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Sex on American Television: An Analysis Across Program Genres and Network Types

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Abstract

As part of a larger study on television exposure, 1,276 shows from the 2001–2002 television season were coded for sexual content. Compared to previous research, this study sampled more networks targeted to adolescents and examined differences across additional program genres. A unique feature is the assessment of sexual content across network types. Three genres were distinguished by high percentages of shows with sexual behavior and talk and greater explicitness. This pattern characterized premium cable movie channels compared to broadcast and other cable networks. Few genres consistently offer programming that is free of sexual content during peak times for teen viewing.

Keywords

adolescents; content analysis; sex; television

Among the sociocultural factors posited to influence young people's sexuality, the media have received significant attention — especially television, as it continues to be the medium used most by youth (Roberts, Foehr, Rideout, & Brodie, 1999). During adolescence, most teens are becoming involved in dating relationships (Kaiser Family Foundation & YM Magazine, 1998), and media portrayals of sexual issues may play a key role in their sexual socialization through the social norms and sexual scripts presented (Brown, Walsh-Childers, & Waszak, 1990). As many as one in five teens reports that entertainment is their most important source of sexual information (Gibbs, 1993 as cited in Brown & Steele, 1995). Additionally, survey evidence suggests that substantial numbers of teens — more than 40% in one survey — find television portrayals of sexual matters to be accurate reflections of real

world experiences and outcomes (Louis Harris & Associates, 1988). Thus, it is important to know what types of messages about sex, its consequences, and sexual responsibility are presented on television shows watched by teens.

This paper addresses this issue by using data from 1,276 television programs to analyze the amount and kinds of sexual behaviors and sexual talk in programming from the 2001–2002 season. It expands on previous content analyses by sampling extensively from several networks targeted to youth rather than evaluating a small number of individual programs popular among teens (Cope-Farrar & Kunkel, 2002; Greenberg et al., 1993; Ward, 1995) and by examining sexual content across a wider array of program genres. We also assess differences between major commercial broadcast networks and two categories of cable networks popular among teens.

Media exposure has been posited to affect viewers' attitudes and behavior in several ways. Cultivation theory (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli, & Shanahan, 2002) proposes that television exposure, especially heavy viewing, creates shared beliefs and perceptions as viewers adopt the messages and images presented in the symbolic world of television as accurate depictions of social reality. Another theoretical approach, social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), later recast as social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986, 2001), predicts that individuals will imitate the behavior of others when those models are rewarded or not punished, especially when viewers perceive them as attractive and similar to themselves. According to Bandura, individuals model their behavior on vicarious experiences such as media because their real life experiences are usually more limited. This may be particularly true for adolescents who may not have much first-hand experience with sexuality yet are starting to enter into dating relationships and thus are eager to learn about issues such as how to behave with a romantic partner or how to perform various sexual behaviors. A closely related concept is that sexual scenarios portrayed by the media provide scripts that may be used by youth to fill in gaps in their understanding of sexual situations (Brown & Steele, 1995). According to these theories, to the extent that television portrays sex frequently and in an unrealistically positive manner — with a preponderance of benefits and little attention to risks and negative outcomes — viewers will be more apt to make misinformed and potentially dangerous decisions about sex (e.g., engage in sex “because everyone’s doing it” according to the normative messages pervading television shows, not use condoms because television characters who serve as models do not use them and nothing bad happens).

Although heavy viewers of all ages may be influenced by their exposure to television, teenagers may be particularly vulnerable to media messages regarding sex because of developmental limitations in their critical thinking skills (Gordon, 1990; Gruber & Thau, 2003). Thus, adolescence represents a sensitive period when interest in sexual matters is heightened and gender roles and sexual attitudes are being shaped, yet analytic skills are often far from fully developed. Consequently, it is important to understand the messages about sex promulgated by television, especially among youth-oriented shows.

Concern about the sexual messages relayed by television has already spurred research aimed at describing and quantifying sexual material in television shows. Past content analyses have found that portrayals of sexual activity and verbal references to sex on television are

frequent, with sexual messages presented in a largely favorable light and seldom accompanied by references to risks and negative consequences such as sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and unwanted pregnancy (Baxter, De Riemer, Landini, Leslie, & Singletary, 1985; Brown & Steele, 1995; Buerkel-Rothfuss, 1993; Kunkel et al., 1999, 2003; Kunkel, Cope-Farrar, Biely, Maynard-Farinola, & Donnerstein, 2001; Lowry & Towles, 1989a, 1989b). Portrayals of responsible sexual decision-making (such as the use of contraceptives) are infrequent (Brown & Newcomer, 1991), with abstinence among teenagers rarely portrayed in a positive manner (Committee on Communications, 1995). Sex on television generally occurs 4 to 8 times more often between unmarried persons than married couples (Brown & Newcomer, 1991; Lowry & Shidler, 1993). In research that examined the 12 prime-time shows most watched by children and adolescents during the 1992–1993 television season, Ward (1995) found that discussions of sexuality were quite common — on average 29% of the interactions per episode contained verbal references to sexual matters, amounting to nearly 10 sexual interactions per half hour program — and more messages emphasized a recreational orientation to sex than a procreational orientation.

Over the last 20 years, there has been a substantial increase in the amount of sexually oriented material in television shows (Brown et al., 1990; Brown & Newcomer, 1991; Buerkel-Rothfuss, 1993; Greenberg & Busselle, 1994; Greenberg & D'Alessio, 1985; Kunkel, Cope, & Colvin, 1996) as well as more explicit depictions of human sexuality, including more portrayals of intercourse and verbal references to once taboo subjects of homosexuality and condoms (Brown et al., 1990; Brown, Greenberg, & Buerkel-Rothfuss, 1993; Buerkel-Rothfuss, 1993; Heintz-Knowles, Engstrand, Shively, Stern, & Delwiche, 1996; Louis Harris & Associates, 1988; Sapolsky & Tabarlet, 1991). With the increasing saturation of cable and satellite television, which are subject to less regulation than commercial broadcast networks, growing numbers of youth may have access to programming that contains greater amounts of and more explicit depictions of sexual themes. In fact, analyses of Nielsen ratings data by Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau (2001) showed that teen viewing of ad-supported cable television has not only increased significantly in the past decade, but in 2000–2001 it surpassed their viewing of broadcast networks in primetime. Another recent trend that may affect the amount and type of sexual content to which youth are exposed is the explosion of dating reality shows where participants win various types of competitions by using their sexuality.

This paper presents the results of the first of three annual content analyses undertaken to characterize the extent and nature of sexual content currently depicted across a broad range of programming popular among youth. Prior content analyses have generally focused on broadcast networks and have used either small samples of programs popular among youth (such as the top 10 to 20) based on television ratings or large samples drawn from networks appealing to a wide range of audiences. Our large sample of 1,276 program episodes is drawn from an extensive array of broadcast and cable networks, including three that feature programming specifically targeted to youth. The content coded data are used to assess the prevalence and frequency of sexual behavior and sexual talk in television programming overall and the patterns that emerge across different genres and network types. Based on the content analyses conducted by Kunkel and colleagues (Kunkel et al., 1999, 2001, 2003), we hypothesize that for the overall sample more than half of all programs will have sexual

content, with a higher proportion of shows containing talk about sex rather than sexual behavior. Second, we expect that the prevalence of safer sex messages will be very low, present in less than 10% of shows overall. In genre comparisons, we expect movies to be most likely to contain sexual content, while children's cartoons and reality programs will be least likely. Finally, based on differences in genre composition of programming as well as the regulatory environments of cable versus commercial broadcast television, we expect that premium cable movie networks will be most likely to air shows with sexual content, to depict high level sexual behaviors such as intercourse, and to depict higher levels of explicitness.

Method

Program Sample

A 3-composite week sampling plan was used to obtain a large random sample of television programs of greatest interest to adolescents that was inclusive of most segments of the television industry. Programs were taped from 11 sources — 6 commercial broadcast networks (ABC, CBS, Fox, NBC, UPN, and WB) and 5 cable networks (BET, Cinemax, HBO, MTV, and Showtime). Several of the networks¹ were selected because of their appeal among young audiences, including UPN, which televises a substantial number of programs with young African American characters (e.g., *The Steve Harvey Show*, *Moesha*, *Fresh Prince of Bel Air*, *One on One*); WB, which tailors its programming to White youth, with programs such as *Gilmore Girls*, *7th Heaven*, *Sabrina*, and *Smallville*; and MTV, which shows music videos and other programs (e.g., dating reality shows) watched by many teens and young adults.

Composite week sampling designs have been used in previous content analysis studies to obtain representative samples of television programming (Kunkel et al., 1999, 2001, 2003; Madden & Grube, 1994; Wallack, Grube, Madden, & Breed, 1990; Wilson et al., 1997). This sampling strategy involves randomly selecting days of the week or specific time slots for recording over several weeks to reduce potential bias that could be introduced if all taping were done within a single calendar week or two. In our 3-composite week sampling plan, taping occurred primarily over a 7-week period from November 4, 2001, through December 22, 2001.² Each week, three different days of the week were randomly selected for taping from all 11 networks, with all seven days of the week represented three times in the sample. The 8-hour time block for taping extended from 3:00 p.m. Pacific time (at which time most youth are out of school) to 11:00 p.m. (through primetime). Thus, approximately 1,850 hours of programming were recorded.

Not all material that was taped was coded. We excluded daily news broadcasts, game shows, sports shows and events, and paid programming as well as all forms of commercials and other promotions (e.g., teasers for network shows). Although music videos were taped, they were coded and analyzed separately due to their unique characteristics and are not reported

¹Although the term "network" has traditionally been associated more narrowly with the longer established commercial broadcast networks, we use the term to include cable ones as well.

²The primary period for data collection included the month of November, which is a sweeps month; however, only 607 shows (47.6%) of our total sample of 1,276 shows were taped in November.

here. In addition, shows that were incomplete because they started before 3:00 p.m. or ended after 11:00 p.m. were not coded. Finally, episode repeats were eliminated from the sample.

The final sample consisted of 1,276 unique program episodes, which represents 1,299 broadcast hours of programming or 832.5 hours of actual program time (broadcast time minus commercials). The sample was varied, with 13 program genres represented.³ Two thirds of program content coded was distributed across three genres: feature films, situation comedies, and dramas.

Measures

The codebook developed for this study was based, in large part, on the variables used by Kunkel and colleagues (1999, 2001, 2003) in their content analyses conducted for the Kaiser Family Foundation. We developed additional items as well as the coding protocol. In contrast to Kunkel and colleagues, who used the scene as the primary unit of analysis, this content analysis involved coding for sexual content in 2-minute intervals of program time. Because scenes vary considerably in length and thus do not provide a constant unit of measure for making comparisons across programs, we used a standard coding unit based on time. Coding media programming in designated time intervals has been used frequently by other researchers conducting content analyses across various program genres, including movies, soap operas, and music videos (e.g., Hazan, Lipton, & Glantz, 1994; Lowery, 1980; Roberts, Christenson, Henriksen, & Bandy, 2002; Sommers-Flanagan, Sommers-Flanagan, & Davis, 1993; Stockwell & Glantz, 1997; Terre, Drabman, & Speer, 1991). In addition to controlling for differences in length of coding units and facilitating comparisons, time-based coding intervals provide greater consistency across coders in the exact program segments assessed.

For purposes of this content analysis, sex was defined as any depiction of sexual activity, sexually suggestive behavior, or any talk about sexuality or sexual activity. To be conservative and avoid overcoding sexual content, messages about sex were differentiated from nonsexual messages related to romance and relationships, which were not coded.

Sexual Behaviors—Eight categories were used to code for the presence of various sexual behaviors within each 2-minute interval among foreground (or speaking) characters and background (or nonspeaking) characters. Coders noted all behaviors portrayed in each interval, but did not code their frequency within intervals. As the portrayal of behaviors among background characters exclusively was low and not reliable, this paper deals only with sexual behaviors that involved at least one foreground character. We developed two additional behavior categories — rape and other sexual assault; however, these behaviors occurred with low frequency in the overall sample (eight cases each) and were not represented in the double-coded sample, making it impossible to assess their reliability. Thus, they were not retained for analytic purposes. Because most of the categories formed a continuum of increasing sexual intimacy (except for the “other” category), they were scaled

³Because soap operas were not broadcast on the west coast (where the taping occurred) during the 3 p.m.–11 p.m. time block, they were subsequently recorded and analyzed separately.

by assigning numerical values (Kunkel et al., 1999, 2001, 2003). The sexual behavior categories and their values were:

Physical flirting: Use of one's body in a sexually suggestive or enticing way. Value = 1.

Passionate kissing: Lip kissing, any use of the mouth or tongue above the shoulders, and seductive kissing of hands. Value = 2.

Intimate touching: Touching of a partner's body, especially erogenous zones, for sexual arousal. Value = 2.

Sexual intercourse strongly implied: Situations in which sexual intercourse was not directly depicted but was strongly implied. Value = 3.

Sexual intercourse depicted: Portrayals of the act of intercourse in which some portion of the body of those engaged in the act was shown while intercourse occurred. Value = 4.

Other: All other types of sexual behaviors that did not fall into the categories specified above, including low-level sexual acts such as leering to high-level sexual acts such as masturbation and bondage and discipline. Because most behaviors coded were at the lower end, the minimal value was assigned to this category. Value = 1.

Relationship Status—For intervals where intercourse was implied or depicted, a follow-up item was completed to assess the type of relationship between sexual partners. The categories for relationships were:

Married: The couple was married at the time intercourse occurred.

Not married, established romantic relationship: Although not married, the couple had a romantic relationship and an apparent commitment to a future together (e.g., dating).

Ongoing casual sex relationship: The couple had some form of a continuing casual sex relationship (e.g., an affair, a prostitute with a regular client).

Past history of romantic involvement: The couple had previously been in an established relationship or marriage but was not currently in one at the time intercourse occurred (e.g., had divorced or broken up after dating with no expectations of getting back together).

Had met before in a nonromantic context: The couple had met before but had never been involved romantically prior to intercourse (e.g., friends, coworkers).

Had just met: The couple did not know each other prior to sexual intercourse (e.g., one night stands, couples who have sex immediately after meeting each other at a bar or party even if they later become involved in an established relationship).

Explicitness—Explicitness — defined as the physical appearance of characters while engaged in any sexual behavior — was coded as a threshold value for each 2-minute interval. The categories and values of explicitness were:

Not at all explicit: No sexually suggestive attire. Value = 0.

Provocative or suggestive appearance/dress: Attire that was sexually provocative (e.g., thongs, tops that revealed cleavage). Value = 1.

Disrobing: Removal of clothing that revealed parts of the body not normally exposed (e.g., removing outer clothing to reveal underwear). Value = 2.

Discreet nudity: Characters known to be partially or completely nude, but their normally private body parts (e.g., genitals, women's breasts) were concealed either by a covering (such as a bedsheet) or by censoring (e.g., black bars, pixilated images). Value = 3.

Nudity: The baring of normally private body parts. Value = 4.

Sexual Talk—Sexual talk involved coding direct comments on sexual topics (e.g., statements about sexual desires, intentions, and actions) as well as indirect references, such as those involving double entendre and sexual innuendo. In addition to dialogue, we also coded nonspoken verbal messages with sexual content (e.g., title screens between scenes, close-ups of newspaper headlines and magazine covers). Each 2-minute interval was coded for the presence of sexual talk across the different categories, with the restriction that individual comments could not be coded in more than one category. Unlike sexual behaviors, which can be aligned along a continuum, the sexual talk categories cannot be scaled. Two categories — expert advice and other talk — were not reliable and thus were not retained for analytic purposes. The four categories used to describe talk about sex were:

Comments about own/others' sexual actions or interests: Comments relating to sexual desires, interests, activities, and discussions about sexual orientation.

Talk about past sexual intercourse: Talk about intercourse that had already occurred.

Talk toward sex: Intimate or seductive comments directed at a partner to promote sex.

Talk about sex-related crimes: Discussion about illegal acts of sexual violence such as rape, incest, molestation, and “gay bashing.”

Talk about sex was also coded for the presence of humor. To code for humor, the talk about sex had to use either a traditional form of humor (e.g., jokes, sarcasm, and innuendo) or be followed by laughter (from the laugh track, if one was present, or from a character).

Humor: Intervals were coded “yes” for this variable if at least one sexual comment involved humor.

An additional measure related to talk was the interval focus on talk about sex. This variable provided an index of the amount of sexual talk in intervals where such talk was present.

Focus on talk about sex: Intervals in which the total number of sexually related comments was fewer than five were coded as having a “minor focus.” Those with more extended discussions of sexual issues with five or more comments were coded as having a “major focus.”⁴

Sexual Responsibility—As part of our effort to assess the context in which sex is portrayed or discussed, we coded whether specific issues related to sexual responsibility were present. Intervals containing any sexual behavior or sexual talk were also coded for two themes of sexual responsibility: sexual patience and sexual precautions.

Sexual patience: Sexual patience refers to abstaining altogether from or postponing sexual intercourse for any of the following reasons: moral stance, as a strategy for avoiding negative outcomes such as unwanted pregnancy, or lack of readiness (e.g., too early in a relationship, one or more partners not emotionally ready). To code for sexual patience, it had to be clear that a character’s refusal to have sex was motivated by one of the reasons cited above (i.e., reflected a genuine ongoing commitment not to have sex rather than simply a lack of interest in having sex with a particular person). Additionally, cases in which propositions of a steady sexual partner were rebuffed for transient reasons (e.g., too tired for sex) were not counted as depictions of sexual patience. Intervals containing portrayals or talk about abstinence or delaying sexual intercourse were coded “yes” for this variable.

Sexual precautions: Sexual precautions refers to pursuing efforts to prevent negative health-related consequences of sexual intercourse such as AIDS, STDs, and unwanted pregnancy when sexually active. Talk or depictions of preventive measures in non-sexual contexts (e.g., using condoms as water balloons or to smuggle drugs) were not included in this item. Intervals with portrayals or talk about the use or failure to use preventive measures when sexually active were coded “yes” for this variable.

Types of sexual precautions: For intervals in which the theme of sexual precautions was present, coders completed a follow-up item to specify all topics that were depicted or discussed: protection in general (i.e., unspecified comments such as “we were careful” or “you used something, right?”), condoms, and any birth control other than condoms. Other categories such as HIV testing prior to engaging in sex occurred too infrequently to be reliable and were not retained for analytic purposes.

Program Coding

Coder Training—Sixteen students (10 females) from local universities were recruited to serve as coders. Training took place from September 2001 through January 2002. The

⁴A quantitative criterion for coding amount of talk about sex was developed after early coding efforts using a more qualitative measure based on centrality of talk to story lines proved to be unreliable. With the 5-comment criterion, intervals containing a couple of throw away lines related to sex would be coded as having a “minor focus”; however, a total of five sexually related comments within a 2-minute time frame was deemed substantial enough to code for “major focus.”

phases of training included orientation to the coding task and codebook, large group coding of shows not in the sample with supervisors, and individual coding of practice shows where coders assessed shows individually and then discussed the results interval by interval in weekly group meetings. Preliminary reliability analyses were conducted on data collected during the individual practice phase of training to determine when coders could proceed with the actual coding task. The reliability analyses presented below, however, relate to assessments of coder agreement obtained from the coding of a subset of shows in the program sample.

Coding Procedures—Coders watched sequential 2-minute intervals of program time and coded sexual behaviors and talk that occurred. As the coding was confined to program content and excluded commercials and other promotions, coders used kitchen timers and the counters on the videocassette recorders to track 2-minute intervals of program time. Coders recorded data on scannable forms for each interval as they viewed it. Although coders were allowed to carry information forward (i.e., use information presented in prior intervals to understand the content in later ones), they were not permitted to code backwards (i.e., use information learned later in a program to go back and change the coding in an earlier interval). All opening credits and those closing credits accompanied by content from the current episode (i.e., a final scene) were coded.

Interrater Reliability Analyses—Approximately 12% ($n = 157$) of the shows in the sample were randomly assigned to two coders for independent coding and reliability assessment. After both coders' data had been recorded and analyzed for reliability purposes, coders then met to resolve any discrepancies in the two sets of ratings and produce a final set for use in the data analyses to address the research questions. Assessment of reliability was conducted on an ongoing basis throughout the 4 to 5 months it took coders to complete the entire program sample. Programs from every genre and every network were included in the reliability analyses. Genres were represented in the double-coded sample in approximate proportion to their representation in the overall program sample.

For purposes of reliability assessment, the number of 2-minute intervals coded for each variable was summed across the intervals in an episode to gauge the frequency with which individual behaviors and types of sex talk occurred within each program episode. This summing resulted in converting nominal data at the 2-minute interval level (e.g., presence/absence of flirting) into frequency counts at the program level (e.g., number of intervals in which flirting occurred in the episode). Therefore, all reliability analyses used the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC). The ICC is an assessment of the proportion of variance in the measures attributable to coder agreement corrected for chance. For interval data such as the frequency counts used here, the ICC is equivalent to Krippendorff's alpha (Krippendorff, 1980).

The results of the reliability analyses are presented in Table 1. An ICC of .70 was used as the criterion for acceptable reliability for difficult-to-code items, such as the ones used in this content analysis. Despite the complexity of the coding task, the extent of agreement among coders was good overall. In several cases where reliability was just below .70 (.68 for provocative appearance or dress, .65 for other behavior, .66 for sexual patience), we have

used the data for these items. In cases where the ICC was considerably below .70, we have merged categories to create items with acceptable reliability. This occurred with two sexual behaviors: intimate touching was combined with passionate kissing, with an ICC for this combined category of .93.⁵ Similarly, two talk categories were combined — comments about own/others' sexual actions or interests and talk about past intercourse — with an ICC of .89 for this combined category. Finally, the four relationship categories in which sexual partners were not in some type of established, romantic relationship — ongoing casual sex, past romantic relationship, had met before in a nonromantic context, and had just met prior to intercourse — were combined into one category, “not married, casual relationship,” with an ICC of .85.

Results

Episode Level Analyses

Sexual Behavior—Overall, 82.1% of the episodes coded contained some sexual behavior or talk (see Table 2) and 66.8% contained some form of sexual behavior in at least one 2-minute interval. As shown in Table 3, nearly half of the 1,276 episodes had a portrayal of physical flirting and about half included kissing and/or touching. One quarter of the sample contained a sexual behavior in the category of other behavior, primarily characters engaged in leering. For the higher level sexual behaviors of sexual intercourse implied and sexual intercourse depicted, the percentage of shows with such portrayals dropped to 10.5% and 3.9%, respectively.

Among the different program genres (see Table 2), children's cartoons were least likely to have any depictions of sexual behavior (20.7%), followed by talk shows (28.4%) and news magazines (29.0%). For these latter two genres, sexual behaviors occurred primarily in the movie or video clips shown rather than in the behavior of the shows' hosts or guests. At the other extreme, for several genres nearly every show contained sexual behavior, including comedy drama (100%), television movies (100%), and feature films (92.7%). A relatively high proportion (81.3%) of televised entertainment magazines — shows that feature stories on celebrities and current events in the entertainment industry — contained sexual behavior. As with talk shows and news magazines, these portrayals were typically found in the movie clips or video footage (e.g., a celebrity couple kissing in public) shown rather than in the interviews conducted.

Consistent with the overall sample, for each genre the percentage of shows with low-level sexual behaviors far outweighed the percentage containing portrayals of intercourse (see Table 3). None of the shows classified as children's cartoon, talk show, or news magazine contained a portrayal of intercourse implied or depicted. Genres that had the highest percentages of shows with any sexual behavior were also those most likely to show intercourse implied or depicted.

⁵Combining categories was typically necessary because one or more of the categories (e.g., intimate touching) occurred with such low frequency in the overall data set that a small number of disagreements substantially reduced its reliability.

Differences in sexual behavior were also examined across network types. The commercial broadcast category included the three major networks — ABC, CBS, and NBC — as well as Fox, UPN, and WB; the cable music entertainment category included BET and MTV (with analyses discussed in this paper confined to the nonmusic video programming including talk shows, comedy/variety shows, and reality shows as the music videos were analyzed separately); the premium cable movie category included Cinemax, HBO, and Showtime. With fewer restrictions on cable programming, it is not surprising that more sexual behavior overall was found in cable shows — especially among the three premium cable movie channels (89.7%), which were significantly higher than commercial broadcast networks (62.4%), $\chi^2 (1, N = 1123) = 52.2, p < .001$, and cable music entertainment channels (66.0%), $\chi^2 (1, N = 338) = 28.4, p < .001$. The commercial broadcast networks and two music entertainment channels were not significantly different ($p = .42$).

Significant differences between premium cable movie channels and the other two network types were found for each of the specific sexual behaviors (all p -values $< .001$), with the percentage of shows containing behaviors other than intercourse about 1.5 to 2.5 times greater on the premium movie channels. The proportion of shows on premium cable movie networks with intercourse implied was nearly 4 times greater (28.6%) than commercial broadcast channels (7.6%), $\chi^2 (1, N = 1123) = 69.9, p < .001$, and cable music entertainment channels (6.5%), $\chi^2 (1, N = 338) = 27.0, p < .001$. The commercial broadcast and cable music entertainment channels were not significantly different ($p = .65$). For intercourse depicted, the differential between premium cable movie and other network categories was even greater — by a factor of 8 to 23 — with 20.5% of shows on premium movie channels depicting intercourse compared to 0.9% for commercial broadcast networks, $\chi^2 (1, N = 1123) = 152.5, p < .001$, and 2.6% for cable music entertainment channels, $\chi^2 (1, N = 338) = 24.7, p < .001$. The commercial broadcast and cable music entertainment networks were marginally different, $\chi^2 (1, N = 1091) = 3.8, p = .053$.

Sexual Talk—Consistent with Kunkel and colleagues (1999, 2001, 2003), talk about sex was more frequent in our sample (76.5%) than was sexual behavior (66.8%), $\chi^2 (1, N = 1276) = 323.4, p < .001$. Similarly, the category of comments about own/others' actions or interests, which in our case was combined with talk about past sex, was the most frequent type of talk about sex, with three quarters of the sample containing such talk. Talk toward sex was present in slightly more than one quarter of shows in the sample, and talk about sex crimes was found in only 6.1%.

For nearly all genres (see Table 2), 65% or more of the shows had some talk about sex; the three exceptions were children's cartoons (14.9%), news magazines (41.9%), and other programming (57.1%). In general, genres with high percentages of shows containing sexual behavior were also relatively high in prevalence of talk about sex.

Among the network types, the three premium cable movie channels had significantly more shows with any talk about sex (92.4%) compared to commercial broadcast (72.7%), $\chi^2 (1, N = 1123) = 32.9, p < .001$, and cable music entertainment networks (80.4%), $\chi^2 (1, N = 338) = 10.7, p < .001$. Comparisons between cable music entertainment and commercial

broadcast networks indicated that BET and MTV were significantly higher in terms of any sex talk, $\chi^2(1, N = 1091) = 4.0, p < .05$.

Sexual Responsibility—In our sample, only 30 shows (representing 2.4% of the entire sample and 2.9% of the shows with any sexual content) contained a portrayal or any talk about sexual patience. Messages about using sexual precautions when having sex were slightly more prevalent, occurring in 55 episodes (4.3% of the overall sample and 5.2% of shows with any sexual content). Among shows with portrayals of intercourse (implied or depicted), the percentages with sexual patience and sexual precautions messages were 3.6% and 10.9%, respectively. When messages about sexual precautions were present, they most often related to condoms (43 episodes), followed by other birth control (14 episodes), and protection in general (13 episodes).

Interval Level Analyses

Sexual Behaviors

Frequency of sexual portrayals: For the 852 shows that contained at least one portrayal of sexual behavior, the average number of 2-minute intervals per hour of program time⁶ (maximum of 30) that contained sexual behavior was calculated. Slightly more than 7 intervals per hour of program time (about 25%) displayed some form of sexual behavior.

Among the 13 program genres, the average number of intervals depicting sex ranged from a low of 1.4 intervals for news magazines and 3.0 for talk shows to a high of 13.8 intervals (nearly 50%) for reality shows. The reality genre includes numerous dating reality programs such as *Love Cruise*, *Temptation Island*, and *Shipmates*, which contain low-level sexual behaviors scattered throughout episodes. The remaining genres contained from 5.1 to 11.0 intervals per hour of program time with sexual behavior.

A one-way ANOVA on frequency of sexual behavior revealed a significant main effect for network type, $F(2, 849) = 16.6, p < .001$. Interestingly, the premium cable movie channels had the lowest number of intervals per hour of program time with sexual behavior ($M = 6.0$ compared to $M = 9.9$ for cable music entertainment channels and $M = 7.3$ for commercial broadcast channels). Post hoc comparisons with Tamhane's T2 test revealed that the differences between the three network types were all significant, ($p < .01$). In contrast to the findings for the reality genre where low-level behaviors tend to be widely dispersed throughout shows, programs on premium cable movie channels contain more high-level behaviors found in a relatively small proportion — about one fifth — of their intervals.

Average level of sexual behaviors: Across the 3,858 2-minute intervals that contained sexual behavior (of a total of 24,974 intervals coded), we summed the weights assigned to the different behavior categories to calculate the average level of sexual behavior portrayed per interval. For the sample overall, this value was 1.9; on average, sexual depictions fell in

⁶Because our sample includes programs from both commercial broadcast and cable networks, we use a standard unit — number of 2-minute intervals per hour of program time rather than number of 2-minute intervals per one hour show — to assess the frequency of sexual behavior and talk. This accounts for the fact that commercials substantially reduce the amount of program content on broadcast networks to about 22 2-minute intervals in an hour program while one hour cable shows (especially those on premium channels) often have about 30 2-minute intervals.

the moderate range, at the level of kissing and touching. This is not surprising given the preponderance of lower-level sexual behaviors across all types of programs, even those with relatively high percentages of shows containing intercourse. The values for level of sexual behavior ranged from a low of 1.2 for children's cartoons to a high of 2.9 for the genre "other."

Significant differences across the types of networks in the average level of sexual behavior per interval emerged from the one-way ANOVA, $F(2, 3855) = 23.5, p < .001$. Post hoc comparisons with Tamhane's T2 test revealed a small but significant difference ($p < .001$), with level of sexual behavior depicted higher for the premium cable movie channels ($M = 2.0$) than the commercial broadcast ($M = 1.8$) and cable music entertainment channels ($M = 1.8$).

Explicitness of sexual behavior: Table 4 displays the distribution of explicitness ratings as well as the average level of explicitness per interval across the 3,858 intervals containing sexual behavior. Nearly two thirds of all intervals with sexual behavior were rated as not at all explicit. Twenty-two percent were coded as provocative dress or appearance, 6.6% of intervals contained discreet nudity, with the remaining 5% split between disrobing and nudity. With this distribution of explicitness scores, the average 2-minute interval containing sexual behavior was rated 0.6, a value about halfway between not at all explicit and provocative dress.

This same general pattern was found for the majority of genres, with the overwhelming percentage of intervals rated as not at all explicit and only about 10% or less displaying discreet nudity or nudity. For children's cartoons and news magazines, all intervals with sexual behavior were coded either as not at all explicit (80–81%) or provocative appearance or dress (19–20%). In contrast, for comedy drama — a category that includes shows such as *Sex and the City*, *Mind of the Married Man*, and *Ally McBeal* — nearly one quarter of the 2-minute intervals with sexual behavior were coded as discreet nudity or nudity. Talk shows had a relatively high percentage of intervals rated for discreet nudity and a relatively high average explicitness level, again attributable to the movie or video clips shown on such programs.

An examination of explicitness ratings by network type revealed that commercial broadcast channels had a higher percentage of 2-minute intervals with behavior rated as not at all explicit (71.7%) than cable music entertainment channels (54.1%), $\chi^2(1, N = 2474) = 55.5, p < .001$, and premium cable movie channels (60.0%), $\chi^2(1, N = 3376) = 50.5, p < .001$. The difference between cable music entertainment and premium cable movie channels was also significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 1866) = 5.1, p < .05$. In terms of provocative appearance, cable music entertainment channels had significantly more intervals rated for sexually suggestive dress (35.5%) than commercial broadcast channels (20.2%), $\chi^2(1, N = 2474) = 51.0, p < .001$, and premium cable movie channels (20.7%), $\chi^2(1, N = 1866) = 42.4, p < .001$. The difference between commercial broadcast and premium cable movie channels was not significant ($p = .73$). Explicitness ratings at the higher end of the continuum occurred significantly more often on premium cable movie networks. Disrobing was found in 3.8% of intervals on premium cable movie networks compared to 1.9% of commercial broadcast

networks, $\chi^2(1, N = 3376) = 11.5, p < .001$. Nudity was also coded more often on premium cable movie channels (8.3%) compared to both commercial broadcast networks (0.3%), $\chi^2(1, N = 3376) = 154.7, p < .001$, and cable music entertainment channels (0.0 %), $\chi^2(1, N = 1866) = 42.7, p < .001$. Discreet nudity was the only explicitness rating for which there were no significant differences across network types.

Relationship status of couples engaging in intercourse: Sexual intercourse was implied or depicted in 254 intervals (6.6% of all intervals containing sexual behavior). In 41 of these cases, relationship status was missing for three reasons: inadequate information provided in the program for determining the type of relationship ($n = 24$), the couple did not fit any of the categories (e.g., three-way encounters, gang rape) ($n = 5$), or coders failed to complete the follow-up item ($n = 12$). Of the 213 cases of intercourse for which relationship information was coded, 17.4% involved married couples, 23.9% involved unmarried couples in established romantic relationships, and more than half (58.7%) involved couples in some type of casual relationship.

Sexual Talk — Frequency and Amount—Table 5 provides information on the average number of 2-minute intervals per hour of program time with talk about sex, with a major versus a minor focus on sex talk, and with humor across the 976 shows that contained talk about sex. Overall, 11.0 2-minute intervals out of a maximum of 30 per hour of program time contained some form of talk about sex. On average, 8.0 intervals per hour were rated as having a minor focus on sex talk and 3.3 intervals per hour had a major focus. Humor was rated as occurring with sex talk in 7.7 intervals per hour.

Among the different genres, those with the highest average number of intervals per hour of program time containing sex talk were reality shows (16.5), situation comedies (14.2), and comedy dramas (14.1). Children's cartoons anchored the other end of the continuum with a low of 4.7 intervals per hour of talk about sex. The remaining program types fell in the range from 7 to 12 intervals per hour. For all genres except "other," more intervals were rated as having a minor rather than a major focus on sex talk. In most cases, the ratio of minor to major focus was 2.5:1 or higher (with children's cartoons having 7 times as many intervals rated as minor as compared to major). Comedy drama, however, was the one genre in which there was a more even split, with 7.4 intervals per hour rated as minor focus and 7.0 rated as major focus. In terms of humor, situation comedies and variety/comedy programs were most likely to have humor associated with sex talk (13.6 and 11.4 intervals, respectively). Genres in which the talk about sex was least likely to contain humor were news magazines (0.8 intervals), television movies (2.0 intervals), and talk shows (3.0 intervals).

One-way ANOVAs revealed that there were significant main effects for network type on: average number of intervals with sexual talk, number of intervals with a minor focus on sexual talk, and number of intervals in which humor was associated with sexual talk (all p -values $< .001$). Comparisons using Tamhane's T2 showed that premium cable movie networks were significantly lower in both average number of intervals per hour of program time with talk about sex (8.0 compared to 12.0 for cable music entertainment channels, $p < .001$, and 11.5 for commercial broadcast networks, $p < .01$) and number of intervals with minor focus on talk about sex (5.3 versus 8.1 for cable music entertainment channels, $p < .$

001, and 8.7 for commercial broadcast networks, $p < .01$). For both variables, the differences between the latter two network types were not significant. With respect to humor in sex talk, commercial broadcast networks with a mean of 8.7 intervals per hour of program time were significantly higher than both the cable music entertainment channels ($M = 6.8$, $p < .05$) and premium cable movie networks ($M = 4.4$, $p < .001$). The premium cable movie channels were also significantly lower in humor compared to the cable music entertainment channels ($p < .01$).

Discussion

Our content analysis of the 2001–2002 season on American television examined the prevalence and types of sexual behavior and sexual talk characterizing a random sample of 1,276 unique program episodes aired across 11 networks. Compared to previous content analyses, our study offers an extensive program sample, the use of standard units for coding programs and interpreting results, and rigorous reliability analyses conducted on an ongoing basis throughout the coding task on a randomly selected subsample of shows. We found that a considerable majority of the shows in our sample (82%) included some form of sexual content, with 67% containing a portrayal of sexual behavior in at least one 2-minute interval. In general, when programs contained sexual behavior it was found in about one quarter of the 2-minute intervals, with those behaviors at the lower end of the sexual continuum far outnumbering those at the higher end. As expected, sexual talk was more ubiquitous than sexual behavior, present in more than 75% of shows in the sample. When shows did contain talk about sex, such comments typically were found in slightly more than one third of the 30 2-minute intervals per hour of program time but most often did not constitute extended discussions about sex. Consistent with other studies (Greenberg & Busselle, 1994; Kunkel et al., 1999, 2001, 2003; Lowry & Shidler, 1993; Lowry & Towles, 1989a; Sapolsky & Tabarlet, 1991), we found that messages about sexual responsibility were rare, occurring in about 6% of all programs and 13% of shows with portrayals of intercourse. Additionally, sexual intercourse most often occurred among unmarried persons at a rate of nearly 5:1 in our study. Thus, the predictions made about the prevalence of sexual content and safer sex messages in the sample overall were supported.

When we looked at different types of programs we found a considerable amount of sexual content across all genres, with the exception of children's cartoons. In 11 of 13 genres, one half or more of the shows contained sexual behavior; in 12 genres, 50% or more of the shows contained talk about sex. Nearly every comedy drama, television movie, and feature film contained at least one instance of sexual behavior. These three genres also had more frequent portrayals of explicit material, including intercourse — either strongly implied or clearly depicted — and nudity. Regarding prevalence of sexual talk, comedy dramas and feature films again anchored the high end of the range, along with situation comedies and variety/comedy shows. Among the two genres of animated shows, children's cartoons were extremely low in sexual content. However, other animated programming, which includes shows such as *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill* that are highly popular among children and teenagers, had relatively high percentages of shows with sexual portrayals (53%) and sexual talk (77%).

Our findings with respect to genre are consistent with those of other large content analyses (e.g., Kunkel et al., 2001, 2003) at least in terms of relative rankings, where there are similar data. For example, Kunkel and colleagues have found that movies have the highest percentage of shows with sexual behavior. In our sample, two genres ranked first — television movie and comedy drama — followed closely by feature films. The three lowest ranking genres in terms of sexual behavior in Kunkel and colleagues' most recent study (2003) were reality shows, talk shows, and news magazines. When we likewise excluded children's cartoons, the genres with the fewest shows containing sexual behavior were talk shows and news magazines. Consistent patterns also emerged with regard to talk about sex, with comedies (classified as comedy series in Kunkel et al.'s studies and separated out in our study into situation comedies, comedy dramas, and variety/comedies) consistently identified as among the top genres containing sexual talk. Both studies also found reality shows to anchor the lower end of the continuum. Despite the similarities in rank orders, we found that 65% of reality shows contained talk about sex and 55% contained sexual behavior whereas the comparable percentages from the Kunkel et al. (2003) study were only 20% and 7%, respectively. Some of this absolute difference in amount of sexual material may be found in different category definitions. In our study, the reality genre included four types of shows featuring physical challenges (e.g., *Survivor*), law enforcement activities (e.g., *Cops*), dating (e.g., *Shipmates*), and daily life activities among housemates (e.g., *Real World*), with the latter two often focusing on the sexual relationships and behaviors of people on the show. However, in addition to police shows, Kunkel et al. (2003) classified documentaries (which we categorized separately) along with game shows and public affairs programs (which we excluded from our sample) as reality shows. Thus, although our prediction that movies would anchor the top of the range for prevalence of sexual content was generally supported, we found considerably more sexual content in reality shows than previous content analysis studies.

The findings across different program types suggest that for youth viewing television during late afternoon through primetime, few genres consistently offer programming that is free of sexual content, considering both behavior and talk. For example, we found that children's cartoons, talk shows, and news magazines were relatively low in depictions of sexual behavior; however, 41.9% of news magazines and 65.7% of talk shows contained talk about sex. Despite the fact that sexual content may generally be moderate in terms of intimacy and explicitness and discussions of sex relatively short, its pervasiveness may still exert a powerful influence on young people. For example, one in four shows in our sample contained talk toward sex — comments intended to promote sexual relations with a partner — providing youth with scripts for initiating sexual activity largely unavailable in natural social settings.

In addition to assessing differences in sexual content across program genres, we also examined patterns across types of networks. As many of the cable networks tend to broadcast a limited number of genres, the results for networks are correlated with those for genres. As expected, the premium cable movie channels — which predominately show feature films, cable movies as well as several of the comedy drama series — were significantly higher than other network types in terms of the percentage of shows containing sexual behavior (overall as well as depictions of each specific behavior including high level

behaviors), more explicit sexual portrayals, and talk about sex. Interestingly, although more shows on premium cable movie channels contained sexual behavior and talk, analyses limited to shows with sexual content showed that the frequency (per hour of program time) of sexual portrayals and talk about sex was lower among shows on premium cable movie channels.

In summary, sexual content is pervasive in television programming, particularly among shows and networks popular among teens. As with prior content analyses, however, we did find that sexual behaviors depicted are most often in the low to moderate range and most portrayals are not very explicit. Similarly, among shows that had talk about sex, it was more often a minor focus. However, young people whose television fare includes heavy viewing of comedy programs of every type and movies on cable channels are likely to be exposed to considerably more sexual behavior and talk. As posited by cultivation theory, such exposure over time may lead young people to develop unrealistic norms and expectations about sexuality (i.e., overestimate the extent to which young people are sexually active, underestimate the likelihood of negative outcomes from engaging in sex).

In addition to the prevalence of sexual content, a consistent finding across content analysis studies has been the high frequency with which sex is portrayed among unmarried persons, with few depictions of precautionary behavior and negative consequences associated with sex. In our study, we found safer sex messages incorporated into only 6% of programs. We also not only found that sexual intercourse most often occurred between unmarried persons, but in more than half of the instances the couple was in a casual rather than a committed romantic relationship. Other content analyses have consistently found that sexually active characters rarely suffer negative consequences for their sexual behavior (Kunkel et al., 1999, 2001, 2003; Lowry & Towles, 1989a). To the extent that youth in particular are more likely to use the sexual scenarios depicted by the media as scripts that guide their own sexual practices, they may be more likely to engage in sexual risk taking (i.e., have sex with people they do not know very well, have multiple sexual partners, not use protection).

Recent trends among commercial broadcast networks to show an ever-increasing number of dating reality shows (e.g., *Joe Millionaire*, *The Bachelorette*) suggest that even youth without access to cable or satellite television may be exposed to a greater number of shows where sexual issues are the focal theme. The growing sexualization of commercial broadcast television may be seen in the show *Are You Hot? The Search for America's Sexiest People* where contestants appear — often scantily clad — before a panel of judges to exhibit their physical attributes, be critiqued, and then deemed “hot or not hot.” Additionally, the premise of several dating reality shows (e.g., *Temptation Island* and *Paradise Hotel*) is to bring attractive male and female participants to a private location where their goal is to “hook up” or be eliminated from the contest. Our findings suggest that while sexual content continues to permeate genres previously identified as high in sexual behavior and talk (e.g., movies), it is becoming increasingly integrated into a wider array of shows and genres in relatively high proportions. Perhaps more disturbing in terms of the sexual socialization of young people, however, is the context in which sex is often depicted. In addition to the relative absence of sexual risk and responsibility themes in programming overall, the underlying message of the growing number of dating reality shows is that sexual manipulation and engaging in casual

sexual exploits are effective means for attaining financial and social rewards and, presumably, happiness.

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Table 1

Interrater Reliability Analyses on Sexuality Measures for 157 Double-coded Shows (Intraclass Correlation Coefficient, ICC)

Sexual content variable	ICC
Sexual behaviors — foreground	
Physical flirting	.70
Passionate kissing and intimate touching combined	.93
Sexual intercourse implied	.70
Sexual intercourse depicted	.93
Other behavior	.65
Relationship status of couples engaging in intercourse	
Married	.72
Not married, established romantic relationship	.89
Not married, casual relationship	.85
Level of explicitness	
Not at all	.83
Provocative dress/appearance	.68
Disrobing	.84
Discreet nudity	.77
Nudity	.77
Sexual talk	
Comments about own/others' actions or interests and past intercourse combined	.89
Talk toward sex	.70
Talk about sex crimes	.74
Presence of humor with talk about sex	.85
Interval focus on talk about sex	
Minor	.78
Major	.81
Sexual patience	.66
Sexual precautions	.87
Types of sexual precautions	
Protection in general	.87
Condoms	.75
Other birth control	1.00

Table 2

Percentage of Shows with Any Sexual Content, Any Sexual Behavior, and Any Talk About Sex by Genre and Network Type

	No. of episodes	% with any sexual content	% with any sexual behavior	% with any talk about sex
All episodes	1,276	82.1	66.8	76.5
Genre				
Situation comedy	344	95.9	80.5	93.0
Drama	154	87.0	67.5	80.5
Comedy drama	20	100.0	100.0	100.0
News magazine	31	61.3	29.0	41.9
Entertainment magazine	80	95.0	81.3	83.8
Reality	116	69.8	55.2	64.7
Talk show	67	70.1	28.4	65.7
Children's cartoon	121	26.4	20.7	14.9
Other animated	60	78.3	53.3	76.7
TV movie	7	100.0	100.0	85.7
Feature film	177	97.2	92.7	93.2
Variety/comedy	43	93.0	81.4	93.0
Documentary/historical	49	77.6	55.1	69.4
Other	7	100.0	57.1	57.1
Type of network				
Commercial broadcast	938	78.8	62.4	72.7
Cable music entertainment	153	86.9	66.0	80.4
Premium cable movie	185	95.1	89.7	92.4

Table 3

Percentage of Episodes Containing Different Sexual Behaviors

	Physical Flirting %	Kissing or touching %	Intercourse implied %	Intercourse depicted %	Other sexual behavior %
All episodes (<i>N</i> = 1,276)	49.5	48.6	10.5	3.9	25.1
Genre					
Situation comedy (<i>n</i> = 344)	56.1	55.5	13.7	0.3	27.3
Drama (<i>n</i> = 154)	47.4	53.9	8.4	5.8	18.8
Comedy drama (<i>n</i> = 20)	80.0	85.0	20.0	15.0	45.0
News magazine (<i>n</i> = 31)	6.5	25.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Entertainment magazine (<i>n</i> = 80)	48.8	58.8	2.5	0.0	30.0
Reality (<i>n</i> = 116)	48.3	42.2	4.3	0.9	7.8
Talk show (<i>n</i> = 67)	16.4	16.4	0.0	0.0	3.0
Children's cartoon (<i>n</i> = 121)	16.5	5.8	0.0	0.0	4.1
Other animated (<i>n</i> = 60)	40.0	35.0	3.3	0.0	25.0
TV movie (<i>n</i> = 7)	85.7	100.0	14.3	42.9	57.1
Feature film (<i>n</i> = 177)	83.6	84.7	31.6	17.5	53.1
Variety/comedy (<i>n</i> = 43)	51.2	25.6	4.7	0.0	65.1
Documentary/historical (<i>n</i> = 49)	40.8	28.6	4.1	2.0	8.2
Other (<i>n</i> = 7)	28.6	57.1	0.0	14.3	42.9
Type of network					
Commercial broadcast (<i>n</i> = 938)	43.6	43.6	7.6	0.9	19.9
Cable music entertainment (<i>n</i> = 153)	51.6	38.6	6.5	2.6	24.8
Premium cable movie (<i>n</i> = 185)	77.8	82.2	28.6	20.5	51.4

Table 4
Distribution of Explicitness Ratings and Average Level of Explicitness per Interval across Intervals Containing Sexual Behavior

	Not explicit explicitness %	Provocative dress %	Disrobing %	Discreet nudity %	Nudity %	Average
All intervals with sexual behavior (<i>N</i> = 3,858)	65.3	22.3	2.7	6.6	3.1	0.6
Genre						
Situation comedy (<i>n</i> = 862)	78.3	16.8	0.9	3.9	0.0	0.3
Drama (<i>n</i> = 397)	70.0	16.6	3.3	6.5	3.5	0.6
Comedy drama (<i>n</i> = 110)	59.1	14.5	2.7	14.5	9.1	1.0
News magazine (<i>n</i> = 10)	80.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
Entertainment magazine (<i>n</i> = 202)	46.0	41.1	0.5	11.9	0.5	0.8
Reality (<i>n</i> = 345)	62.3	26.1	4.6	7.0	0.0	0.6
Talk show (<i>n</i> = 38)	52.6	26.3	2.6	18.4	0.0	0.9
Children's cartoon (<i>n</i> = 52)	80.8	19.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
Other animated (<i>n</i> = 84)	65.5	22.6	7.1	4.8	0.0	0.5
TV movie (<i>n</i> = 57)	63.2	22.8	3.5	3.5	7.0	0.7
Feature film (<i>n</i> = 1441)	63.5	21.0	3.3	7.2	4.9	0.7
Variety/comedy (<i>n</i> = 125)	61.6	28.0	1.6	8.8	0.0	0.6
Documentary/historical (<i>n</i> = 101)	37.6	58.4	3.0	1.0	0.0	0.7
Other (<i>n</i> = 34)	11.8	23.5	0.0	5.9	58.2	2.8
Type of network						
Commercial broadcast (<i>n</i> = 1992)	71.7	20.2	1.9	5.9	0.3	0.4
Cable music entertainment (<i>n</i> = 482)	54.1	35.5	2.5	7.9	0.0	0.6
Premium cable movie (<i>n</i> = 1384)	60.0	20.7	3.8	7.2	8.3	0.8

Table 5

Average Number of 2-minute Intervals per Hour of Program Time with Sex Talk, with Major versus Minor Focus on Sex Talk, and with Humor across 976 Episodes that Contained Talk about Sex

	Any sex talk ^a	Minor focus on sex talk ^a	Major focus on sex talk ^a	Humor ^a
All episodes with sex talk (<i>N</i> = 976)	11.0	8.0	3.3	7.7
Genre				
Situation comedy (<i>n</i> = 320)	14.2	10.6	3.9	13.6
Drama (<i>n</i> = 124)	8.0	5.7	2.4	2.7
Comedy drama (<i>n</i> = 20)	14.1	7.4	7.0	8.7
News magazine (<i>n</i> = 13)	6.9	5.3	1.6	0.8
Entertainment magazine (<i>n</i> = 67)	9.6	9.3	2.0	4.2
Reality (<i>n</i> = 75)	16.5	9.8	6.8	8.3
Talk show (<i>n</i> = 44)	8.4	6.2	2.4	3.0
Children's cartoon (<i>n</i> = 18)	4.7	4.1	0.6	2.8
Other animated (<i>n</i> = 46)	9.7	8.5	1.7	7.6
TV movie (<i>n</i> = 6)	9.0	7.5	1.7	2.0
Feature film (<i>n</i> = 165)	7.0	5.1	2.0	3.7
Variety/comedy (<i>n</i> = 40)	11.9	7.5	4.8	11.4
Documentary/historical (<i>n</i> = 34)	8.3	6.7	2.1	3.4
Other (<i>n</i> = 4)	9.8	3.3	6.8	7.2
Type of Network				
Commercial broadcast (<i>n</i> = 682)	11.5	8.7	3.2	8.7
Cable music entertainment (<i>n</i> = 123)	12.0	8.1	4.1	6.8
Premium cable movie (<i>n</i> = 171)	8.0	5.3	2.8	4.4

^a Out of a maximum of 30 intervals of actual program time.