

**THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE:  
A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO READING AND WRITING FOR  
SOCIOLOGY**



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## INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY, ITS INQUIRY, AND COMMON CAREERS WITH THE DEGREE

Have you ever wondered...

- Does my gender impact how I am perceived in professional environments?
- How does drug abuse impact the family unit?
- What does outsourcing mean for relationships between coworkers?
- Why is food insecurity more prominent in some areas than others?
- Why and how do social revolutions happen?

If you have asked these or similar questions, then you have begun thinking like a sociologist. Sociology is the study of society and social groups through a scientific lens. Following scientific procedures, a sociologist will pose a question and conduct research through a variety of methods including surveys, interviews, focus groups, ethnography, content analysis, or secondary analysis of data that is publically available (e.g., Current Population Survey data). These scientific processes help to answer questions about human behavior in groups, social structures, and society as a whole. Sociologists often specialize in a certain area of study such as: family, culture, digital media, medicine and health, work and organizations, race and ethnicity, gender, social theory, mental illness, social movements, etc. But ultimately, they are always asking two important question about society and social groups—why? and how?

If you've ever thought about the social impact of human behavior, you might have unknowingly dipped your toes into the realm of sociology where we look at both the macro forces (such as the structure of societies and organizations) and micro forces (such

as an individual's social agency) that shape society and social groups. Ultimately, research in sociology helps to produce new and relevant theories that answer our social questions, which can aid those who create our social programs and policies by helping them make more informed choices.

### *What Careers Exist in Sociology?*

To better understand who practices sociology – or what sociologists commonly do – check out the ASA guide “21<sup>st</sup> Century Careers with an Undergraduate Degree in Sociology” (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) located in the department Research Room area (Old Library, room 102C).

Other sources, for example *Common Career Paths for Sociology Majors* (Lambert 2009), suggest that sociology undergraduate and graduate alumni find work and jobs in the following areas:

- Teaching at College or University
- Human Services
- Human Resources
- Public Employment (including legal careers and criminal justice)
- Social Research and Data Analysis

Finally in two sociology courses (Sociology of Work and Sociology of Organizations) department faculty, Drs. Zalewski and Ceballos, have been studying alumni who graduated with a sociology degree from WCU. The study is called The Sociology Majors Project. In first jobs post-graduation, 38 alumni moved into seven areas that include: human services, research, financial work, administration work, marketing, human resources, and miscellaneous jobs. These areas align with national data on the jobs and work of undergraduate sociology alumni.

Examples of jobs in four broad categories include: Human Services (e.g., social worker, drug and alcohol counselor, instructor/teacher), Research (e.g., in social science and medicine), Administration Work (e.g., manager, client relations work, project coordinator, contracts supervisor), and Miscellaneous (e.g., work in digital media, data management, insurance adjustor, peace corp.).

To answer social questions, to understand macro forces and micro forces, to develop new and relevant theories, and to help those who create programs and policies make more informed decisions, sociologists must ultimately be effective writers. This guide will help students navigate writing assignments in sociology courses as they practice the ways of thinking, reading, and writing like a sociologist.

## **OVERVIEW: WAYS OF READING AND WRITING IN SOCIOLOGY**

In this previous section of this guide we learned some of the ways that sociologists think: they pose social questions and look at macro forces and micro forces using a variety of research methods in order to suggest answers to the questions being posed. This way of thinking leads to particular ways of reading and writing in sociology that are important for students to understand as they study sociology.

### *Ways of Reading*

Sociology undergraduate students learn about sociology concepts, independent and dependent variables, and their relationships to each other. For example, sociologists commonly look at the intersection of race (concept or variable one), social class (concept or variable two), and gender (concept or variable three) in relation to something else; for example, like leadership in organizations or roles in families.

Key considerations when reading works in sociology are the ideas of correlation and nuance in writing. For example, a sociology article might show that people with higher

levels of education have stronger tendencies to fall in the upper social classes. Using the phrasing “stronger tendencies” reflects the idea of correlation and nuance, which is the established way of discussing relationships between two variables in sociology. What is important to note about the use of “stronger tendencies” in explaining the relationship between education and social class is that one social category (education, the independent variable or variable that represents the cause for something) does not unequivocally *cause* the outcome (social class, or dependent variable) in 100% or even a significant number of cases. In other words being educated does not cause an individual to fall into the upper social class. Scientifically, this causation is very difficult to prove because of the possibility of some other factor that may also explain an outcome (these unrecognized factors or causes are often referred to as spurious variables or relationships).

Good sociological readers are always looking for the nuance used to explain the relationship between two variables in a sociological explanation.

A good sociological reader should also pay close attention to the writer’s disposition to sources and facts. As explained in “Ways of Writing” below, sociologists often locate their arguments about the relationship between two or more variables within an existing conversation, and authors make clear how their work is contributing something new to that conversation. This doesn’t mean that we should take a writer’s citation of sources at face value. Attention to sources selected by an author is important and should be carefully scrutinized by students. For example, suppose we read a sociological study about education and social class that suggests that the affordability of college has made college education a gateway to the upper social class. A good sociological reader would not take this claim at face value, but might look more carefully at the sources the writer is using to make such claims. By doing this, we might learn that nearly all of the sources attributed to the statement about “the affordability of college” were from 1985 or earlier. By

carefully scrutinizing sources selected by an author, sociology students become better sociological readers.

### *Ways of Writing*

With some exceptions – e.g., very macro-level theoretical work – much of sociological writing offers descriptive information and details about populations, social groups, and macro- and micro-level patterns in everyday social life.

Like the social sciences generally, sociological research and its science develops in an evolving way. Facts and theories build upon themselves and each other and should be reflected in students' writing. In this way, from a scholarly perspective, ideas and theories are continually perceived to be moving forward and sociological knowledge is progressing with each new contribution. In other words, ideas and theories get better or more effective at explaining the actual social features under study. For example, during industrial times the assembly line nature of labor focused on controlling workers through technical control measures, such as machine technologies that produced greater worker efficiency, time on task, number of items produced, etc. Sociologists of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century studied these technological worker controls. Today as we've instituted more digital technologies workers are less likely to work on assembly lines, but we still see technological, bureaucratic, and cultural controls in the organization of work and the workplace. For example, rather than focusing on items produced companies may focus on employee commitment (as in the increased time workers spend on the job each day and week), employee advocacy for their employer within and outside of work, etc. Sociologists studying labor today would begin their studies by looking at what sociologists have studied in the past and build from observations of the past to understand what we see in the present. In this way sociology knowledge is building on prior knowledge and making

connections to new knowledge as society changes. Thus, scholars usually quote other scholarly sources to offer facts and evidence to support their own arguments.

Many students come to learn source use and citation as an expectation put on them by an instructor, and the student's use of citations become less about what the writer is trying to explain and more about demonstrating proper citation for points on the paper. The truth is that when we write a paper in sociology we need to locate what we are writing about within a conversation that is already happening. That is, we need to show readers where our own writings are located within already established ideas and theories in sociology, and then we need to offer those readers a work that builds on those ideas to move the sociological topic forward.

## WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT WRITING IN SOCIOLOGY?

### *Claims-making evidence structures*

Much sociological writing uses a writing approach one sociologist in the department (Dr. Zalewski) has called claims-making. Others might say the author is taking an argue-mode. Somewhere, hopefully plainly and in the introduction paragraphs that set the context for the large narrative, a sociologist makes a claim or argument. Recent scholarship especially embodies this approach: something is clearly stated in the introduction to the narrative. Students in the sociology major should learn to identify the major claim in materials they read for course discussion and assignments. Read for the BIG – meaning sociological – ideas.

Often there are clear indicators of a scholar's main idea. For example, sociologist Arlie Hochschild's famous book on service work entitled *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* (1982) explicitly identifies the argument she makes in the title narrative. From her use of the terms "managed, feelings, and

commercialization,” it could be surmised as: human feelings are being managed (or controlled) by employers as they are sold to customers in a service transaction.

Claims-making is important because it positions writers to make a provocative or important statement that has to be explored critically. Hochschild’s book on service work is a good example of the critical nature that commonly embodies sociological research and findings. By critical, sociologists aim to draw attention to and unpack the taken-for-granted nature of social life. Scholars in this tradition elaborate on the disproportionate power that organizations and the elite exercise over the everyday activities and livelihoods of large groups of people.

#### *Support claims with social facts*

After an introduction, authors typically support their claim or argument with theories, “social facts,” and their research findings. Social facts represent patterns in social behavior (e.g., like the proportion of US workers employed in service jobs). Statistics on collective human behavior represent social facts. For example, recently the Census Bureau reported that the fertility rate for the United States fell below replacement level fertility (2019); i.e., in other words currently the fertility rate is below 2.1 births per female between the ages of 15 and 44 (<https://www.cnn.com/2019/01/10/health/us-fertility-rate-replacement-cdc-study/index.html>). These facts might be used to support a claim about a declining labor workforce.

The report on fertility by the Census Bureau is another form of evidence structure used in sociology and the social sciences generally. The main purpose in this form of reporting is on scientifically researching and documenting current social phenomenon. In the Census Bureau example, declining fertility rates are continuously studied through reliable and valid scientific methods like representative sampling of the national and regional population. These rates are then documented in regular government reporting for the

purpose of public dissemination. Let's take a look at an example from the United States Census Bureau's 2015 report "An Aging World":

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Population aging, while due primarily to lower fertility, also reflects a human success story of increased longevity. Today, living to age 70 or age 80 is no longer a rarity in many parts of the world. However, increasing longevity has led to new challenges: How many years can older people expect to live in good health? What are the chronic diseases that they may have to deal with? How long can they live independently? How many of them are still working? Will they have sufficient economic resources to last their lifetimes? Can they afford health care costs? The world is facing these and many more questions as population aging continues.



Notice how a social fact about age supports the claim about increased longevity



In this example, the sociological implication of the claim-made is elaborated upon through a series of questions.

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## COMMON GENRES AND ASSIGNMENTS IN SOCIOLOGY: A ROADMAP OF TYPES OF SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

In this section, the primary writing assignments required by sociology students are discussed. The purpose and goals of each writing assignment are highlighted, as well as the arrangement and the common move that gets made in each of them. Discussion of each writing assignment also includes the steps students should take to develop each assignment. This is followed with an example of the genre.

### *Term Paper, or Literature Review Paper*

The term or literature review paper (term paper used in this section to refer to either) essentially is the same paper, and it is of some substantive length; e.g., from 5 to 25 pages double spaced with font size of 12. The primary purpose of a term paper is to summarize

the past research conversation on a social topic, issue, or research question. The goal is to give an overview of the approach and discussion points commonly made about the subject. Often, the most daunting part of completing a term paper assignment is narrowing a topic to something manageable. The other challenge is starting the process of writing the term paper.

For an arrangement, most scholarly term papers include:

- an introduction
- several categorical sections involving one or more layers of headings
- a conclusion

Each part of the arrangement in a term paper has a related goal or function. The introduction discusses the **purpose of the research paper, conveys the writer's interest** in it, and describes **why the issue is important**. To underscore its significance, the issue is typically contextualized in recent events and/or in an ongoing discussion thread among sociology scholars. The introduction usually concludes by **providing a roadmap** to the remaining sections in the term paper.

*Steps in writing a term paper.* Unless proscribed otherwise by a faculty instructor, generally, the student's sociological interest and question will guide their investigation into what has been researched and discussed in related scholarly literature. For example, to understand the effects of the war on drugs on courts and corrections, a student would begin searching in the JSTOR database and the WCU library stacks. They could start their search requesting results for sociology journals and books on this topic and related articles and book reviews.

From there, students should read abstracts and identify source material for the body of the paper. A common way to keep track of the dialogue and/or conceptual framing of the issue of interest is to develop annotations on material to include in the term paper. Annotations may be used for planning and brainstorming a literature review essay. In some courses, a professor may assign students to submit annotations in preparation for a future literature review essay. Whether required or not, annotations helps researchers and writers in sociology keep track of source material during the research process. An example of an annotation follows:

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Daniels, Arlene K. 1987. "Invisible Work." *Social Problems* 34(5): 403-415.

Daniels argues that our understandings and more importantly the moral significance attributed to work done in private (e.g., housework, family work, and child care) must change. Her argument stems from the sociological position that behavior is learned. Women practice these skills of developing interpersonal relations and family, whereby over time appear to be natural expressions that occur spontaneously. The work women do in the home has been largely undervalued. "Such activity is not seen as learned, skilled, required, but only the expression of the character or style of women in general." Consequently, because work done in the home is not validated on the same level as paid work, women also tend to undervalue it and in many cases do not recognize all the intricacies and time that is taken to complete these tasks (e.g., DeVault, 'feeding the family' includes not only planning and preparing meals but considering such things as personal preferences, varying menus, etc).

See here how good annotations often begin by naming the central argument of the source. Consider your verb choice carefully: is the author arguing? suggesting? rejecting?

Good annotations make clear the sociological insight, which is often relationships among variables that have been taken for granted. Ask yourself: What insight does this source reveal about the relationship among the variables being studied?

A good annotation identifies the sociological position, tradition, or theory upon which a source is built. In this case it is that "behavior is learned."

Annotations use quotation, but only when there is something important or revealing about the way an author explains an idea that is worth capturing. The majority is your voice summarizing what the work shows.

Daniels describes the work involved in developing 'interpersonal relations:"

1. attending carefully to how a setting affects others in it-- through taking the role of the other and feeling some of the same feelings;
2. focusing attention through ruminating about the past and planning for the future;
3. checking over the behavior of all respondents in an interaction;
4. creating a comfortable ambience through expressions of gaiety, warmth, sympathy, and cheerful, affectionate concern for or interest in another.

Daniels also reminds us of the work that is done to create family events. Women typically "plan, provision, and then produce these occasions," whereby the family gains status as *the* social institution attributed with the highest level of moral and social significance. By participating in families and their events, we gain feelings of solidarity and learn commitment to others.

} A good annotation typically ends by identifying a sociological fact or facts that the source concludes

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**Remember that the annotation style you see above is typically used in the planning of a literature review, but the final literature looks different than a list of annotations. *After* researching and reading and annotating source material, the student should then begin writing the body of their term paper in sections.**

**The body section of a term paper in sociology is determined after relevant reading of collected sources. There is not clear formula for arranging a sociology paper because the arrangement (as paragraphs or sections) of the essay is **categorical**, being determined by**

the research writer's finding. In a literature review on the effects of the war on drugs, for example, a researcher might find literature pertaining to effects on the 1) the courts and 2) the corrections and prison system in criminal justice. The sociology research writer might decide to then organize the essay into two sections (Courts and Corrections), and each section could include sub-layers of discussion on the effects of the war on drugs. In the organization of corrections sub-section, for instance, the student could write about the resulting prison overcrowding issue and the increased privatization of prisons in many states. Then, they could discuss the added costs of the war on drugs policy reform to states and compare the cost of operating the corrections of pre- and post- the war on drugs time and in differing ways (state versus private prison systems). Finally, the student could describe the rehabilitation resources commonly available at this time and – per the experts – their effectiveness at reducing rates of recidivism in the war on drugs era.

Generally there are one or two purposes in writing the conclusion paragraph/section of a literature review. **The first and primary purpose of the conclusion is to summarize the main ideas in the term paper.** A second, and optional, purpose in the term paper is to **describe the implications of the scholarly review.** For example, for the latter criminal justice example, the student would ascertain whether the war on drugs era was worth it in economic and social costs. Did the heavy emphasis on rooting out drug crime and criminals lead to a reduction in crime? Did it add financial costs to administering justice in American society? At what human cost?

Below is an example from Greil et al's (2010) literature review of research on the experience of infertility published in the academic journal *Sociology of Health & Illness*. You can [read the full article here](#).

The authors of this study reviewed literature pertaining to research on individuals' experiences with infertility from 2000–2010. As the review of that research developed,

authors discovered that categories emerged in the type of research they were finding. The final body of the article became organized by these categories of research with a distinct section devoted to each of the categories of research literature. Those categories, and thus the body of the essay became:

- Descriptive literature on the experience of infertility
- Research focusing on the sociocultural context of infertility
- Research on two worlds of infertility (developed countries and non-developed)
- Research on the psychology of infertility
- Research on infertility treatment experiences

These body sections of the essay review relevant research on these subtopics of infertility experiences so that other sociologists can learn about these vast bodies of research already conducted in these domains. Within each body section of the essay, the authors summarize the respective literature. Here’s an example of the first body section of Greil et al. (2010):

Long literature reviews typically group literature being reviewed into categories that become titled as sub-sections.

When a claim can be supported by many sources, a literature review may list those sources (chronologically) in a single parenthesis to show readers what sources validate the claim being made.

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**Descriptive literature on the experience of infertility**  
 Recent contributions to the descriptive literature on infertile women (for example, Becker 2000, Clarke et al. 2006, Earle and Letherby 2007, Johansson and Berg 2005, Redshaw et al. 2007) tend to confirm and elaborate upon previous characterisations of infertile individuals. Several characterisations of infertile women or couples have emerged from qualitative research. For example, Williams (1997) extracted 11 themes from interviews with infertile women: negative identity; a sense of worthlessness and inadequacy; a feeling of lack of personal control; anger and resentment; grief and depression; anxiety and stress; lower life satisfaction; envy of other

Like body paragraphs in any essay, the first sentence in a body paragraph (topic sentence) tends to be a claim that connects two subjects or objects with a verb. In literature reviews, the topic sentence is often making a claim about what is found in a particular body of scholarly literature. Here we see the authors connecting “descriptive literature” to “previous characterisations” of infertile individuals” with the verb phrase “tend to confirm and elaborate”

mothers; loss of the dream of co-creating; the ‘emotional roller coaster’; and a sense of isolation. Ulrich and Weatherall (2000) suggest that women experience infertility as an unanticipated life-course disruption. Martin-Matthews and Matthews (2001) focus on the sense among infertile women that time is slipping away and explore the interaction between familial and societal timetables, body timetables and treatment timetables (see also Earle and Letherby 2007). Parry and Shiness (2004) report that leisure satisfaction is impaired by the process of seeking treatment and by feelings of social isolation. Evidence suggests, however, that the characterisation of infertile woman as totally immersed in the process of trying to become pregnant describes only treatment seekers (Greil and McQuillan 2004 and forthcoming, Jacob et al. 2007, White et al. 2006).

A great literature review doesn't just list a series of sources in parenthesis if those sources validate a claim. A great literature review also provides summary and depth of explanation about individual sources. In this case, readers learn about the findings of Williams (1997). In the sentences that proceed, readers also learn about Ulrich and Weatherall (2000), Martin-Matthews and Matthews (2001), and Parry and Shiness (2004) respectively.

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### *Empirical Research Proposals and Research Papers*

Students in the major and minor are often interested or required to develop their own empirical research on a sociological issue or question (e.g., in SOC 322). For example, students in SOC 492 (Senior Seminar) may choose to conduct an empirical research project and write about their research findings in a course paper.

In the Senior Seminar course and in others (e.g., SOC 250), students will be requested to write a short research proposal prior to conducting either a literature review/term paper or a paper on their own empirical research. Proposals are important ways to encapsulate a research idea before conducting the actual research. Research proposals (either type) typically address several things:

- In an introduction, they describe the social problem. This includes a brief discussion of what has been done and what is known about the social problem, as

well as identifying what is not properly understood (a gap in knowledge) and why understanding this is important to resolve the issue. How will it benefit our understanding about specific populations and issues they face?

- Next, a proposal will describe the proposed project and include discussion of the research design, the methods that will be used, a timeline for the research, and (optional) what resources will be necessary to complete the project.
- Finally in concluding remarks to a research proposal, the student will offer a justification for the research project, underscoring that this research represents an effective and beneficial way of adding to scholarly knowledge about the social problem. Or, as in the case of proposing a study reviewing scholarly literature on a topic, the student will describe how this project will benefit them personally.

In the example research proposal below, a student suggests that knowing more about the effects of the war on drugs on the courts and corrections units in the criminal justice system will better position them for a professional career in a related area.

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### The Tough on Crime Era's Effects on The Criminal Justice System

Throughout my academic career at West Chester University I have grown to see a strong relationship between the fields of Criminal Justice and Sociology. Being the two subjects that I am passionate about, I have noticed how important it is to implement the sociological perspective when thinking about a trend in the Criminal Justice field. Sociology gives me a framework that I can refer to in order to better understand how recidivism rates change over time, why some people are more likely to be pulled over than others based on demographic differences, or even why we see unexplainably long sentences for drug offenses instead of some violent crimes.

Note that the use of first-person POV is perfectly acceptable in a research proposal.

Here, the author makes the case for a sociological perspective on the proposed subject of study, "criminal justice." A good research proposal makes a case that a sociological perspective is needed in an area of concern.

Note that the author gets more specific about the concepts and ideas on which a sociological perspective is valuable. In this case within the topic of criminal justice we see an emphasis on concepts like "recidivism," "demographic differences" in police pull-overs, and "unexplainably long sentences for drug offenses instead of some violent crimes." A good research proposal gets specific about concepts of concern to be explored through sociological research.

Sociology's ability to help me make sense of phenomenon such as these has inspired me to utilize my time in this class to take a broad sociological look into the three main aspects of the Criminal Justice System in the United States.

Once the research idea has been introduced, a research proposal begins to detail a specific plan for conducting the research.

The Criminal Justice system is broken down into three parts, law enforcement, the courts, and corrections. I would like to apply the sociological perspective to all three parts of the Criminal Justice system throughout my research. All three parts of the Justice System are constantly evolving; however, they very recently experienced a big overhaul during the tough on crime era. During my research, I will analyze how the tough on crime era impacted each area of the Criminal Justice System using the sociological perspective.

In terms of policing, I would love to apply the sociological perspective to the stop and frisk policy that was a result of the tough on crime era. I could take this opportunity to look at how this policy fueled racial biases that were already present in the Criminal Justice System and how this could leave a lasting impact on specific communities. In terms of the courts, I know that sentencing has been an area of concern for many years. I could use this study to see how new policies, such as the three strikes rule in California, impacted the length of a sentence for specific crimes. I would want to study any correlation between this new sentencing policy and people based on demographic identifiers. Finally, I could apply the sociological perspective to rates of recidivism following the tough on crime era. Recidivism is a prominent issue in the Criminal Justice System, and I would use this research opportunity to study how trends in recidivism were affected in the years following the tough on crime era. Did the massive amounts of incarceration affect the

A good research proposal also poses a research question that can be addressed through the proposed sociological research.

systems' ability to rehabilitate members of society that it deemed "criminal"?

Since my project will be a content analysis my plan for research is simple. I would like to have an annotated bibliography of all my main sources together by April. I would like to have at least three to five different references for each area of the system that I am studying. I will compare these sources and develop what I think is an

Note that the author identifies the methodology being utilized in the proposed research, "content analysis" or a literature review. An explanation follows for how that methodological plan will unfold.

Note that the use of first-person POV is perfectly acceptable in a research proposal. Here, the research overviews hypotheses or expectations for the research. These are important to reveal because they help researchers stay tuned to any biases or expectations, and they also provide a reference to revisit after the research has been completed.

accurate interpretation of my findings. I will use my group member to hold me accountable for my annotated bibliography.

During this project I expect to find that the tough on crime era targeted low class and black Americans. I expect to find out that this era fueled the already large misrepresentation of race that existed in prisons. I also expect to see that the high incarceration rates make it harder for the corrections area of the Criminal Justice system to succeed. This in turn makes it harder for the people who are deemed criminal to achieve success after incarceration. I am of course going to follow proper research practices and if I don't see the results that I expect I will be excited to report that accurately.

This subject is very important to me because I plan on working in the Justice System someday whether it be in the judicial, legislative, or executive branch. I know that the tough on crime era shaped the Justice System into what it is today. I think that studying this specific time period will give me a better understanding of how the policies that exist today affect people for better or for worse. I do not want to blindly follow the system the way it is and it important to me that I understand why the system is currently the way it is and how it needs to change in the future.

Here the proposer concludes by making a case for why the research would be effective and beneficial to society and the researcher.

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A research paper is developed as the product of the proposed research once it has been conducted. This guide includes two research papers for review in Appendices A & B.

Research papers typically use the following arrangement:

- an introduction,
- a discussion of the literature related to the research issue/question,
- a section on the means of empirical investigation and the manner in which it was carried out among a particular population (e.g., participant observation, a survey and descriptors of the method, sample, and data to be collected),
- the results and discussion section, and
- a conclusion.

Take some time to explore Craig Lepre's (2018) research on "The Changing Demographics in Professional Baseball" (Appendix A) and Camille Norris' (2018) research "Will you accept this reality show?' Perceptions about the "Reality" in Reality Television Dating and Marriage Shows" (Appendix B).

### *Response or Reflection Paper and Journaling*

Sociology faculty often require that students write shorter papers such as response or reflection papers and journals for their courses (e.g., SOC 100, 346, and 371). Responses and reflections help students model the kind of thinking that sociologists inhabit when they read texts, analyze situations, and think about sociological problems. In response or reflection papers, students may be asked to discuss what they found most interesting about a reading or exercise in a course and why it was interesting. Or they may be asked to describe the points in the reading they agreed or disagreed with and why they felt this way. Response papers and journals may ask students to apply concepts from lectures, readings, or films to social facts and patterns they have observed or experienced personally. Or they may be asked to apply concepts, common social practices, and outcomes to their personal lives. No matter whether a response or reflection is looking at

a reading, lecture, film, or situation, a good reflection or response makes some of the following moves:

- quickly summarizes the context of the reading, lecture concept, film, situation
- points readers to details (quotes from the reading, ideas in the lecture, moments in the film, specific observations from the situation)
- reflects on the relationship between the observed details and a broader sociological conclusion (what the readings reveal, the value of a lecture concept, what the film reveals to viewers, what an observed situation reveals about society or the situation)

Below is an example of a journal submitted by a student to satisfy an assignment to conduct **participant observation** in a social setting, develop a sociological research question, and describe what they observed and why they formulated a question.

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### Journal Two

For this assignment, I chose to go to the Recreation Center and observe people exercising. I noticed that there was an obvious separation of gender, which led my sociological question to be, “What are the social consequences of defining exercise in terms of gender?”. The gym is set up so that the second floor is filled with cardio machines, and the third floor is filled with weights and lifting machines. Something else I noticed was that the second floor was mostly all women, while the third floor was mostly all men. This is because society believes that women should have a skinny body and men should have a buff body. These labels should not be enforced because, personally, I always feel out of place and embarrassed when I use lifting machines. I also noticed women and men’s expressions

Here the writer identifies the context and scene for the reflection: an observation of the “Recreation Center” and how people act while exercising there. This leads the author to pose a question, though not all reflections pose questions.

Here, the reflection points to details. In this case, details are about what’s being observed in the recreation center, such as where machines are located and gender differences among locations. In a textual reflection or film reflection, details might be quotations or observations of the film.

while they were working out, which interested and intrigued me. The men looked confident and secure when they were lifting, but the women seemed to be always looking around the room to see if anyone was staring at them. I also believe that men are very careful about not “looking bad” in a gym and are scared to ask for help because they could be seen as inferior. This is a big problem in our culture because no gender should be assigned labels that they feel they need to conform to. It was clear in this situation that the preconceived standards about gender in the gym are extremely relevant.

After relevant observations are detailed, the observer begins to reflect on sociological implications. In this case it is the idea that gender conformity pressures are apparent in this public space.

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## RESEARCH, METHODS, AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN SOCIOLOGY

Students, professors, and professional sociologists all utilize research methods in the course of engaging with the field of sociology. It is important to understand some of the major approaches to sociology research (methods) and the ethical considerations to be kept in mind when engaging in this research.

### *Quantitative Research Methods*

Quantitative research methods have to do with precise measurement with numbers and statistics. In the recent past, quantitative research has been denoted with the term “big data” because of the breadth of data and analysis. So much data is available today on human behavior precisely because we are aiding and abetting the processes of providing data. We constantly tune in to digital platforms that have the capacity to keep permanent records of how we interface with it.

Common quantitative research methodologies include surveys. Through their typically fixed response systems, surveys enable the scientific processes of measuring and analyzing data for patterns most times through statistical program applications like SPSS. Quantitative methods also include secondary analysis, which is commonly conducted with survey data. For example, the US Census government agency arranges to do Current Population Surveys (CPS) monthly of 60,000 households for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (another federal government agency) on standard questions like: employment, hours worked, and earnings. On occasion, the CPS is designed to investigate a particular work pattern or issue. For example, in May 2004, the CPS examined “work schedules and working at home.” This data is then available for social scientists in various job capacities to utilize this data for their own research analysis and purposes.

### *Qualitative Research Methods*

Qualitative research methods emphasize the processes of describing and interpreting social behavior, attitudes, and structures to produce data that can then be scientifically analyzed for social patterns. Some of the classic books in sociology from researchers affiliated with the Chicago School (a prominent institution, philosophical approach, and reference in the sociology discipline) have developed significant ideas about the structural influences on our social behavior. Sociological qualitative research methods include: participant observation, interviews, historical, and content analysis (of a myriad of human artifacts). Qualitative methods, because of their depth of perspective, have themselves been described as producing “thick data.”

### *Human Subjects Research and the University Institutional Review Board (IRB)*

Undergraduate students in sociology are encouraged to conduct their own research and to inquire about supporting faculty research in the program!

Students interested in conducting research on human subjects should complete the social/behavioral modules to obtain certification from CITI program (@citiprogram.org). WCU pays a subscription so that certification is accessible to all students in the major and minor.

Also, if you want to discuss your research in a public forum (e.g., give a research poster at a sociology conference or a college event), you should complete an application from the WCU Institutional Review Board (IRB) to get approval to do so. A faculty sponsor can help you with this. Approval from the IRB usually takes 2-4 weeks after submitting your research application materials.

*Which research method suits me and my interest?*

One type of research method (qualitative or quantitative) is usually preferred by scholars and students over the other. Generally personal preferences guide the research tools chosen for sociological inquiry. For example, persons experienced in developing survey tools in software like Qualtrics, posting on social media sites like Twitter, and extracting and analyzing the data they collect with statistical applications like SPSS often prefer quantitative research methods. This compares to other persons with experience locating and speaking directly with people in particular social classes, age groups, or professions and analyzing their responses to open-ended questioning. These persons demonstrate a preference for qualitative research methods.

## **COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID FOR WRITING IN SOCIOLOGY**

*Articulating the Sociological Perspective Clearly*

Students have a tendency to write “society says/dictates/mandates...” when society cannot do this. Instead, think in terms of sociological categories and symbols such as: culture, social norms, and roles.

### *Grammar and Punctuation*

Writing in sociology should be formal, meaning unless specified by your instructor to do so, you should not be using “text speak.” Instead, you should try to follow the common sentence structure in English, meaning you should have a noun, verb, and object.

Commas and periods should be inside quotation marks. One space follows a period of semi-colon.

When citing a passage of text from another source, if it’s longer than three sentences, it should be separated from its reference paragraph and indented five spaces throughout the passage.

Ensure that you use the version of a word appropriate for the context of your narrative. For example, students confuse “they’re” for “their” and “there;” “it’s” and “its;” and “you’re” and “your.”

Edit, edit, and edit!! Edit for mistakes in grammar and punctuation. And also edit to make your narrative clear to readers. This usually means removing unneeded text to make your claim or argument. An important sociologist named Howard Becker wrote a book in 1986 entitled *Writing for Social Scientists*, where he argues to edit for brevity to make your scientific or public statements evident.

### **ASA CITATION STYLE**

The American Sociological Association (ASA) publishes a style guide. There is a copy of the latest edition of the ASA style guide in the department Research Room (102C).

The ASA style guide uses the Chicago Manual of Style as its primary reference. The Chicago Manual of Style can be found at: <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home>).

Some rules of thumb when writing in sociology include the following.

- Use an active voice whenever possible.
- Use the past tense of verbs when describing past research in a literature review paper. Use past tense to discuss research methods in an empirical paper. Use either past or present tense to discuss results of an empirical project.

Following are an example reference of a journal article, a chapter in an edited volume of a book, and an article from an e-resource.

*Journal Article*

Gans, Herbert J. 2005. "Race as Class." *Contexts* 4(4):17-21.

*Chapter in Book*

Riley, Matilda White. 1985. "Women, Men, and the Lengthening Life Course." Pp. 333-47 in *Gender and the Life Course*, edited by A. S. Rossi. New York: Aldine.

*Article from E-Resources*

Shafer, Daniel W. and Fred L. Ramsey. 2003. "Teaching the Craft of Data Analysis." *Journal of Statistics Education* 11(1). Retrieved December 12, 2006 (<http://www.amstat.org/publications/jse/v11n1/schafer.html>).

## LIBRARY OR OPEN ACCESS RESOURCES FOR SOCIOLOGY STUDENTS

One important resource for undergraduate sociological students is the [American Sociological Society \(ASA\) @ asanet.org](http://asanet.org). Check out the current "sections" (menu item) on the ASA webpage for information about important scholars in particular areas of expertise and their recent scholarship.

There are other important resources for sociology undergraduate students. The following is a short list of them. Please consult with your professors in courses for others that relate to particular curricular content.

- [Society for the Study of Social Problems](#)
- [Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction](#)
- [Census Bureau](#)
- [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

Check with our librarian, **Kerry Walton**, for resources there. Check for sociological resources [in the JSTOR database](#). Undergraduate sociology students are strongly encouraged to use discretion when they research and review news and scholarly source material. They should practice and strengthen their information literacy skills.

## Appendix A: Senior Thesis Paper

Craig Lepre

Thesis Paper

Dr. Jackie Zalewski

10 December, 2018

### The Changing Demographics in Professional Baseball

Commonly known as America's past time, baseball has been around in the United States dating back to the Civil War era. According to PBS, the first recorded game of baseball was played in 1846, while the first professional game was not played until 1869. In the early days of baseball, the sport was reserved for white males exclusively, with African Americans, and other minorities, not being permitted to play the sport at the professional level. Segregation and racism were huge problems through the early 1900's in our country, where minorities were treated as second class citizens and were not given the same chances, or rights, as whites.

As our country began to become more accepting of minorities, we will be able to see how baseball followed right in step. As we started to become less segregated as a country, baseball saw a big rise in African American, and a slight raise in other minority groups, players throughout the years. Going from a game reserved for whites, both African American and Spanish players began filling roster spots on Major League teams. At first, we will see a bigger rise in African American players, while Spanish players did not seem to grow at quite at the same rate. However, in recent years, we have seen a steep decline in African American players in Major League baseball while Spanish players are taking the sport by storm. What has caused this phenomenon in baseball? For Spanish players, we will look at our population and the fact that there are just more young Spanish males in our population right now, as well as the fact that Major League teams can sign them at a younger age, and for cheaper than African or White

Americans. On the other side, we will look at how deindustrialization, suburbanization, and mass incarceration, as well as the sociological theories of stacking and structuration have led to a decline in African Americans playing in Major League Baseball.

Even though African Americans, and other minorities, were banned for Major League Baseball in the early days of the sport, they have been playing our nations past time for just as long as white men. In the early days of baseball, African Americans had their own league, the Negro League. The Negro League gave minority players the opportunity to play on teams and play against each other. While they had no ties to Major League Baseball, it gave minority players a chance to play professionally. It was not until 1947 that a man crossed the color barrier in Major League Baseball.

In 1947, Jackie Robinson became the first African American player to play in a Major League Baseball game. Robinson was signed by Branch Rickey, who despised the color line and was responsible for signing multiple African American players, and played for the Brooklyn Dodgers (Goldman). While this was a huge step for minorities in the sport of baseball, it was far from the end of the struggles that they would face. Robinson was, for the most part, hated by fans, opposing teams, and even teammates. Robinson would start in Montreal, the top minor league team below the Brooklyn Dodgers. Before signing, Robinson stated that "I just wanted to be treated fairly," he added. 'You will not be treated fairly!' Rickey snapped (Kashatus). Branch Rickey warned Robinson before he started that he would see this hatred, and advised him that he was not to reach to any of the noise. Rickey even tried to prepare Robinson for some of the hatred that he would endure. "Rickey interrogated the star shortstop. With great dramatic flair, he role-played every conceivable scenario that would confront the first player to break baseball's color barrier: first he was a bigoted sportswriter who only wrote lies about Robinson's performance;

next he was a Southern hotel manager refusing room and board; then, a racist major leaguer looking for a fight; and after that a waiter throwing Robinson out of a 'for whites only' diner. In every scenario, Rickey cursed Robinson and threatened him, verbally degrading him in every way imaginable (Kashatus). If Robinson were to react to any of this throughout the year, in any way, it would surely set back the integration of baseball. "As the season unfolded, Dodger support for Robinson strengthened in response to the admirable way he handled all the adversity. Opposing pitchers threw at his head and ribs, while infielders would spit in his face if he was involved in a close play on the base paths. And the hate mail was unending" (Kashatus). Through all the racism, hate, and even death threats to him and his family, Robinson was able to stay strong through the long season.

While Robinson's successful first season in the Major League's did not lead to a high number of black players being signed initially, it opened the door for years to come. In the same year as Robinson, 1947, two other African American players signed Major League contracts, Larry Doby with the Cleveland Indians and Hank Thompson with the St. Louis Browns. Unfortunately for African American players, it still took the other teams to get on board. It wasn't until twelve years later in 1959 that the Boston Red Sox, the last team to sign an African American player, signed their first. With the integration of African Americans into the Major Leagues, the Negro League began to fade in these same years. Although the Negro League faded through the 1950's, it served its purpose of giving minority players a professional league of their own to play in when the Major Leagues would not have them (Goldman).

Over the years since the end of the Negro League and the desegregation of baseball, we can see the breakdown by year of Whites, African Americans, and Latinos by player in the

professional leagues of baseball. If we take a look below at figure 1, we can see how the percentages of each group changes over the years (Armour & Levitt).

<b>Year</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>African Americans</b>	<b>Latino</b>
1947	98.3%	0.9%	0.7%
1948	98.5%	0.7%	0.7%
1949	96.6%	1.5%	1.9%
1950	95.3%	1.7%	3.0%
1951	94.3%	2.9%	2.8%
1952	94.4%	2.9%	2.7%
1953	93.3%	3.7%	3.0%
1954	90.7%	5.6%	3.7%
1955	89.8%	5.2%	5.0%
1956	88.2%	6.7%	5.1%
1957	88.1%	6.7%	5.2%
1958	86.7%	7.4%	5.9%
1959	84.8%	8.8%	6.5%
1960	82.3%	8.9%	8.9%
1961	82.6%	9.7%	7.7%
1962	81.9%	10.1%	8.0%
1963	80.1%	11.7%	8.2%
1964	79.3%	11.7%	8.9%
1965	78.3%	12.7%	8.8%
1966	76.9%	13.4%	9.7%
1967	75.6%	13.6%	10.7%
1968	73.8%	15.4%	10.8%
1969	74.4%	14.5%	11.1%
1970	73.7%	14.6%	11.7%
1971	73.9%	15.5%	10.6%
1972	72.9%	16.1%	10.9%
1973	71.6%	17.4%	11.0%
1974	71.1%	17.4%	11.5%
1975	71.3%	18.5%	10.2%
1976	70.5%	18.0%	11.5%
1977	70.7%	17.9%	11.4%
1978	71.3%	17.4%	11.3%
1979	71.4%	17.9%	10.7%
1980	71.1%	17.4%	11.6%
1981	70.1%	18.7%	11.1%
1982	70.4%	17.9%	11.7%
1983	70.3%	18.0%	11.6%
1984	69.6%	18.4%	12.0%
1985	70.3%	18.3%	11.3%
1986	70.0%	18.3%	11.8%

<b>Year</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>African Americans</b>	<b>Latino</b>
1987	69.9%	17.7%	12.3%
1988	68.2%	17.3%	14.5%
1989	70.3%	16.5%	13.2%
1990	68.6%	16.6%	14.8%
1991	66.8%	17.0%	16.1%
1992	67.7%	16.7%	15.6%
1993	66.3%	16.8%	16.9%
1994	65.0%	17.2%	17.8%
1995	64.5%	16.1%	19.2%
1996	63.2%	16.0%	20.4%
1997	60.9%	15.0%	23.5%
1998	62.0%	14.3%	22.8%
1999	61.7%	13.6%	23.5%
2000	61.2%	12.8%	24.7%
2001	60.7%	12.1%	26.0%
2002	60.8%	10.8%	26.5%
2003	61.0%	10.4%	26.8%
2004	60.3%	10.1%	27.7%
2005	60.9%	9.1%	27.8%
2006	61.3%	9.0%	27.9%
2007	63.1%	8.5%	26.1%
2008	62.1%	8.2%	27.3%
2009	62.2%	7.1%	28.5%
2010	63.0%	7.8%	27.2%
2011	63.5%	7.9%	26.9%
2012	63.9%	7.2%	26.9%
2013	63.6%	6.7%	27.7%
2014	63.7%	6.7%	27.7%
2015	63.4%	7.2%	27.7%
2016	63.7%	6.7%	27.4%

If we examine the African American column of figure 1, we will first notice that from the time Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in baseball, 1947, there was a steady increase of African American players through the 1960's and into the 1970's. Through the late 70's into the mid 1980's, however, African American numbers seem to plateau around eighteen percent. Once we get into the late 80's the numbers of African American players in Major League Baseball reverse and begin dropping. From the late 1980's to the present, African American numbers in baseball

have dropped significantly, reaching a low of a little under seven percent as of 2016. To put this into perspective, the last time African Americans were this poorly represented in professional baseball was all the way back in 1957.

Now, let us slide over one column and look at how Spanish players have been represented throughout the years in professional baseball. Much like African American players, there were very few Spanish players in Major League Baseball in the early days of the sport. Once baseball began allowing minority players to reach the professional ranks, Spanish players, like African American players, saw a slight increase year by year starting in 1947. Spanish players seemed to plateau a few years before African American players though, reaching around eleven percent in 1967 and staying right around the same number into the mid 1980's. From there, the percentage of Spanish players in professional baseball began to increase gradually again, growing slightly each year. Then, from the early to mid 1990's, we see a big jump in Spanish players. By 1996, Spanish players hit twenty percent making up roughly one fifth of professional players. Spanish players have continued to grow rapidly in the past twenty years, and as of 2016 make up nearly one third of all players at just under thirty percent.

What I wanted to look at were the reasons behind the big drop off in the representation of African Americans in professional baseball, while the number of Spanish players skyrocketed. Was there a common theme that was responsible for both sides of the demographic shift in baseball, or were they completely unrelated? I began by looking at the sport in its earliest stages, little league and other youth programs. I wanted to know if there was a certain point where African American players stayed away from the sport, or are they never even getting started? We will be taking a closer look into the reason why African American participation has

drastically declined in the sport of baseball, and the reasons behind why Spanish players representation in professional baseball is at an all time high right now.

The first socio-economic issue we will look at is the deindustrialization of America. Beginning in the 1970's, American business owners began outsourcing their manufacturing process overseas into other countries. By doing this, companies were able to save lots of money on the manufacturing process. While this is great for the heads of companies, and the people making the big money, this meant millions of people were getting laid off, and found themselves out of work. According to David Canton, "from 1979 to 2017, the United States lost 7.2 million factory jobs." The biggest hit was in northern cities, which were heavily populated with African Americans. "The U.S. lost 9 percent of its manufacturing jobs between 1967 and 2001, but in the industrial heartland-the Northeast and the Midwest-the loss reached more than 40 percent" (Doyle). These manufacturing jobs provided good wages and benefits for many African American men in the cities, and then they just disappeared and they found themselves out of work.

During this period in our countries history, we did not have the laws in place now for equal employment opportunity. Because of this, "black men were the last to get hired in higher-paying factory jobs," which forced them to take service jobs (Canton). These jobs were much lower paying than the manufacturing jobs, so now many African American men were working longer hours during the day, but bringing home less money. With the decrease in the pay they were receiving, obviously they had to try to save money in other areas, and let's face it, baseball is not a cheap sport. There are fees to play in leagues, and lots of equipment is needed: bats, balls, cleats, gloves, helmets and other protective equipment to name a few. There are other options for sports, take basketball, that are much cheaper and all you really need is the shoes on

your feet and one ball. Not to mention, you can go to any park with a basketball net, and find people to play a pick-up or non-organized game with. On top of making less money, African Americans were working much longer hours at work, and could find themselves working through the night. This gave them much less time to volunteer for little league, which meant the little league fees would go up because they had to find coaches (Canton). With parents working longer hours with lower wages, this meant that many children missed out on the opportunity to play in organized sports, and they were never even introduced to the sport of baseball.

The next socio-economic phenomenon we will examine is the suburbanization that took place in the United States. "Rapid suburbanization between 1950 and 1970 radically changed the spatial structure of U.S. cities, transforming them from concentrated, highly centralized agglomerations into scattered, decentralized metropolitan areas" (Massey & Denton 592). Throughout the middle to late 1900's, many families began to leave the crowded cities, and buy homes in the suburbs. However, not everyone was fortunate enough to be able to leave the city and buy houses in the suburbs. "As middle-class whites abandoned central cities for suburbs, blacks arrived in large parts to take their places. Largely because of rural-urban migration from South to North, the percentage of blacks living in central cities rose from 42% in 1950 to 58% in 1970" (Massey & Denton 592). Part of the problem, according to Canton, was that "the federal government established redlining that prohibited blacks from obtaining home loans." After the 1970's, African Americans had more luck moving to suburbs as the percentage of African Americans living in suburbs rose from sixteen to twenty one percent between 1970 and 1980, according to Massey and Denton. Although African Americans were moving more into the suburbs, it was not the same areas that many middle-class white families moved to.

Even with black moving more into the suburbs, we did not see much of a change in racial segregation moving through the 1970's. As Massey and Denton stated, "once a suburb acquires a visible black presence, it tends to attract more blacks than whites, which leads to neighborhood succession and the emergence of a black enclave. Suburban succession and segregation are generated through a variety of individual and institutional mechanisms, including redlining, restrictive zoning, organized resistance to black entrance, and racial steering" (593). Middle-class white Americans who had left the cities for the suburbs wanted to keep African Americans out of where they were living. Unfortunately, many African Americans are associated with living in lower income areas, with higher crime rates, and white Americans did not want any of that coming into their suburbs. "Suburbs that attract black residents tend to be older areas with relatively low socioeconomic statuses and high population densities. Black suburban neighborhoods are typically adjacent to or near the central city and relatively unattractive to white renters and homebuyers. Often they are older, manufacturing suburbs characterized by weak tax bases, poor municipal services, and higher degrees of debt" (Massey and Denton 593). As noted by Massey and Denton, in a less extreme fashion, "black suburbs replicate conditions of inner cities" (593). Although African Americans were in part moving out of the cities and into suburbs, the conditions they were living in very much resembled the inner cities, so not much really changed.

When we look at how suburbanization affected Spanish Americans, we see some key differences especially in terms of segregation. As Massey and Denton state, Hispanics became more concentrated within central cities between 1950 and 1970. "The increasing concentration of Hispanics was reinforced by immigration from abroad, with migration chains producing Hispanic enclaves in many inner cities, such as those in Los Angeles, Chicago, and Miami. In

spite of their concentration, however, Hispanics are significantly more suburbanized and less segregated than blacks. According to the 1980 census, 44% of metropolitan Hispanics, as compared with only 29% of metropolitan blacks, live in suburbs, and data from 1970 indicate that Hispanic segregation is quite low" (Massey and Denton 593).

So what does this mean in terms of baseball? For middle-class white families that moved to the suburbs, they had lots of room and the economic stability to set up little league organizations. They had the money to renovate fields and buy the proper equipment needed to play baseball. In the lower income areas heavily populated by African Americans, they did not have to space, nor the money, to set up little league organizations and keep them running. Many African American kids were missing out on the opportunity to ever even play baseball because they did not have the resources to get involved in the sport.

The next factor we can look at for the decline of African American involvement in baseball is mass incarceration. Part of this problem is linked with the phenomenon of suburbanization. There have been studies done that have found a "persistent positive relationship between the degree of suburbanization in a metropolitan area and rates of serious crime in the center city. That is, when the proportion of metropolitan area residents who live in the suburbs is high, so too are the rates of serious crime in the center city of that metropolitan area" (Ousey & Shihadeh). Who was left in the center cities of these metropolitan areas when we look at suburbanization? We saw many white middle-class families leaving the city areas for the suburbs, leaving the center city areas heavily populated by African Americans. While discussing the relationship between suburbanization and crime in the center city, Ousey and Shihadeh point to two critical factors of urban life. "First, according to the human ecology model, suburbanization is a complex ecological process that represents more than the mere

movement of individuals from the city to the suburban fringe. On the contrary, left in its wake an isolated population of minorities, blacks in particular, anchored to center-city areas with bleak economic prospects and a shrinking low-skill job base. Second, although previous research on suburbanization and center-city crime did not use racially disaggregated data, it is widely acknowledged that serious crime and other indicators of social malaise are disproportionately concentrated in black communities within center cities" (650). Ousey and Shihadeh note that while African Americans only made up about twelve percent of the population in 1990, they were responsible for more than half of all robbery and homicide arrests. In their findings, Ousey and Shihadeh argue that "(1) suburbanization is one element in a broader redistribution of people and industry that works to the social and economic disadvantage of center-city blacks, and (2) that serious crime in urban areas is overwhelmingly concentrated in black center-city communities" (651).

During the 1980's and 90's, America was going through a war on drugs, which resulted in many people being arrested for nonviolent crimes. Many African Americans felt the harsh effects of this, and as a result many were locked up and viewed as criminals. According to Deborah Small, "United States drug laws, while superficially neutral, are enforced in a manner that is massively and persuasively biased." African American men are way more likely to end up in prison at some point in their lifetime than Whites. "Blacks constitute 13 percent of all drug users, but 35 percent of those arrested for drug possession, 55 percent of those convicted, and 74 percent of those sent to prison. In at least 15 states, black men are sent to prison for drug offenses at rates that are 20 to 57 times greater than for White men. The disproportionate arrests- and media coverage-feed the mistaken assumption that Blacks use drugs at higher rates Whites and serve as justification for continued racial profiling" (897). Small points out that the war on

drug did not just affect men, but also women as she states "between 1986 and 1991, the number of Black women incarcerated for drug offenses jumped 826 percent" (899). In Small's discussion, she looks at the numbers of African Americans incarcerated for drug use, especially cocaine, and the numbers are astounding. Small states that "in 1994, 90 percent of those convicted of federal crack cocaine offenses were Black, 6 percent Latino, and less than 4 percent White" (899). African Americans were being arrested and sent to prison at alarmingly higher rates than any other race.

So, how does looking at the mass incarceration of African Americans, and the war on drugs, help explain the decline of African American participation in baseball? As stated by Small, "because of the 'war on drugs,' tens of thousands of children are permanently separated from the love and guidance of parents who have been incarcerated for drug offenses" (899). Many African American children were growing up without the presence of their fathers because they had been arrested for nonviolent drug use. As a result, they were never even introduced to the sport, or had the chance to ever play it. African Americans were viewed as drug addicts and criminals, which made it even harder for them to find work, so now they had even fewer resources for leisure activities such as baseball. Not to mention, an entire generation of African Americans who grew up playing baseball were now locked up behind bars and unable to play anymore. The mass incarceration and war on drugs ultimately led to two generations of African Americans missing in participation from baseball.

In baseball, and other sports, African American players have been subject to a theory of stacking, or centralization. This theory focuses on African American players being placed in non central positions. Smith and Leonard define stacking as "the practice of stacking black athletes in certain positions on athletic teams while denying them access to others" (323). As stated by

Tim Curry, "within contemporary major league baseball, the outfield is the only position where black players dominate" (307). Major league baseball rosters are made up of twenty five players at any given time. Within baseball, there are eight primary positions and then the pitcher. Every major league team has five starting pitchers, who rotate the pitcher which starts the game every five games, with another seven or eight pitchers in the bullpen. The outfield is made up of only three positions, and most teams carry one extra outfielder. Just looking at the numbers, the number of spots on rosters for African Americans, in the position which they play the most, is very small. So why is it that African Americans are stuck in the outfield predominantly? Curry states that studies show that we see "the positional segregation in baseball as reflecting widely held stereotypes in society. Among the most persistent of those stereotypes is that black players lack intelligence and organizational ability- the 'necessities,' as one former baseball executive put it, for leadership/management positions. Thus black baseball players are slotted into outfield positions, where strength and power fit some prevailing cultural expectations for black men" (308-309). Looking at the numbers that Curry found, African Americans made up over half of outfield positions at fifty seven percent. However, at the three positions that are looked as the biggest leaders on the field, catcher pitcher and shortstop, African Americans barely even show up. African Americans play such a small percentage of these core positions, which make up majority of baseball rosters, making it nearly impossible for them to make it to the major league ranks.

John C. Phillips also found that African Americans players were very poorly represented in leadership positions. He states that positions like "catcher, shortstop and second base in baseball demand not only physical skills but also an ability to recognize opponents tactics and to coordinate with teammates in responding to those tactics." Phillips goes on to define centrality

as "(1) high frequency of interactions with teammates, (2) high degree of coordination with teammates, and (3) sound tactical judgment-the ability to make the right decisions. That is, the qualities required of an occupant of a central position in sports are the same as the qualities required of a good leader in any organization. Subsequent research has shown that sports teams continue to exclude black players from central (leadership) positions" (335). Although we have come a long way since the days of racism and discrimination in our country, there is still a sense that it lingers to this day. African American athletes are still thought to be inferior in intelligence, which holds them back from playing the central positions. Outfield is a position which requires very little thinking or leadership qualities, which as we have found through research, is why African Americans are not predominately found in central positions, but rather in the outfield. Phillips also found that African Americans may not be getting a fair shot at being promoted to the Major Leagues. He states that "on average a black player must be better than a white player if he is to have an equal chance of transitioning from minor leagues to the majors" (334). If a White player and an African American player are at the same level and skill set, major league teams are going to go with the White player.

The next theory we will look at is Anthony Giddens's structural theory in explaining the decline in African American players in baseball. According to David Ogden and Randall A. Rose, "structural theory has the potential to integrate all of these desperate influences on leisure activity in a rich and revealing way with emphasis on understanding and addressing the waning participation by African Americans in baseball" (226). As stated by Ogden and Randall "in the past few decades, baseball's importance in everyday lives of African Americans has dimmed, and other sports, such as basketball, are more likely to be incorporated into the routines of African American male youths. Numerous studies have shown that African American youths are more

likely than White youths to be encouraged and even directed to play basketball over other sports. Economic factors, social encounters, and mass media compel African American youth toward sports more easily played in the urban core and away from sports requiring more time, space, and facilities" (227). As we discussed earlier, many African Americans reside in center cities, or areas more commonly associated with being poorer and more run down. With that, comes less room and resources for activities such as baseball. Baseball requires much more room and equipment than other sports, such as basketball, which makes it tough in poorer communities within center cities. Ogden and Randall looked at the numbers in youth leagues, and found "a recent survey of 177 you 'select' baseball teams from 18 states showed that approximately 3% of the 2,000 players (ages 12 to 14 years) on those teams were African American" (230). They also found that the numbers of African American baseball players at the NCAA Division I college level were also at three percent. Not only are they not playing, Ogden and Randall noted that there are few African Americans even in the stands as spectators. What is it that is drawing African Americans away from our national pastime?

According to Ogden and Randall, "research has shown that African American youth have numerous facilitators to playing basketball and numerous constraints to playing baseball" (235). Ogden and Randall define facilitators as "factors that 'enable or promote the formation of leisure preferences and that encourage or enhance participation" (235). African Americans are being pushed more towards sports like basketball, while baseball is not really an option to them. "Phillipp found structures associated with parents to be among facilitators. According to his research, parents feel that basketball is one of the more important leisure activities for their children and that basketball is a sport that best fits African Americans. They thus positively sanction playing basketball as an extension of legitimation structures. School officials provide

facilitation structures as well by encouraging African American youth, more so than White youth, to play basketball" (235).

Media also has an effect on the African American culture turning more towards basketball. As stated by Ogden and Randall, "shoe and clothing companies, such as Nike and Reebok, portray African American basketball players in pick-up games against a backdrop of chain-linked fenced playgrounds in the urban core, and sportscasters often relate stories of African American college players whose basketball skills were first noticed on a ghetto playground" (235-236). Everywhere that African American children look they are being directed to playing basketball. Look at the big names in the different professional sports leagues. When we look at baseball, the big names are from white players such as: Mike Trout or Bryce Harper, or Spanish players such as: Miguel Cabrera or Yadier Molina. Very rarely, if ever, do we see an African American player as the face of Major League Baseball. If we look at basketball, in the NBA, all of the big names are African American players such as: LeBron James, Steph Curry, or Kevin Durant. As a young kid, most likely you are going to idolize someone who looks like you. Right there, African American children are being pushed towards basketball over baseball.

Ogden and Randall go on and expand on the difficulty for baseball facilities in the center cities. "Accessibility to leisure and sports facilities can be both a facilitator and a constraint to sports participation. Phillips contends that African American athletes excel in those sports where facilities are accessible." They state that White athletes are more dispersed across a variety of sports because they have to resources and facilities, "whereas African Americans and other in the inner city have access to fewer programs and limited facilities and, thus, unequal access to sports development. Well-kept baseball fields are harder to find in the inner city than basketball courts. The groomed fields are more apt to be found in the suburbs, where most of the 'elite' select teams

play" (237). Along with the facilities which cost money to keep up with, most baseball leagues cost lots of money to participate in, especially travel teams which play in tournaments across the country. There is a big obstacle for many African Americans in the inner cities, whereas basketball is a much cheaper and more accessible option for them to pursue. College also comes into play, financially. Baseball only has 11.6 scholarships to divide up among a roster of twenty five to thirty players, if not more, where basketball and football have the ability to give players full scholarships.

If we take a look back at figure 1, we will see how drastically African American representation has dropped in recent years as we are back to low numbers we have not seen since 1957. On the other side, however, we are seeing a drastic increase in the number of Hispanic players in professional baseball. Many of these Hispanic players are being signed from foreign countries such as: Venezuela, Dominican Republic, and Cuba, to name a few. What is that drawing baseball scouts to sign so many of these players? For starters, these players are much cheaper for teams to sign than American players, and they wanted the opportunity to play baseball in the United States. As Samuel O. Regalado states, scouts found "many young players who begged for the opportunity to play in the United States" (16). Branch Rickey, who signed Jackie Robinson the first black player, was also big in bringing Latin players over to play in the majors. Rickey did not see, or care, the color of the players, he just wanted the most talented guys to win games. Howie Haak, a scout who worked for Rickey, was responsible for signing some of the early Latin stars, such as Roberto Clemente, a Hall of Fame pitcher who played for the Pirates. According to Regalado, Haak had boasted "he had signed four gems for about a thousand dollars of bonus money-total... To get four guys that good in the states might've cost a hundred thousand" (16). There were not laws regarding labor in Latin countries that baseball

teams had to adhere to, so they could get around not paying these guys much, if any money. As Regalado states, "despite the embellishments of the big-league scouts in Latin America, bonuses were few and far between and moderate, at best. Most players signed contracts that merely paid for their passage to the United States" (16). Now, this was in the 1960's when we first started seeing Hispanic players brought in, so since then signing bonuses have increased, but they are still cheap in comparison. According to Rob Ruck, "the average signing bonus for the 407 young players who signed in 2005 had risen to about \$33,000. In the first four months of 2011, the 188 boys signed by major league organizations received bonuses averaging almost \$131,000" (Ruck). While this sounds like large sums of money, it is pennies compared to the bonuses that American players see in the draft, many early round picks exceed bonuses well into the millions.

As Regalado states, "hunger and poverty accentuated the Latin Americans' desire to play professional baseball" (17). While the money these players are getting paid in bonuses might not equal what Americans receive, it is a lot to them. These players are coming from countries that do not have nearly the amount of resources that we have in the United States, and these players grow up extremely poor. The money they receive in their signing bonus makes them rich in their own mind. Felipe Alou, an ex big league player was quoted as saying "I looked at the tired walls of our home, at the crowded rooms, at the weariness of my parents' faces... I could only hope that better days were coming and that I would help bring them" when he signed his contract at seventeen years old (Regalado, 17). Not only are Hispanics getting paid more money than would be available to them in their home countries, they are being given an opportunity for a better life leaving their poorer counties, and coming to the United States.

Another aspect of signing players that favors Hispanics is rate and age these players are able to sign contracts. According to Ruck, Hispanic players "benefit from MLB policies that

exempt them from the draft," which means that "Latin American players can begin their careers as free agents." So what exactly does this mean? For Americans, the way the draft works, you can be drafted by a team after your senior year in high school, and if you do not get picked then you do not have another chance until after your third year of college. The draft only happens once a year, in June, and only applies to American and Canadian players. If you are not drafted after your last year in college, then you may become a free agent and teams may sign you, if they wish, whenever they want. However, at this point, you are looking at a twenty two or twenty three year old kid. Which although it does not sound old, most baseball players sign contracts at younger ages, and as you get into your mid twenties it gets harder and harder to draw attention to yourself. For Hispanics, they do not have to worry about the draft and begin right away as free agents, and according to Brooks Carey, can be signed starting at the age of sixteen. This means that Hispanics can be signed at any time throughout the year, and have a head start in terms of age over American kids. Brooks Carey was a professional baseball player from 1978-1982, and has been in the game and coaching ever since. During my professional career I played for Brooks, and recently asked him some questions regarding the rise in Hispanic players. When I asked him about signing Hispanic players, as a coach he has done this numerous times, he stated; "they almost have an unfair advantage over anyone else. They get signed at sixteen years old and have anywhere from two to five years of professional experience under their belt before any of you (Americans) even have the opportunity to sign a contract. Teams sign them so much because we can get them for much cheaper, and coaches believe they can coach them up to become the next superstars of the game."

Hispanic players are often signed in bunches, meaning many get signed at one time. According to Regalado, Branch Rickey had a "quality out of quantity philosophy" and often

times "signed several players at the same time" (16). They would sign multiple players, for cheap, hoping that one, if not a couple, would work out and become great players. I had the chance to ask Brooks if this concept was still in use today. Carey said that he had never used that term used, but the concept was definitely still in play today. According to Carey, "teams will sign these kids hoping that one or two turn out to be big leaguers. Because they sign them for so cheap, it's a win for them if one out of the bunch turns into a big leaguer. Organizations believe that getting these kids so young and cheap, will give the coaches a good chance to enhance their raw abilities and turn them into superstars. It's a win-win for the guys calling the shots because if they hit a homerun and find the next superstar they look like a genius, but even if not they are still saving money at the end of the day because they don't have to pay most of these kids the big million dollar signing bonuses that American kids see."

Professional baseball as a whole has also invested lots of money into developing talent in these Hispanic countries. According to Ruck, "they (Latin Americans) now comprise more than a quarter of all major leaguers, about half of all minor leaguers, and they dominate the ranks of the game's best players." It helps that teams are able to get these players for cheap, but there are other reasons why teams are so interested in signing Latin American players, they are good and they help teams win. According to Ruck, in 2011, "Latinos won half the Silver Slugger Awards-given to the best offensive players at each position in the National and American Leagues-last season and represent a staggering 40 percent of the players nominated for the 2011 All-Star game." These players are very good and are becoming this generations superstars in the sport of baseball. Major League teams have been investing lots of time and money into finding more of these superstars. According to Ruck, "teams spend approximately \$100 million per season operating some 40 year-round baseball academies in the Dominican Republic and Venezuela."

These facilities are giving these Latin kids better facilities to train in, plus the constant exposure to scouts who are constantly watching, and evaluating them.

Although not much research has been done on how it relates to the changing demographics of baseball, I believe that it is worth noting that the Hispanic youth population is growing. According to Amitai Etzioni, "not only have Hispanic numbers surpassed those of black Americans, who until 2003 made up America's largest minority group, Hispanics have been reliably projected to grow much faster than African Americans or any other American group" (22). Etzioni also notes that "Hispanics also have more children than African-Americans. During the most recent year for which data is available, 2003-2004, one of every two people added to America's population was Hispanic" (23). As I mentioned there has not been research to determine if this has any effect of the baseball demographics, but one cannot help to think that it plays a part. Just looking at simple numbers, there are more you Hispanic people than any other race, so there are more of them to choose from and more of a chance they could reach the Major Leagues.

Through my three year professional career, I noticed the extreme impact that Hispanic players had at the minor league level. I played in an independent league, which is equivalent to a minor league level just not affiliated with a major league team, but during March for Spring Training I played in a league where we played against the affiliated minor league teams. When playing these teams, especially at the lower levels, the teams were comprised of almost all Spanish players. It was a joke amongst American players that whites were becoming minorities, and honestly, that is closer to becoming the truth. On many of these minor league teams at the lower levels, there are only a handful of white players, mostly pitchers, and the rest were Spanish players. Very rarely did I play with, or against, any African American players. For the most

part, Spanish players occupy all of the infield positions, most catchers are becoming Spanish players, and the pitchers are about half and half Spanish and White. There are some teams that are even making their players take Spanish lessons and learn their language. It used to be that Hispanic players would have to learn English to communicate, but if that is starting to switch, it goes to show how many of these Latino players are being signed by Major League organizations.

So what is in store for baseball in the future? All indicators look as though we should not expect to see any change in the growing number of Hispanics in baseball. If anything, we will see the number of Hispanic players increase in coming years. Hispanic players are becoming the face of baseball, as majority of young stars who have come up in recent years are Hispanic players. The minor league systems are flush with Hispanic players, and we will continue to see a large number of them make an impact for teams at the major league level. The only change that could have a real effect would be if baseball made it so that foreign born Hispanics had to enter the draft like Americans. I highly doubt we will ever see this though because the team owners would never get on board with that because they would have to pay them more money, and they would not be able to sign them at the early age.

As for African Americans, it is going to be tough for baseball to get the interest of young African American kids back from basketball. However, Major League Baseball has been endorsing a program, RBI, reviving baseball in inner cities, since it was founded in 1989. According the Major League Baseball, RBI baseball "is a program designed to promote the game of baseball to teenage boys and girls in disadvantaged areas. In partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, RBI leagues are maturing in local Boys & Girls Clubs nationwide. According to Major League Baseball, the objectives for RBI are: "(1) increase participation and interest in baseball, (2) encourage academic participation and achievement, (3) increase the

number of talented athletes prepared to play in college and the minor leagues, (4) promote greater inclusion of minorities into the mainstream of the game, and (5) develop self-esteem and teach the value of teamwork." Major League Baseball and its teams have donated over fifteen million dollars worth of resources to the RBI programs. These programs are designed to not only get African Americans and other inner city kids more involved with baseball, but focuses on keeping kids off the streets and out of trouble, and helps with school and becoming more prepared for college. While they might not have had huge successes getting the African American participation in baseball to where it once was, the RBI baseball programs are having a positive effect for kids as a whole in the inner cities.

Baseball may never recover from the rapid decline of African American players that has happened over recent years. The factors in the mid to late twentieth century, deindustrialization, suburbanization, and mass incarceration, may have been too big of a blow to the African American community, and we may never see the same participation from African Americans. Major League Baseball would have to start at the bottom, really getting the youth interested in the sport. The RBI programs have definitely helped, but the MLB needs to showcase more African American players as stars in their game to get kids interested. When African American kids see nothing but White and Hispanic players at the front of baseball, and then see sports such as basketball that are full of African Americans it makes sense that they would lean more towards that sport. Although our country has come a long way since our days of segregation, we can still see remnants of old ways prevalent in today's sports. As we can see with stacking, there are still prejudices that exist within sports that limit African Americans, and put them on certain spots on the field. When looking at basketball, you see African Americans playing, and succeeding at every position. Baseball needs to do away with some of their old thought

processes and just put the best player on the field. In the old days of the Negro League, African Americans played every position and there were high rates of African Americans that play baseball. Kids had stars to look up to, who were the same color skin as them, and they could aspire to be like them. Baseball needs to get the interest started at the youth level, and that starts with having a star player, or a public face that African American kids can see and look up too. If we keep going down this path of a declining African American representation in the demographics of baseball, along with the continual growth of Hispanic players, we may not be able to call our national pastime American much longer.

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## Appendix B: Senior Thesis Paper

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1 November 2018  
Sociology 492  
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### **“Will you accept this reality show?” Perceptions about the “Reality” in Reality Television Dating and Marriage Shows**

Reality television has taken America by storm, captivating viewers, hooking them enough to tune in week after week to view their favorite shows. America’s obsession with reality TV began 26 years when MTV debut *The Real World*, a social experiment about seven strangers living in one house. There was something so fascinating to audiences about watching strangers from all different walks of life live together under one roof. The Real World would continue for 32 seasons, shedding light on sensitive issues such as living with HIV/AIDS, abortions, prejudice, infidelity, political differences, and addiction. This was reality television, it wasn’t pretty, but it was “real” and it was entertaining.

Reality television allows viewers to experience different life situations from the comfort of their own homes. At the same time, reality television also allows viewers to feel connected to the content by being relatable. Reality television is special in the fact that it must be both believable and unbelievable at the same time; believable in the sense that it must be relatable to its audience in order to keep the concept of being “reality” and unbelievable in the sense that it must be outrageous enough to be entertaining. Reality TV content is endless. Programs cover just about every area of interest audiences could possibly have. Topics covered in these popular programs include dating and marriage shows, survival shows, home renovations, personal makeovers, cooking shows, legal shows, sports, competition shows, travel, social experiments, medical shows, the list goes on and continues to grow.

In order to understand the significance of reality television it is important to understand how impactful television has been on American culture. For decades television has arguably been our best and most powerful forms of mass communication. It allows for large numbers of people to be exposed to the same programs simultaneously. Unlike the radio, which also has the ability to reach many, television gives audiences the satisfaction of graphic exposure allowing for a more authentic feeling therefore resulting in a better connection to the content. Take the catastrophic event on 9/11 for example; it was television that allowed millions from all across the country to be current as the events unfolded. Recently, we saw just how used television is when the debate between Hilary Clinton and Donald Trump took place on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016. “NBC had the biggest audience overall, upwards of 18 million people watched the debate on NBC. ABC drew 13.5 million viewers, CBS drew 12.1 million, Fox News drew 11.4 million, CNN drew 9.9 million, the Fox broadcast network drew 5.5 million, and MSNBC drew 4.9 million. The debate was also a hit on Spanish language television, attracting 2.5 million viewers on Univision and 1.8 million on Telemundo” (Stelter). Television has become “a firmly established feature of American life” (Grindstaff). People are investing their spare time daily on television, “on average, American adults are watching five hours and four minutes of television per day” (Koblin).TV has also been responsible for bringing families together week after week viewing their favorite programs. Television offers content for conversations, with friends, relatives, co-workers, etc. It has the power to bring people together.

Television is also one of our best reflections of society. Neil Patrick best describes the relationship between television and culture when he said, “Television is our cultures principal mode of knowing about itself. Therefore- and this is the critical point- how television stages the world becomes the model for how the world is properly to be staged” (Saye). As influential as

television is on its audience, I argue its audience has been equally as influential. As with society, television is every evolving, ever changing with time. This can be reflected in popular shows throughout the decades. For example, popular show, *Leave it to Beaver* which premiered in 1957, show cased at the time your typical middle class family. The family consisted of one working father, one stay at home mother, and their two all American sons. At the time *Leave it to Beaver* was the reflection of middle class America. Fast-forward to the present, multi award winning show *Modern Family* paints a different picture of middle class America. A comedy sitcom following the life of Jay Pritchett and his children's families, the three individual families are all different and reflective of modern American families now. Jay, a Caucasian male in his 60's, is married to a much younger Columbian woman, Gloria and together they raise her son, Manny. Claire, Jays daughter, and her husband Phil represent a power couple, both being the bread winners in the family. Mitchell, Jay's son, is in a same sex marriage with his partner Cam and together they raise their adopted daughter. These are just a few examples of the types of families not uncommon to see today.

From a sociological perspective we can relate reality television to the theory of social learning. We as a society learn from observing others. Knowing that, we can imply how audiences are interpreting the content of these reality shows will help shape their own reality and therefore more specifically their experiences in their dating and marriage relationships. The content in these shows will impact not only one's relationships, but the way they view themselves in those relationships as well. Remember, reality television must be relatable on some level; it is in this concept that viewers are allowed the opportunity to view different relationships, comparing themselves and their own relationships, creating their own opinions about these relationships and participants on TV. At the same time reality television has to be

unbelievable for entertainment purposes, not everyone is leaving the country to be proposed to which is very common for contestants on *The Bachelor/Bachelorette*, and not everyone has a “team of experts” to find their husband or wife like they do in the popular show *Married at First Sight*. It’s the unbelievable that keeps us on the edge of our seats week after week; at the same time it’s the unbelievable that can cause unreal expectations as well as reinforce or teach us self-destructive behavior.

To get a better sense of the content of these popular reality dating and marriage shows here we’ll briefly overview a few of the most popular ones. Probably the largest and most popular franchise, *The Bachelor/Bachelorette* consists of numerous contestants competing for the love of one male (the Bachelor) or one female (the Bachelorette). On *The Bachelor*, women are sent home every week if they don’t receive a rose from the bachelor until it comes down to the final two and the one who “wins” will accept the final rose and be proposed to. On *The Bachelorette*, the same plot follows except that instead of the Bachelorette proposing to her final choice in the end, the man is expected to propose to her. *The Bachelor* has been entertaining viewers for the past 16 years and 21 seasons while *The Bachelorette* has been televised for 15 years and 14 seasons. Considering the end goal of this show is a proposal with the promise of marriage, it would be appropriate to explain that out of all of the couples who have left *The Bachelor* together; only one couple is married while seven couples from *The Bachelorette* are married (Gonzalez). Another very popular reality dating/marriage show is *Married At First Sight*, the premise of this show consists of a “team of experts”, including well known Sociologist Dr. Pepper Schwartz, who use an algorithm to match couples together with the intent of being married. The first time the couple meets is at the altar, following the wedding they are sent on a honeymoon, and then it’s back home to their everyday lives where they must decide together

where to live, how to handle combined finances including any debt, integrating of family and friends, division of household responsibilities, and intimacy. At the end of an eight week period the couple must decide whether they want to continue being married or choose to divorce. Since participants of this show go on the show with the intent of being married and know there is a possibility of getting a divorce this may be considered one of the more authentic reality marriage shows. Again, it's worth mentioning how many couples have remained together, after four years on television and seven seasons out of the 21 couples five have remained married (*Married At First Sight*, Lifetime Network). MTV has had luck with their own reality dating shows, the most popular show being *Are You the One?*, claims to use an algorithm to find contestants "perfect match", although it's a secret and it's up to the couples to try to find their find perfect match in order to win money and love. It's more difficult to say how many couples are still together from this show since marriage isn't what matters in order to be considered successful in the end. The content continues to grow, all three networks that show these programs mentioned above have now created new reality dating/marriage shows. ABC network which premieres *The Bachelor/Bachelorette* also created *Bachelor in Paradise*, and *The Bachelor Winter Games*. Lifetime network which premieres *Married At First Sight* has now created *Married At First Sight the First Year*, following successful married couples from *Married At First Sight* as they continue life together, as well as *Married At First Sight: Honeymoon Island*. Following the success of *Are You the One?* MTV has created *EX on the Beach* a show that offers strangers the opportunity to meet and create possible romantic connections until their ex's show up and old feelings arise.

As Ann Swindeler explains in her book, *Talk of Love*, "people use culture to learn how to be, or become, particular kinds of persons" (pg. 71). Reality television is culture so what does

our obsession with reality television say about society today? More specifically what does our obsession with reality dating and marriage shows such as the above mentioned say about us as a society? Throughout this paper we will get a better understanding of how much of the “reality” element people are buying into from these shows, how these shows impact viewers’ personal lives, and what draws viewers to watch these shows.

### **Methods**

For this empirical research project I created a 21 question online survey with the purpose of gauging people’s perceptions about the “reality” in reality dating and marriage shows. In an attempt to reach as many potential respondents as I could, my survey was posted online to my personal Facebook. Upon posting it to my own Facebook, ten other Facebook users shared it to their own personal accounts. While results began to come in I believed in order to be a sufficient collection of data I would need more participants. Therefore, in addition to my post, and along with those who shared it, I decided to take a chance and post it in the comments section on the Facebook pages of shows such as *Married At First Sight*, *The Bachelor*, *The Bachelorette*, *Are You the One?*, and *Big Brother*. Along with the link to the survey I briefly explained the purpose and use of the survey and asked viewers to participate. While the popular reality show *Big Brother* wouldn’t necessarily be categorized as a “reality dating show”, belonging to their private fan page I decided to post the survey there and asked that members who were also viewers of any reality dating/ marriage shows to participate in my survey. By the next day I had collected 200 surveys, and some very kind words from strangers wishing me luck. After feeling satisfied with the number of data, I closed the survey and began analyzing my results.

## Data

(Q1) Out of the 199 people who answered what sex they most identify with 94 percent said they identify with female, 4 percent answered male, and 1 percent answered non-binary. (Q2) Out of the 200 participants who answered what age group they fall into 19 percent answered 18-24, 29 percent said 25-34, 21 percent said 35-44, 13 percent 35-44, 13 percent said 45-54, 11 percent said 55-64, and 5 percent answered that they were 65 or over. (Q3) Out of the 199 participants who answered what best describes their current relationship status 16 percent answered single/never married, 1 percent said they were casually dating, 22 percent are in a committed relationship, 49 percent are married, 2 percent are separated, 7 percent are divorced, and 1 percent said they are widowed.

(Q4) When asked what reality dating/marriage shows viewers watched 33 percent responded *The Bachelor/Bachelorette*, 22 percent said *Bachelor in Paradise*, 32 percent said *Are You the One?*, 47 percent *Married At First Sight*, 36 percent said *90 Day Fiancé*, 5 percent said *The Proposal*, 17 percent replied that they don't watch reality dating/marriage TV shows, and 2 percent replied with "other". When asked to specify what shows they watched responses included *Seven Year Switch*, *Ex on the Beach*, *Love and Hip Hop*, *Famously Single*, and *Jersey Shore Family Vacation*. Other answers included *Hell's Kitchen* as well as *The Challenge*, although when categorized these two shows may not be considered dating or marriage shows.

(Q5) When asked if participants were regular viewers of these shows out of the 199 that answered 71 percent replied yes and 28 percent said no. (Q6) When asked if participants usually watch these shows alone or with others, out of the 187 respondents who answered the majority said they watch these shows alone at 66 percent, 19 percent said with a spouse or partner, 3 percent said with friends, and 10 percent said they watch with family. (Q7) Respondents were

asked do they interact with friends/ family about episodes either while in progress or afterwards out of the 198 answers the majority replied sometimes at 32 percent, followed by respondents who replied that they never interact with friends/family about these shows at 28 percent, 8 percent reported they always do, 14 percent said they usually do, and 15 percent said they rarely do. (Q8) Participants were then asked how many people they speak with per week about these episodes and out of 198 respondents, 39 percent said none, the majority said between 1-3 people at 57 percent, 2 percent said between 4-6 people, and 0.51 percent said 6 people or more.

(Q9) When asked if respondents follow participants of these shows on social media (via. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) out of the 197 people that answered the majority replied no at 54 percent, and 45 percent replied yes.(Q10) Respondents were then asked what entertainment element most appeals to you? Out of the 197 participants who answered the majority replied that drama is the entertainment element that most appeals to them at 49 percent, 23 percent said romance, 13 percent said comedy, and 13 percent replied “other”. When asked to specify, answers included “social interaction”, “compatibility of couples”, “the social experiment nature”, and “the personality profile of the participants”. These responses further support the idea that television is more than just entertainment. There are viewers who take more from these shows than just an hour of content to pass the time. People are listening and learning from these shows.

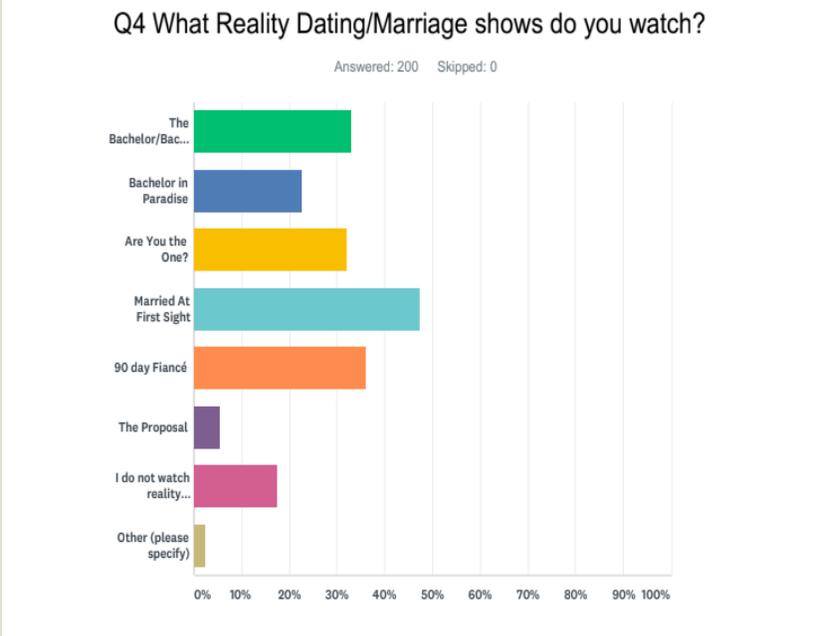


Figure 1 Question 4

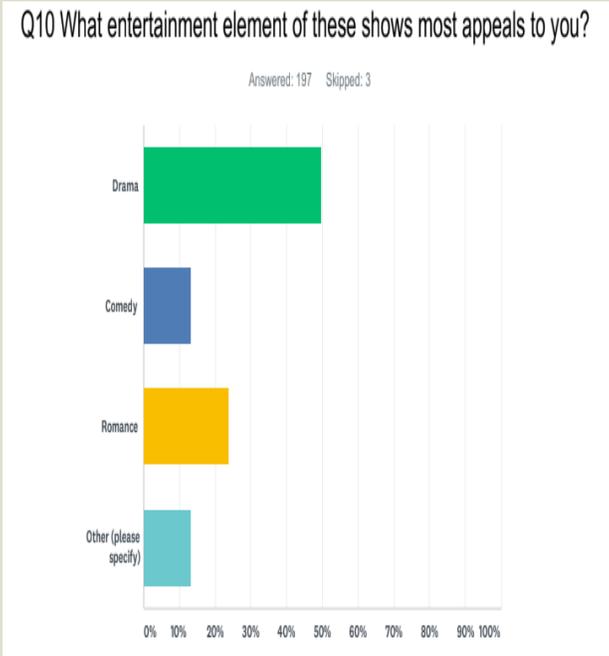


Figure 2 Question 10

(Q11) When asked how much do you agree or disagree with the following statement, “Participants on these reality shows always have pure intentions of finding love”, 2 percent said they strongly agree, 15 percent said they agree, 31 percent said they neither agree nor disagree, 31 percent said they disagree, and 18 percent said they strongly disagree. (Q12) Next, respondents were asked how much do you agree or disagree with the following statement, “Reality television dating/marriage shows are more scripted than unscripted”, out of the 199 respondents who answered 19 percent strongly agree, 41 percent agree, 26 percent said they neither agree nor disagree 11 percent said they disagree, and 1 percent said they strongly disagree.

(Q13) When asked how much respondents agree or disagree with the following statement, “Allowing the world to be able to observe and/or judge your relationship can be beneficial”, the majority said they disagree at 34 percent, 19 percent said they strongly disagree, 27 percent said they neither agree nor disagree, 16 percent said they agree, and 2 percent said they strongly agree. (Q14) Next, participants were asked if they believed relationships formed on television are more authentic (real) or a performance (an act) the majority believe these relationships are a performance at 83 percent, while 16 percent said they believe these relationships are authentic. (Q15) When asked to rate on a scale of 1-10 how much of what respondents are seeing in these shows are they believing (1 being not real at all, 10 being completely real) when calculated the average number was 3.6 which means the believable factor is less than half and closer to not believing the “reality” in these reality shows.

(Q16) Contrary to the majority not believing the authenticity of these reality shows and the motives of its participants, when asked if respondents believe someone can find love on

television an overwhelming majority said yes they do believe someone can find love on TV at 83 percent, while only 16 percent replied no.

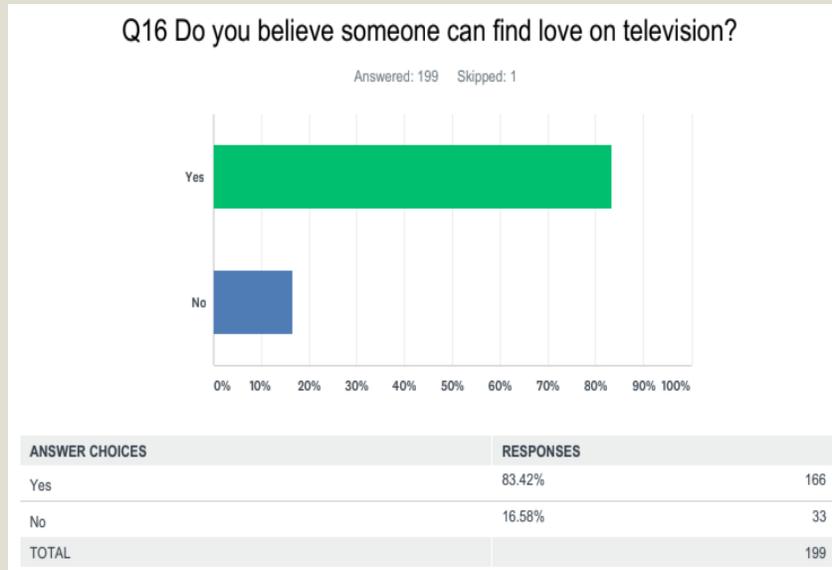


Figure 3 Question 16

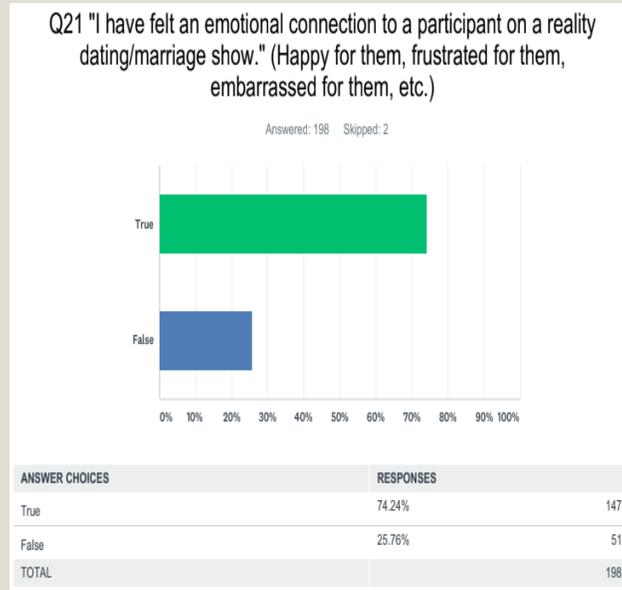


Figure 4 Question 21

(Q17) Relating reality TV to viewers' personal lives respondents were asked if they ever compare their own relationship to the ones they view on television, out of the 198 people who

responded, 50 percent said never, 46 percent said sometimes, and 3 percent said always. (Q18) Next, respondents were asked how much they agree or disagree with the following statement, “I have learned valuable lessons from watching these shows” (how to find a partner, how to maintain a relationship, etc.) the majority disagree at 30 percent, 22 percent strongly disagree, 20 percent said they neither agree nor disagree, 23 percent said they agree, and only 4 percent said they strongly agree. (Q19) When asked if watching these shows ever influence respondents own relationships (date night ideas, social media posts, etc.) the majority reported they never influence their own relationships at 64 percent, 35 percent said sometimes, and 2 percent said always. (Q20) Respondents were then asked if watching these shows ever influence what they seek in a partner, 68 percent said never, 29 percent said sometimes, and 2 percent said always (Q21) Last, respondents were asked to answer true or false to the following statement, “I have felt an emotional connection to a participant on a reality dating/marriage show”, out of the 198 who answered, the majority replied true at 74 percent, while only 25 percent replied false.

### **Findings/Results**

In an overall sense it seems like reality dating/marriage show watchers aren't necessarily buying into the “reality” of these shows. However, it seems that most respondents cannot say for certain that all motives of participants in these shows are not pure or that these shows are completely scripted. For example, in question 11, out of 197 respondents who answered only 36 of them would say that they strongly disagree that participants of these shows always have pure intentions. The majority of respondent's answers were nearly tied when 63 people said they neither agree nor disagree and 62 people said they disagree. It's difficult to measure a stranger's intentions through a television show once a week. Viewers have to rely on their own experiences and emotions to judge whether participants of these shows are being genuine or fake. Another

example would be question 12, when respondents were asked if they believed reality dating/marriage shows were more scripted than unscripted, out of the 199 people who answered only 38 could commit to saying they strongly agree with that statement while 83 people said they agree. These findings support my earlier explanation of reality television having to be both believable and unbelievable. While people may lean towards these reality dating/marriage shows being more unbelievable than believable there is still enough content to keep people from considering these shows to be complete fiction. Results of question 14 were interesting in the fact that now when only given two choices to answer whether respondents believe relationships formed on television are more authentic or a performance, out of the 199 people who responded 167 said they believe these relationships are a performance and only 32 said authentic.

When asked how many people respondents speak with per week about episodes an overwhelming 114 out of 198 participants said they speak with between one and three people. Aside from the time viewers spend watching these programs, speaking with even just one person per week about these shows means people are investing even more time in these shows. This supports the idea that television is not just something that is kept to oneself. Television is a popular topic of conversation and when viewers talk about these types of reality shows they become more real. When viewers speak to friends, family, coworkers, etc. about these shows they are both reinforcing and challenging societal norms. I was surprised that the majority of respondents don't follow TV participants on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Although there is only a difference of 19 people between those who say they do follow them and those who say they don't, I had predicted there would be more who said they do. In hindsight, I should have asked if respondents ever tweet about these shows, as I found out through my research Twitter is a popular way to voice ones opinion from those who watch *The*

*Bachelor/Bachelorette* and *Bachelor in Paradise*. Referring to themselves as the “Bachelor Nation”, faithful Bachelor franchise fans have not been shy about sharing their opinions on show content via Twitter. Recently fans stormed twitter with their outrage when the network announced who they chose as the next Bachelor. Fans shared the hashtag #NotMyBachelor to show their lack of support for the networks choice.(Jensen) Asking if respondents ever take to Twitter to voice their opinions about these reality dating/marriage shows would have been interesting to know.

Combined, the majority of respondents reported that they either sometimes, 92 respondents, or always, seven respondents, compare their own relationships to the ones shown on reality TV. This shows the impact reality TV dating/marriage shows can have on real life relationships. Fewer respondents reported that these reality shows have taught them valuable life lessons such as how to find a partner, or how to maintain a relationship. While the majority may not have agreed with the statement, there still are respondents that agree and even strongly agreed with that statement. It’s important to point out that responses such as these show that Reality TV can sometimes be accepted and used as a tool for educating viewers. Whether or not what lessons viewers are gaining from these shows would be considered as “good” or “appropriate” could be debatable. When asked if these shows ever influence what respondents seek in a partner the majority reported these shows never influence them, while less reported they sometimes influence them, and four respondents reported these shows always influence what they seek in a partner. This is important to acknowledge, something as simple as an hour of television per week can potentially influence what someone seeks in a partner they possibly want to devote themselves to long term.

As pointed out in the results the element that most appeals to viewers is the drama in these shows. Here I must touch on some of the 26 respondents who chose to answer the question with “other”. When asked to specify, answers given differed greatly. One respondent’s element that most appeals to them is the “social interaction” that takes place in these shows. It cannot be stressed enough that these shows offer viewers a way to learn from the way people interact on these shows. The problem is often on these shows behaviors such as casual sex, excessive drinking, and physical violence between participants is the content that is shown the most. Continuing with the answers, a few people said they “hate” these shows and one person responded with “The idiocy of anyone willing to be one of many for a chance to be on TV. Do they seriously feel like it is true love? It is a game and people are competitive. I watch in hopes of someone speaking up and walking out. The train wreck continues though”. This respondent really seems to dislike these dating/marriage shows; however the key is they’re still watching. The concept of “hate” watching is important to point out here. Not everyone who views these shows would say they enjoy it, but at the same time reality dating/marriage shows still have the ability to capture people’s attention. This love/hate relationship with reality television is not new nor is it going away. I believe this is one very large area where reality TV differs from scripted TV, it’s just so relatable to audiences, especially when love is involved it’s like watching a disaster happen right in front of you, it’s too hard to look away. At the end of the day whether people are watching it because they love it or hate it, they’re still watching.

The most interesting results came from questions 16 and 21. In question 16, respondents were asked if they believe someone can find love on television. 166 respondents reported that they do believe someone can find love on television. In question 21, respondents were asked to answer true or false to the statement, “I have felt an emotional connection to a participant on a

reality TV dating/marriage show (happy, frustrated, embarrassed for them, etc.)” and 147 respondents chose to answer true. I think these answers speak more on people’s feelings about love more than they do about reality television itself. Scripted or unscripted, pure intentioned or not, I believe most people want to believe there is always a chance to find love and reality TV is extremely relatable to audiences when love and emotions are involved.

### **Implications and Conclusion**

In the book *Talk of Love*, Ann Swidler discusses the concept of “love mythology” this type of love most people are exposed to through movies, plays, books, etc. Love mythology is this fantasy idea of a “happily ever after”, “madly in love” type of fairy tale. Love mythology is arguably the biggest reason for our disappointment when we find out most of our relationships don’t play out like they do in the movies. According to Swidler, the biggest love myths include love at first sight, the concept of a one true love, love conquers all, and the idea of happily ever after. Often times as we learn and evolve from our relationships and experiences and in them we learn that these aspects of love we are often taught and exposed to aren’t necessarily what we get. Reality television offers us a more relatable side of love. People can relate to betrayal, disappointment, and heartbreak. People can relate to break ups, make ups, infidelity, and confusion. Reality television dating/marriage shows are imperfect, messy, and at the same time they can demonstrate what’s “real”. Reality TV feeds our fascination to observe love that may isn’t from a fairy tale. It satisfies our caving to see that others too experience what we ourselves have or someone we know has.

There is great room for research about reality TV dating/marriage shows in the field of sociology. The amount of participants from my survey I was able to get are just a drop in the bucket compared to how many people are watching these types of shows week after week, year

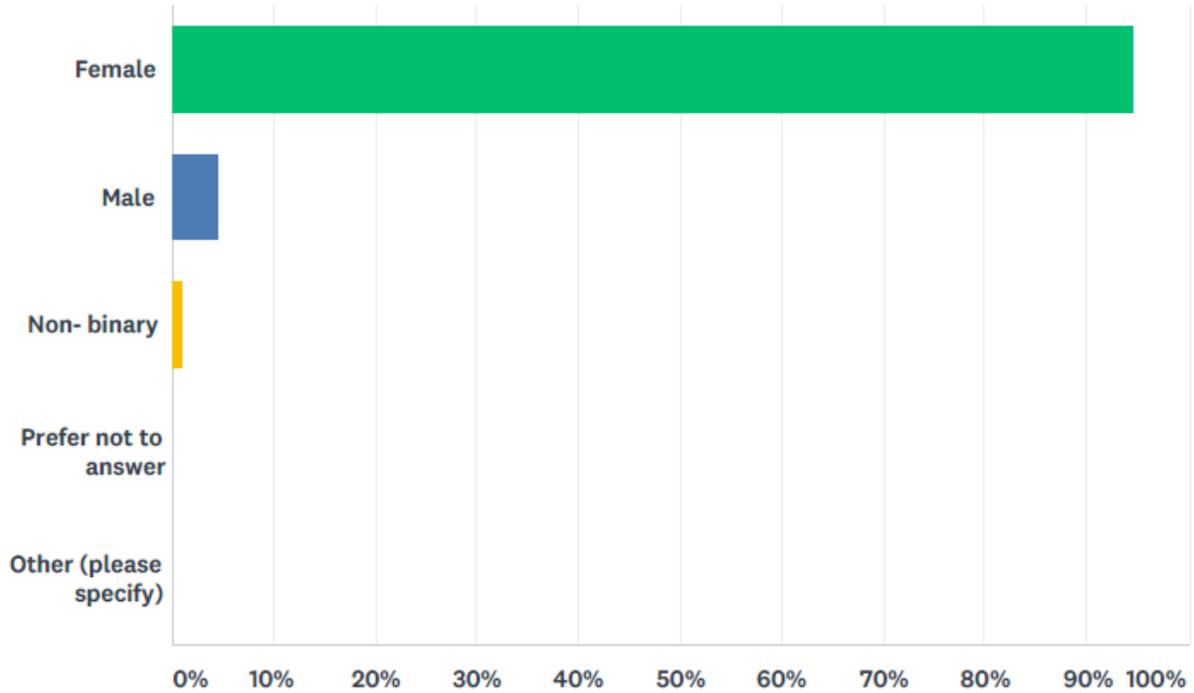
after year. It would be extremely valuable in the field of sociology to understand more in depth how people perceive the reality of these shows and how these shows are impacting their personal lives. The impact of these reality shows matter when the content has the potential to influence peoples relationships, what they seek in a partner, and what behaviors and actions become normalized in society.

All in all maybe reality television dating and marriage shows are the best thing for society. It exposes us to all different types of relationships and helps us steer away from this deceiving idea of the perfect love we are often taught. On the other hand, maybe reality TV dating and marriage shows are the worst thing for us, causing us to feel disappointed in love, making us fear love, and normalizing self-destructive behaviors. Hopefully in the future we can better understand the impact of reality TV dating and marriage shows, but until then you can find me in front of my TV most Monday nights waiting for *The Bachelor* to come on.

**Surveys**

# Q1 What gender do you identify with?

Answered: 199 Skipped: 1

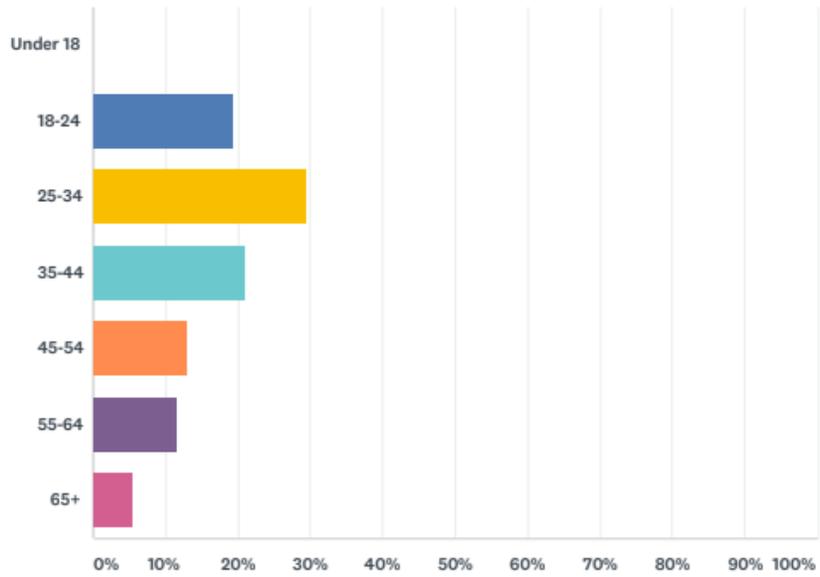


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	94.47%	188
Male	4.52%	9
Non- binary	1.01%	2
Prefer not to answer	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>199</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

## Q2 Age

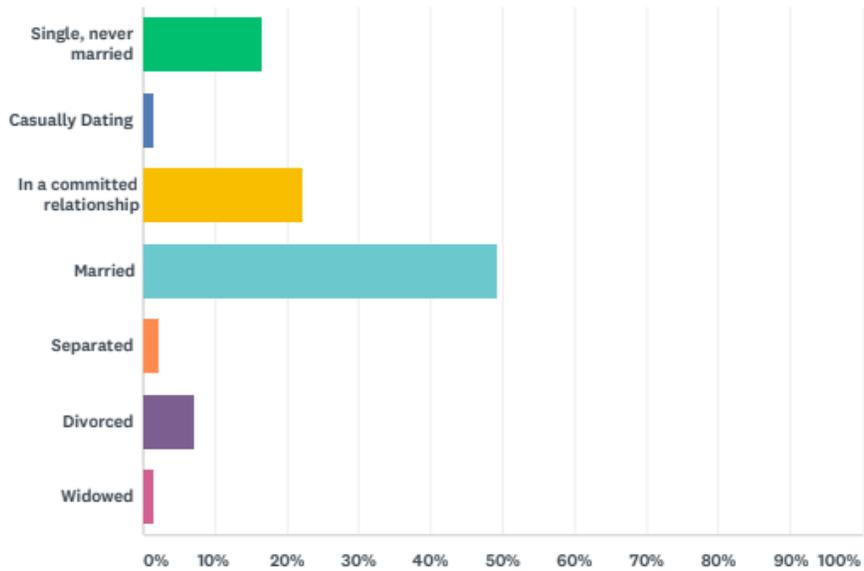
Answered: 200 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	0.00%	0
18-24	19.50%	39
25-34	29.50%	59
35-44	21.00%	42
45-54	13.00%	26
55-64	11.50%	23
65+	5.50%	11
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>200</b>

### Q3 Which of the following best describes your current relationship status?

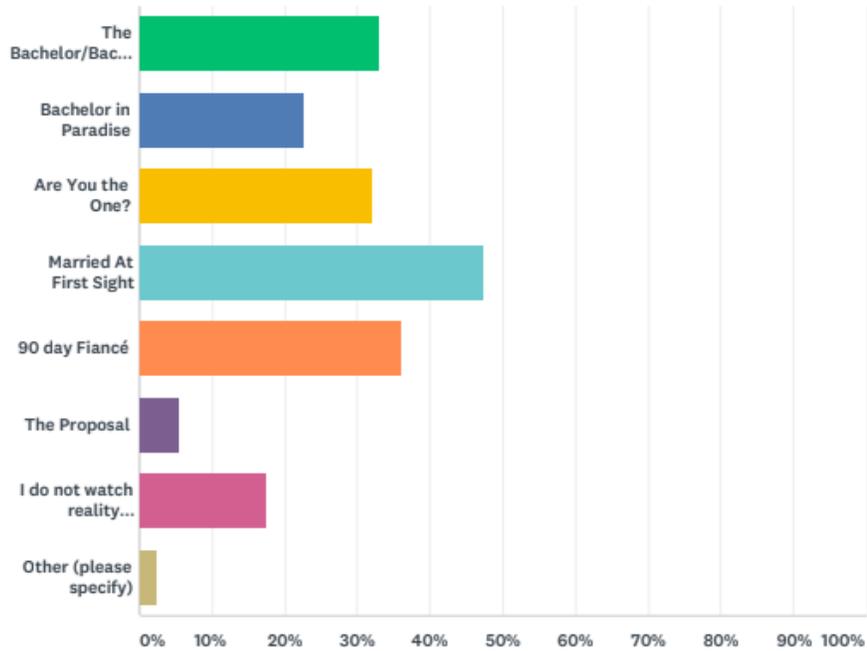
Answered: 199 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Single, never married	16.58%	33
Casually Dating	1.51%	3
In a committed relationship	22.11%	44
Married	49.25%	98
Separated	2.01%	4
Divorced	7.04%	14
Widowed	1.51%	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>199</b>

## Q4 What Reality Dating/Marriage shows do you watch?

Answered: 200 Skipped: 0

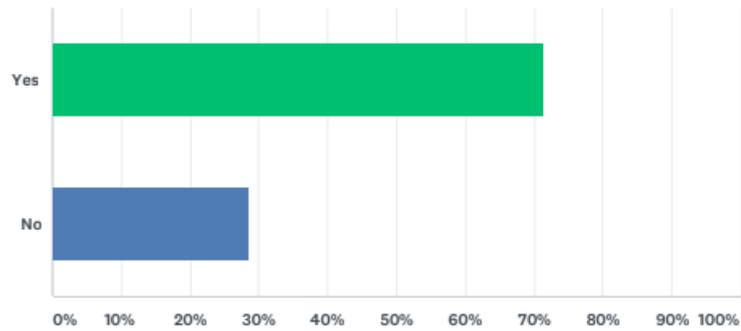


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
The Bachelor/Bachelorette	33.00% 66
Bachelor in Paradise	22.50% 45
Are You the One?	32.00% 64
Married At First Sight	47.50% 95
90 day Fiancé	36.00% 72
The Proposal	5.50% 11
I do not watch reality dating/marriage shows	17.50% 35
Other (please specify)	2.50% 5
Total Respondents: 200	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Jersey Shore Family Vacation	10/19/2018 5:22 AM
2	The challenge, love and hip hop, Hell's Kitchen	10/18/2018 11:44 PM
3	Ex on the Beach	10/18/2018 9:29 PM
4	Seven Year Switch	10/18/2018 12:52 AM
5	Famously Single(I've watched a few episodes.)	10/17/2018 10:58 PM

### Q5 Are you a regular viewer of these programs?

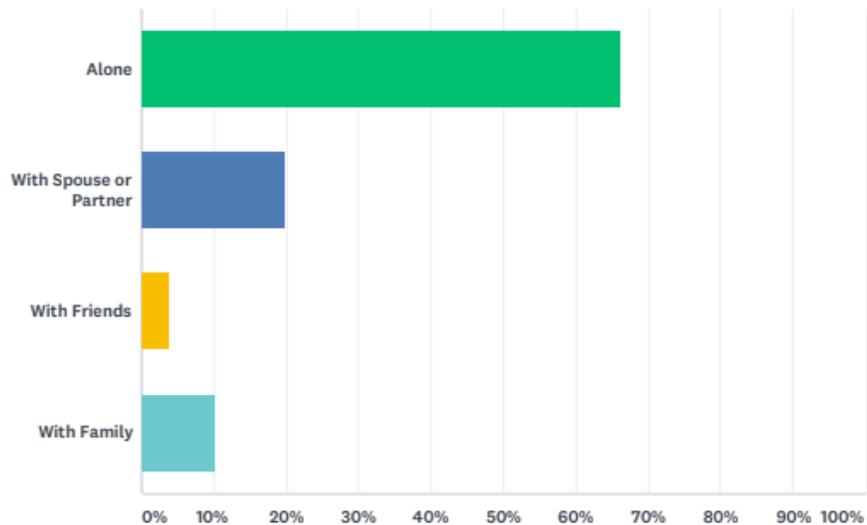
Answered: 199 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	71.36%	142
No	28.64%	57
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>199</b>

### Q6 Do you usually watch these shows alone or with others?

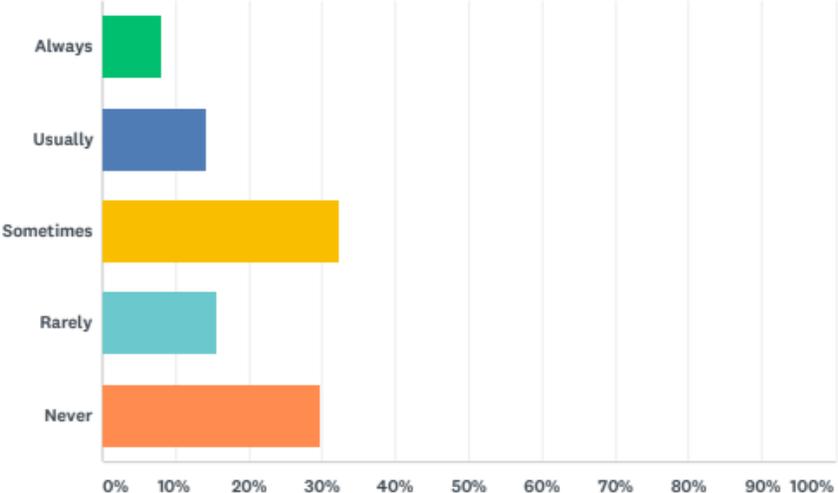
Answered: 187 Skipped: 13



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Alone	66.31%	124
With Spouse or Partner	19.79%	37
With Friends	3.74%	7
With Family	10.16%	19
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>187</b>

**Q7 Do you interact with friends and/or family about episodes either while they are happening or afterward? (Via. Phone, Text, Facetime, etc.)**

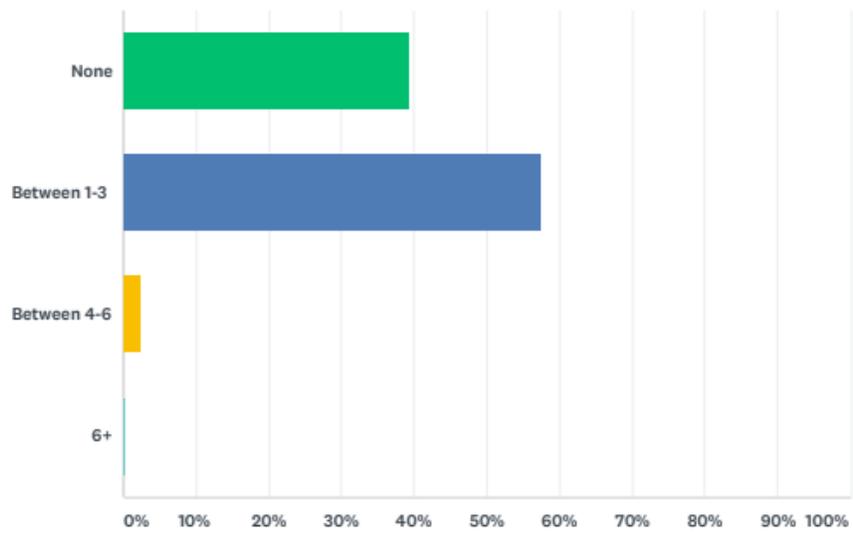
Answered: 198 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Always	8.08%	16
Usually	14.14%	28
Sometimes	32.32%	64
Rarely	15.66%	31
Never	29.80%	59
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>198</b>

## Q8 How many people do you speak with per week about episodes?

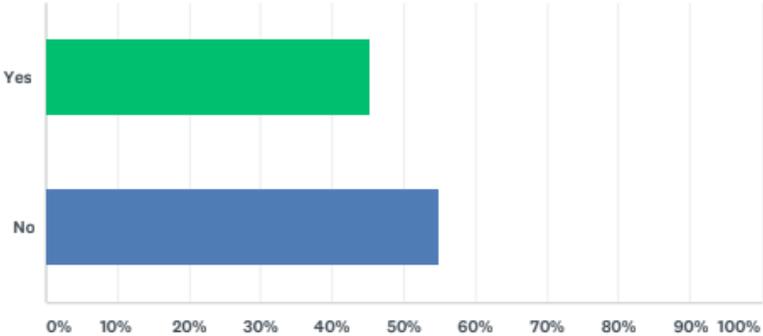
Answered: 198 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None	39.39%	78
Between 1-3	57.58%	114
Between 4-6	2.53%	5
6+	0.51%	1
TOTAL		198

Q9 Do you follow participants from these shows on social media outside of the regular programming? (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

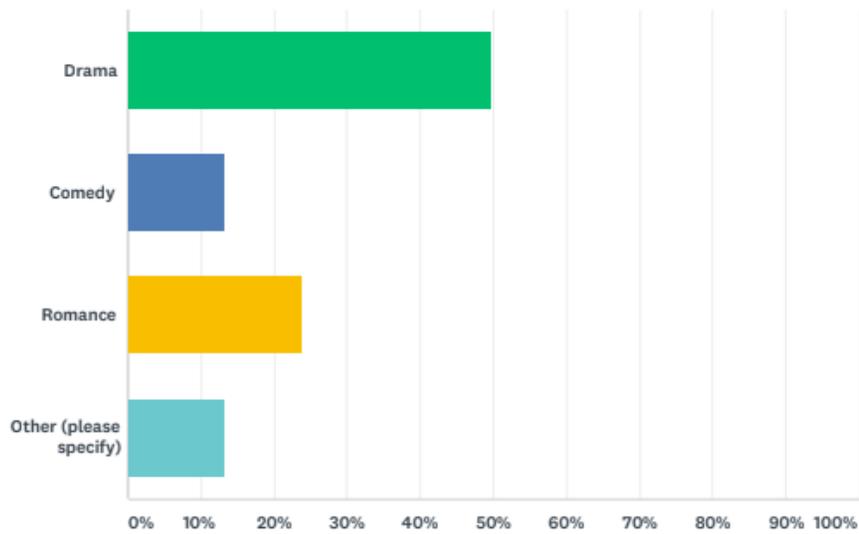
Answered: 197 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	45.18%	89
No	54.82%	108
TOTAL		197

## Q10 What entertainment element of these shows most appeals to you?

Answered: 197 Skipped: 3



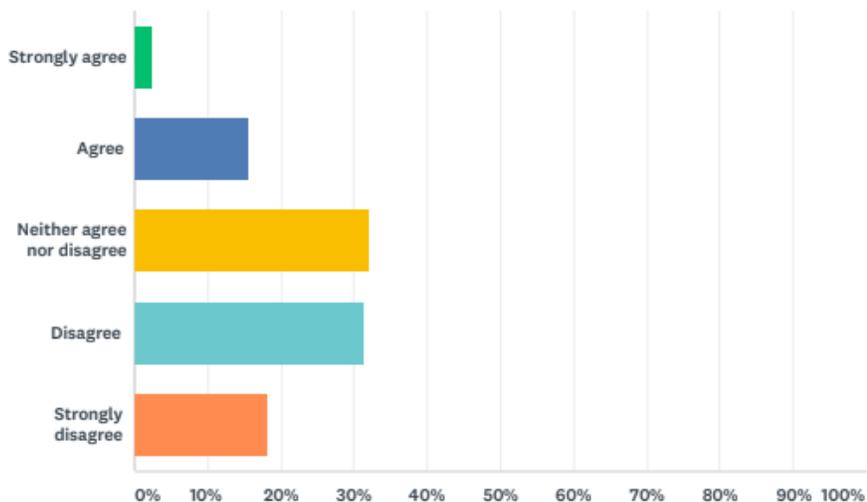
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Drama	49.75%	98
Comedy	13.20%	26
Romance	23.86%	47
Other (please specify)	13.20%	26
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>197</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	All of the above	10/19/2018 7:42 PM
2	Social interaction.	10/19/2018 8:40 AM
3	All of the above	10/19/2018 4:34 AM
4	Compatibility of couples	10/18/2018 11:00 PM
5	None	10/18/2018 8:46 PM
6	The growing of the couple's and people and listening to the experts.	10/18/2018 6:47 PM
7	Interested in the social experiment nature of it	10/18/2018 6:07 PM
8	The relationships	10/18/2018 5:30 PM
9	Nothing	10/18/2018 3:26 PM
10	N/A	10/18/2018 3:12 PM
11	The personality profile of the participants	10/18/2018 3:12 PM
12	Nothing. The few minutes I've seen of these shows, it all is very contrived.	10/18/2018 1:13 PM
13	N/A	10/18/2018 10:55 AM

14	It's fake.	10/18/2018 9:34 AM
15	I don't watch these shows	10/18/2018 7:15 AM
16	None	10/18/2018 6:32 AM
17	Do not watch.	10/18/2018 5:47 AM
18	The idiocy of anyone willing to be one of many for a chance to be on tv. Do they seriously feel like it is true love? It is a game and people are competitive. I watch in hopes of someone speaking up and walking out. The train wreck continues though.	10/18/2018 5:38 AM
19	I don't watch TV	10/17/2018 11:35 PM
20	None	10/17/2018 11:26 PM
21	Nothing really. Pauly D was on so I watched some episodes.	10/17/2018 10:58 PM
22	I don't watch these types of shows	10/17/2018 10:42 PM
23	None	10/17/2018 10:06 PM
24	NA	10/17/2018 9:27 PM
25	Their losers	10/17/2018 9:17 PM
26	Nothing. I hate those shows.	10/17/2018 8:37 PM

### Q11 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?"Participants on these reality shows always have pure intentions of finding love."

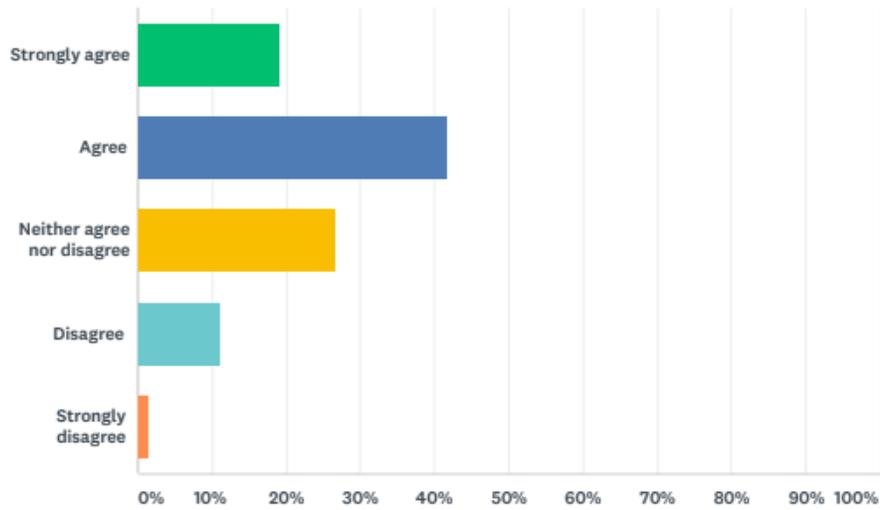
Answered: 197 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	2.54%	5
Agree	15.74%	31
Neither agree nor disagree	31.98%	63
Disagree	31.47%	62
Strongly disagree	18.27%	36
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>197</b>

Q12 How much do you agree or disagree with following statement?"Reality television dating/marriage shows are more scripted than unscripted."

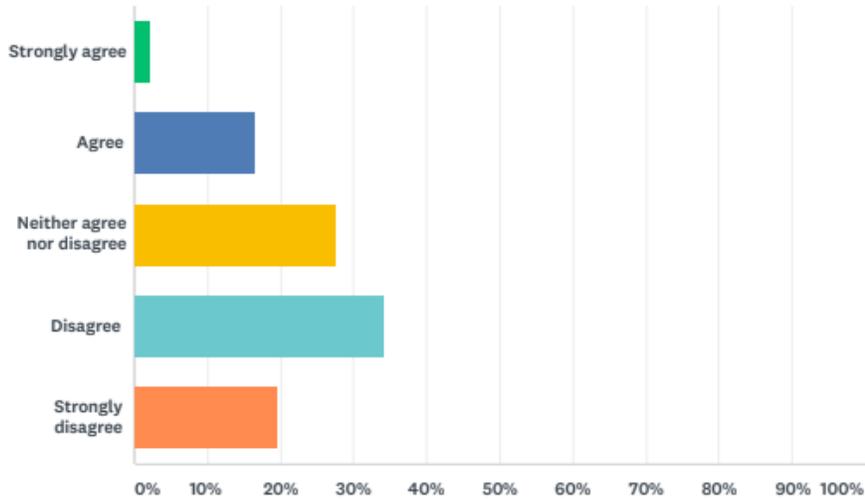
Answered: 199 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	19.10%	38
Agree	41.71%	83
Neither agree nor disagree	26.63%	53
Disagree	11.06%	22
Strongly disagree	1.51%	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>199</b>

**Q13 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?"Allowing the world to be able to observe and/or judge your relationship can be beneficial." (Outsiders opinions, outside point of view, etc.)**

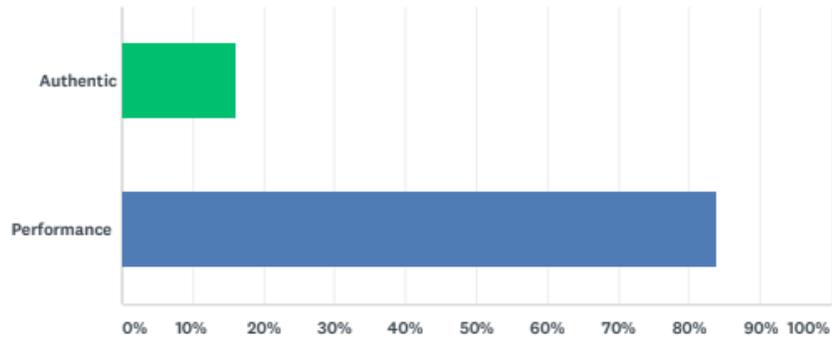
Answered: 199 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	2.01%	4
Agree	16.58%	33
Neither agree nor disagree	27.64%	55
Disagree	34.17%	68
Strongly disagree	19.60%	39
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>199</b>

# Q14 Do you believe relationships formed on television are more authentic (real) or a performance (an act)?

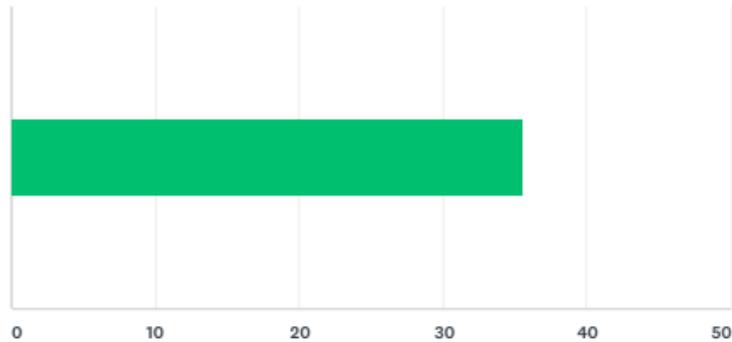
Answered: 199 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Authentic	16.08%	32
Performance	83.92%	167
TOTAL		199

**Q15 On a scale 1-10 how much of what you are seeing are you believing is real?(1 being not real at all, 10 being completely real)**

Answered: 199 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	36	7,075	199
Total Respondents: 199			

#		DATE
1	7	10/19/2018 7:42 PM
2	50	10/19/2018 7:03 PM
3	46	10/19/2018 7:01 PM
4	5	10/19/2018 4:12 PM
5	1	10/19/2018 4:01 PM
6	49	10/19/2018 1:08 PM
7	90	10/19/2018 12:59 PM
8	5	10/19/2018 12:41 PM
9	7	10/19/2018 12:16 PM
10	55	10/19/2018 11:51 AM
11	57	10/19/2018 11:41 AM
12	20	10/19/2018 10:46 AM
13	51	10/19/2018 8:58 AM
14	65	10/19/2018 8:57 AM
15	30	10/19/2018 8:40 AM
16	57	10/19/2018 8:37 AM
17	26	10/19/2018 8:24 AM
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21	70	10/19/2018 7:26 AM

22	50	10/19/2018 7:25 AM
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25	6	10/19/2018 5:22 AM
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27	1	10/19/2018 5:14 AM
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29	62	10/19/2018 4:53 AM
30	55	10/19/2018 4:34 AM
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33	2	10/19/2018 3:10 AM
34	58	10/19/2018 2:52 AM
35	30	10/19/2018 2:43 AM
36	66	10/19/2018 2:22 AM
37	65	10/19/2018 2:14 AM
38	66	10/19/2018 2:10 AM
39	60	10/19/2018 2:10 AM
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41	75	10/19/2018 1:40 AM
42	40	10/19/2018 1:32 AM
43	70	10/19/2018 1:20 AM

44	30	10/19/2018 1:14 AM
45	75	10/19/2018 1:08 AM
46	64	10/19/2018 1:03 AM
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53	23	10/19/2018 12:12 AM
54	45	10/19/2018 12:02 AM
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56	72	10/18/2018 11:52 PM
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67	60	10/18/2018 11:19 PM
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70	100	10/18/2018 11:00 PM
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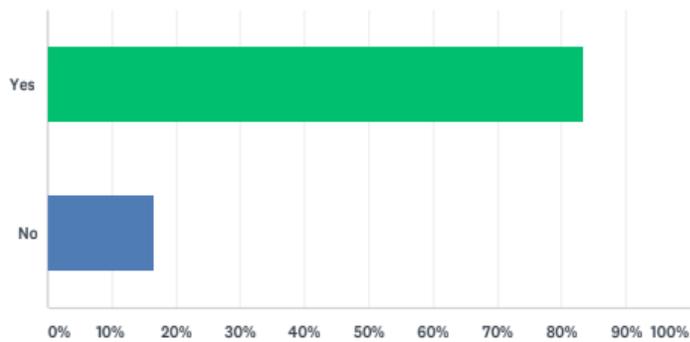
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153	1	10/18/2018 12:39 PM
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155	87	10/18/2018 11:17 AM
156	45	10/18/2018 11:15 AM
157	72	10/18/2018 11:14 AM
158	39	10/18/2018 10:55 AM
159	0	10/18/2018 9:34 AM
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161	5	10/18/2018 9:09 AM
162	84	10/18/2018 8:59 AM
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164	2	10/18/2018 8:14 AM
165	56	10/18/2018 7:55 AM

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181	9	10/17/2018 10:26 PM
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189	40	10/17/2018 9:26 PM
190	37	10/17/2018 9:22 PM
191	67	10/17/2018 9:19 PM
192	3	10/17/2018 9:17 PM
193	0	10/17/2018 9:15 PM
194	5	10/17/2018 9:02 PM
195	75	10/17/2018 8:44 PM
196	31	10/17/2018 8:41 PM
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199	3	10/17/2018 8:33 PM

### Q16 Do you believe someone can find love on television?

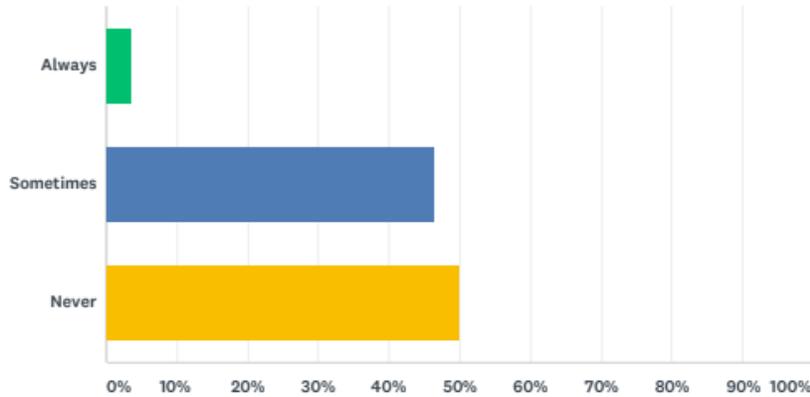
Answered: 199 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	83.42%	166
No	16.58%	33
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>199</b>

### Q17 Do you ever compare your own relationship to the ones you observe on television?

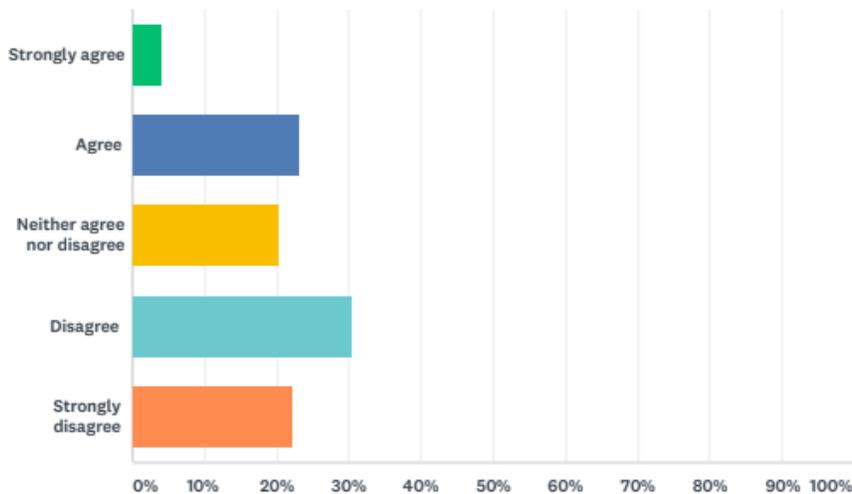
Answered: 198 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Always	3.54%	7
Sometimes	46.46%	92
Never	50.00%	99
TOTAL		198

### Q18 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?"I have learned valuable lessons from watching these shows."(How to find a partner, How to maintain a relationship, etc.)

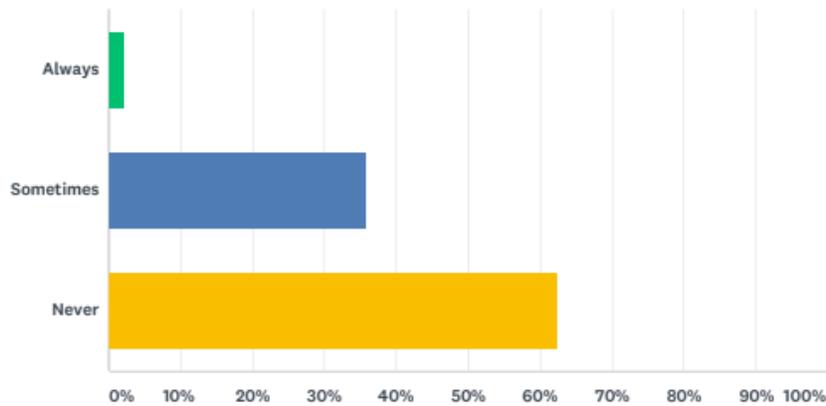
Answered: 198 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	4.04%	8
Agree	23.23%	46
Neither agree nor disagree	20.20%	40
Disagree	30.30%	60
Strongly disagree	22.22%	44
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>198</b>

### Q19 Do watching these shows ever influence your own relationship? (Date night ideas, social media posts, etc.)

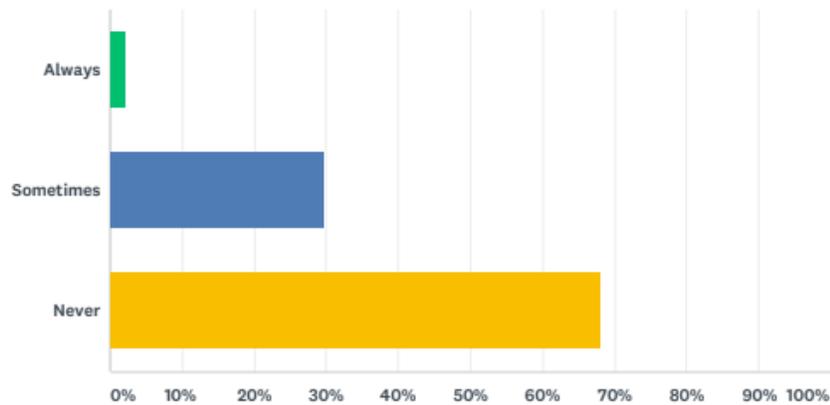
Answered: 199 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Always	2.01%	4
Sometimes	35.68%	71
Never	62.31%	124
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>199</b>

## Q20 Do watching these shows ever influence what you seek in a partner?

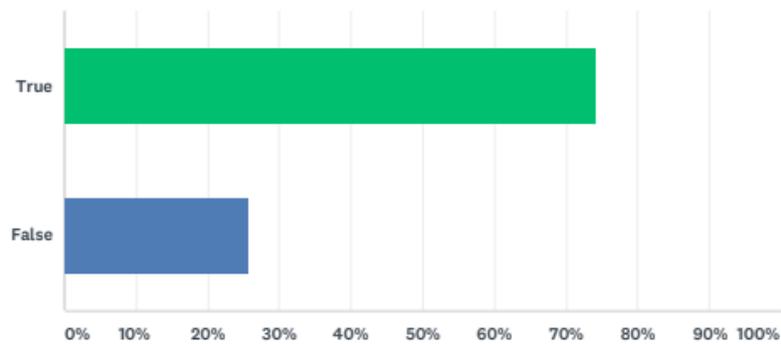
Answered: 198 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Always	2.02%	4
Sometimes	29.80%	59
Never	68.18%	135
TOTAL		198

## Q21 "I have felt an emotional connection to a participant on a reality dating/marriage show." (Happy for them, frustrated for them, embarrassed for them, etc.)

Answered: 198 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
True	74.24%	147
False	25.76%	51
TOTAL		198

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