TELEVISION AS AN INSTRUMENT OF SOCIAL CHANGE: EXAMINING INVOLVEMENT, MUSICAL PERFORMANCE, AND VIEWER EFFECTS

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by

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ABSTRACT

Using the entertainment-education (EE) perspective (Singhal & Rogers, 2004), this study examined the impact of entertainment television featuring social issues. The central question asked whether this content can lead to favorable attitudes, behavioral intentions, and helping behavior. Previous research has identified three possible mechanisms associated with EE effects: character, narrative, and emotional involvement (Murphy et al., 2011). Employing an experiment, involvement models were analyzed. Character involvement results revealed that identification predicted efficacy and behavioral intentions and that efficacy predicted behavioral intentions and behavior. Narrative involvement findings showed that transportation predicted decreased counterarguing and favorable empathic attitudes. Empathic attitudes led to behavioral intentions and behavior predicted empathic attitudes, decreased counterarguing, and behavioral intentions. Emotional involvement results revealed that elevation predicted behavioral intentions, positive feelings toward the focal group, and empathic attitudes. Furthermore, positive feelings predicted empathic attitudes and behavior, empathic attitudes predicted behavioral intentions, and behavioral intentions predicted behavior.

Another primary question concerned which involvement mechanism could best be attributed to the process of attitude and behavior change. With no clear distinction found, the involvement mechanisms and their subsequent variables were combined into an overarching EE model. When combined, elevation predicted behavioral intentions and transportation predicted decreased counterarguing and efficacy, but identification failed to have any impact. Empathic attitudes predicted behavioral intentions and decreased counterarguing predicted behavior. Efficacy, a significant component of the combined model, predicted behavioral intentions, behavior, and empathic attitudes.
The final question focused on understanding how music presentation plays a role within television content via the involvement mechanisms. Exposing participants to one of four types of music presentation (musical performance, original song, instrumental, or no music), results indicated that there was no overall effect for music presentation. However, when compared to the control condition, the music performance condition predicted identification, transportation, and elevation and the original song condition predicted transportation and elevation. Significant findings for the music presentation conditions were obtained in the combined model; however, the musical performance condition no longer predicted identification and the original song condition no longer predicted elevation. Study limitations, practical implications, and directions for future research are discussed.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES ............................................................................................................... vii
LIST OF TABLES ................................................................................................................... viii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..................................................................................................... ix

Significance of Study ........................................................................................................ 1

Literature Review ................................................................................................................ 3

- Entertainment-education .................................................................................................. 3
- Music and Musical Performance .................................................................................... 5
- Character Involvement .................................................................................................... 8
  - Key studies on identification ....................................................................................... 9
  - Measuring identification ............................................................................................ 10
  - Linking identification to persuasion .......................................................................... 10
  - Character involvement hypotheses ............................................................................ 12
- Narrative Involvement .................................................................................................... 13
  - Key studies on transportation .................................................................................. 14
  - Measuring transportation ......................................................................................... 15
  - Linking transportation to persuasion ........................................................................ 16
  - Narrative involvement hypotheses ............................................................................ 19
- Emotional Involvement .................................................................................................. 20
  - Elicitors and responses ............................................................................................. 22
  - Measuring elevation ................................................................................................. 23
  - How elevation may function .................................................................................... 25
  - Elevation in mass communication research .......................................................... 25
  - Expected outcomes .................................................................................................. 28
  - Harnessing elevation ............................................................................................... 29
  - Emotional involvement hypotheses .......................................................................... 31

Research Questions .......................................................................................................... 33

Methodology ...................................................................................................................... 36

- Experiment Sample ....................................................................................................... 36
- Study Procedures .......................................................................................................... 37
- Stimulus Material ......................................................................................................... 38
- Measurement ................................................................................................................ 39
  - General involvement measures ............................................................................... 43
  - Character involvement measures ......................................................................... 44
  - Narrative involvement measures ............................................................................ 45
  - Emotional involvement measures ........................................................................... 46
  - Additional variables ................................................................................................. 47
Results.................................................................................................................49

Character Involvement.........................................................................................49
Narrative Involvement.........................................................................................51
Emotional Involvement.........................................................................................53
Model Fit Differences...........................................................................................55
Multiple-group Analysis: Social Issues Featured and Gender.............................56
Familiarity, Liking, Issue Involvement, and Enjoyment..........................................57
Entertainment-education Model..............................................................................59

Discussion............................................................................................................63

Impact of Music Presentation................................................................................63
Character Involvement Model..............................................................................65
Narrative Involvement Model..............................................................................68
Emotional Involvement Model............................................................................71
Involvement Models...............................................................................................74
Entertainment-education Model............................................................................75
The Possibility of Long-lasting Effects.................................................................79
Potential Limitations..............................................................................................80
  Artificial nature of experiments........................................................................81
  Stimulus material employed..............................................................................82
  Participant sample..............................................................................................83
Practical Implications...........................................................................................83
Future Research....................................................................................................86
  Entertainment-education and involvement.......................................................87
  Measurement of emotional involvement.........................................................88
  Social issues in entertainment television.........................................................88

Conclusion..........................................................................................................91

Summary.............................................................................................................91
Conclusion..........................................................................................................93

REFERENCES......................................................................................................96

APPENDIX: MediaLab Questionnaire..................................................................111
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Hypothesized Character Involvement Model...........................................13
Figure 2: Hypothesized Narrative Involvement Model............................................19
Figure 3: Hypothesized Emotional Involvement Model..........................................32
Figure 4: Final Character Involvement Model..........................................................50
Figure 5: Final Narrative Involvement Model..........................................................52
Figure 6: Final Emotional Involvement Model.........................................................54
Figure 7: Hypothesized Entertainment-education Model.........................................60
Figure 8: Final Entertainment-education Model.........................................................61
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics...........................................................................40
Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations by Condition................................. 41
Table 3: Bivariate Correlations........................................................................42
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Chapter 1

Significance of Study

Foundational theories of entertainment psychology frequently argue that the selection and consumption of entertainment media is based on hedonistic motivations and that pleasure is the primary goal (see Zillmann, 2000; Oliver, 2003). However, new research has begun to investigate and label different motivators for entertainment consumption. Oliver and Raney (2011) were able to expand understanding regarding the selection of entertainment media for eudaimonic ends that involve the seeking of truth as opposed to solely seeking for pleasure. Not surprisingly, some media consumers that are driven by hedonistic goals are exposed to content that seek to do more than just entertain and provide pleasure. No matter what the driving force behind media selection is, when media audiences turn on their TV sets or watch television content on other viewing devices, there is a strong possibility that they will encounter programming that attempts to present tough questions about our social world. At times, the goal for these media creators may be to open a dialogue about a given social issue, continue a conversation that is already taking place, or even prompt the audience to make a change in their community or within themselves.

Newcomb and Hirsch (1983) saw television as a central avenue of this public thought process. Their perspective focused on the idea that television can serve as a public, cultural forum where the nation thinks aloud and discusses relevant social issues. While it would be impossible for every argument related to a given social issue to be presented in a single television episode, in terms of social awareness, the asking of questions is just as important as the answering of those questions (Newcomb & Hirsch, 1983). However, social awareness is simply not enough and, hopefully, is not the only goal. Some claim that social change may be
one possible effect of television consumption (Greenberg, Salmon, Patel, Beck, & Cole, 2004). The entertainment-education perspective (EE), originally viewed as “the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate, in order to increase audience members’ knowledge about an educational issue” (Singhal & Rogers, 2004, p. 5), has been extended to media content that might simply be entertainment-based, but also features some prosocial content regardless of its purpose for inclusion (Greenberg et al., 2004). Previous research has found that these types of messages can lead to significant changes in knowledge, attitude, and behavior of the viewers (Bae, 2012; Bae & Kang, 2008; Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010; Murphy & Cody, 2003; Murphy, Frank, Moran, & Patnoe-Woodley, 2011; Slater & Rouner, 2002; Smith, Downs, & Witte, 2007). In fact, EE is even believed by some to be a compelling instrument of social change (Greenberg et al., 2004).

Using the EE perspective, the central question being asked by this dissertation research is whether entertainment media that addresses social issues can lead to favorable attitudes, behavioral intentions, and helping behavior involving those that are struggling with these issues. An additional question put forth by this research concerns what variables play consequential roles in explaining this process. A range of theoretical constructs could be associated with the persuasive power of television narratives, and research concerned with EE effects is no different. EE research has identified three possible routes for attitude and behavior change, including: character involvement, narrative involvement, and emotional involvement (Murphy et al., 2011). The last question being asked by this research involves if and how musical performance within television content plays a role in this overall process.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Entertainment-education

Over the years, much research has been conducted concerning entertainment-education (EE) and whether television programs featuring issues related to health and society can create/increase awareness and even lead to behavior change (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010). EE research has been studied under other labels, including “enter-educate” and “info-tainment” (Papa et al., 2000), and although the terms may vary, the idea behind the concepts are the same: to educate and/or prompt changes in terms of health topics (or social issues) that are discussed in media content that is often associated with leisure, including radio serials, soap operas, music videos, and comic books (Smith, Downs, & Witte, 2007). The reason for viewing entertainment-education as a major instrument of social change is tied to the often universal appeal and popularity of entertainment media combined with its “ability to get people absorbed in an entertaining context” (Bae & Kang, 2008, p. 87). Not surprisingly, it is not the educational or persuasive content that attracts the viewing audience, but the compelling drama that is also presented during the same viewing experience (Bae, 2012).

Engagement with media characters and entertainment narratives comes in a variety of definitions, concepts, and theories. One way to narrow down the long list of options to choose from is to look at EE effects. When considering EE research and the persuasive power of narratives, two of the most frequently studied concepts of engagement are identification (character involvement) and transportation (narrative involvement) (Murphy et al., 2011). Identification occurs when a viewer is engaged with a specific character (or characters) within a narrative (Cohen, 2001a), and transportation occurs when a viewer is engaged with the narrative
more generally (Green & Brock, 2000). In fact, it has been argued that identification and transportation may actually work together to produce a broader construct that Busselle and Bilandzic (2008) define as narrative engagement, but for the purpose of this research, the focus will be on the individual constructs alone.

Further research has shown that the persuasive power of narratives may not be grounded in character involvement or narrative involvement, but instead with “the emotion that the story evokes” (Murphy et al., 2011, p. 412). In terms of emotional involvement, Dillard and Peck (2000) stated that, within narratives, emotions have the ability to both captivate and persuade the audience. This effect is heightened when a narrative is presented in a televised serial format over an extended period of time, allowing for emotional involvement with the character(s) in the story (Slater & Rouner, 2002).

Emotional involvement has been applied to EE research in a few different ways (Murphy et al., 2011). One way of looking at the amount of emotional involvement is tied to hedonic valence and either positive or negative affect (see Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Murphy & Zajonc, 1993; Pratto, 1994; Tal-Or & Cohen, 2010; Zajonc, 1980). Another way of examining emotional involvement is studying a specific, discrete emotion like anger, disgust, fear, happiness, or sadness (see Bodenhausen, Sheppard, & Kramer, 1994; DeSteno, Petty, Rucker, Wegener, & Braverman, 2004; Nabi, 2002a, 2002b, Tiedens & Linton, 2001). In terms of hedonic valence, a long established understanding has been that negative affect, as compared to positive affect, increases systematic processing of information (see Nabi, 2002a, 2002b; Petty & Wegener, 1998; Schwarz & Clore, 1998). In terms of discrete emotions, research has shown that increased attention and acceptance of a message is more likely when the emotional state of the individual matches the tone of the media message (DeSteno et al., 2004).
For this proposed research, the discrete emotion of elevation will be applied to the EE approach. Elevation is defined as “a warm, uplifting feeling that people experience when they see unexpected acts of human goodness, kindness, and compassion... [that] makes a person want to help others and to become a better person himself or herself” (Haidt, 2000, p. 1-2). The concept of elevation will be discussed more fully in a later section when overviewing research on emotional involvement.

**Music and Musical Performance**

Based on one of the secondary questions of the proposed dissertation research, this study asks whether musical performance can be an effective way to strengthen identification with the characters featured, increase the amount of transportation into the narrative, and/or amplify feelings of elevation. This question is based on the understanding that music is “the language of the emotions” (Scherer, 1995, p. 242) and that “music expresses emotion” (Scherer & Zentner, 2001, p. 361). For those who study the connection between music and television/film, it is common knowledge that emotion characterizes the experience of both music and film (Cohen, 2001b). Whether in the context of television and film or on its own, music often does more than just express emotions; it also produces them (Scherer & Zentner, 2001).

Music is a vital part of the media viewing experience (Cohen, 2001b), with some scholars arguing that music may be the most efficient way of expressing emotions via media (Kalinak, 2010). Within the context of television, music contributes to both emotional meaning (Juslin, 1997) and an establishment of a general mood, which allows for a viewing experience for the audience that involves emotions that are both deep and sincere (Cohen, 2001b). Important to consider with this line of research is that music often serves several functions in the multimedia context, including: (1) directing attention to the most important features on the screen; (2)
inducing mood; (3) communicating meaning and furthering the narrative; (4) causing the viewer to become integrated within the program assisting with memory recall; and (5) heightening the sense of reality of or absorption into the program by “augmenting arousal and increasing attention” (Cohen, 2001b, p. 259).

Concerning the impact of music on emotion, several studies have shown that musical performance has a strong influence on emotional expression (see Juslin, 2000; Juslin & Laukka, 2003). Studies like these support the notion that music can communicate emotions, such as sadness, fear, anger and happiness (Juslin, 2000). A number of challenges have been associated with studying the vocal expression of emotion (whether singing or speaking) and, as such, research in this area is sparse (Scherer, 1995). However, a review of 104 studies (Juslin & Laukka, 2003) on vocal expression and 41 studies on musical performance found two very interesting similarities between the two forms of communication. The first was that there is usually great accuracy in terms of the emotions that are intended to be communicated and what emotional understanding was received. The second was the “emotion-specific patterns of acoustic cues used to communicate each emotion” (p. 770).

To ascertain the impact of musical performance in this context, the proposed dissertation research study draws similarities to a qualitative analysis conducted by Gotell, Brown, and Ekman (2007). Gotell et al. (2007) were interested in the influence of singing and background music on the emotions and moods of dementia patients. In this study, the sessions between caregiver and patients were conducted in one of three ways: no music, background music playing, and singing by the caregiver (sometimes with the patient singing as well). Gotell et al. (2007) found that, when compared to the first condition (no music), the music conditions enhanced positive emotions and improved communication between the caregiver and patient.
Additionally, when compared to the other conditions, the singing condition enhanced sincerity and intimacy in the caregiver/patient interactions.

Since elevation is an emotional state (Haidt, 2000), transportation includes an emotional component (Green & Brock, 2000), and one of the dimensions of identification is empathy or the ability to share and understand the feelings of others (Cohen, 2001a), previous research (Juslin, 2000; Juslin & Laukka, 2003) would imply that music and musical performance may be able to raise levels in each of these three variables due to increased emotional understanding. As such, differences in musical presentation would most likely be driven by emotion or affect. Based on the connection between musical performance and emotional understanding, this dissertation study has four music conditions, including musical performance, original song, instrumental, and a control group. Each condition will feature a social issue narrative; however, stimulus exposure will end with varying musical presentations. In the musical performance condition, the narrative will be followed by a story-congruent musical number performed by characters featured in the narrative. In the remaining conditions, the social issue narrative will be followed by a slideshow of images taken from the program featured in the clip. The original song condition will play the original version of the story-congruent song, the instrumental condition will play an instrumental version of the song, and the control condition will feature no music while the slideshow plays. Due to the removal of music, lyrics, and performance, this study conjectures that the musical performance condition will lead to the highest emotional understanding compared to the other music (and non-music) conditions, and that this emotional understanding will be evident with increased levels of elevation, transportation, and identification.
Character Involvement

Within the EE perspective, character involvement is often connected to social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977) and, more specifically, the concept of identification (Cohen, 2001a). One of the key difficulties with studying identification is that it has been conceptually defined in a number of ways (Moyer-Gusé, 2008; Murphy et al., 2011). Aspects of identification include: liking or positive evaluation of the character (Giles, 2002); parasocial interaction, or the imaged relationship between a viewer and a media character (Moyer-Gusé, 2008); perceived similarity to the character (also known as homophily) (Slater & Rouner, 2002); relating to a given character (Wilkin et al., 2007); wishing, or wanting, to be like the character (Eyal & Rubin, 2003); or the process of taking the perspective of the character, or the traditional view of identification (Cohen, 2001a). With these complexities in mind, some scholars choose to combine some of the aforementioned aspects, yet others do not (Murphy et al., 2011). Unfortunately, there does not seem to be a unanimously accepted conceptual definition for identification. One proposed solution is to combine some of the aspects related to identification into one overarching concept, as recommended by Moyer-Gusé (2008) and to label it involvement with characters. From this perspective, involvement with characters would tie in aspects of not just identification, but also liking, similarity, parasocial interaction, and wishful identification.

However, for the purpose of the proposed dissertation research, the emphasis is solely on the concept of identification. Cohen (2001a) defined identification as “an imaginative process through which an audience member assumes the identity, goals, and perspective of a character” (p. 261). Cohen’s definition is similar to one offered several years later by Moyer-Gusé and Nabi (2010) when they defined identification as “an emotional and cognitive process whereby a viewer imagines himself or herself as a particular character” (p. 29). As such, the conceptual
definition of identification will use elements from both definitions (Cohen, 2001a; Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010), defining identification as an emotional and cognitive process through which a viewer imagines himself or herself as a particular character based on the character’s identity, goals, and perspective.

**Key studies on identification.** Often connected to social cognitive theory (SCT), studies about identification with media characters and its effects on viewers have been conducted for more than 30 years. On the subject of identification, some studies have shown: that for children, identification with aggressive television characters increased learning of similar aggressive behavior (Huesmann, Lagerspetz, & Eron, 1984); that identification with a fictional character of similar race and gender as the participant can lead to the individual being intensely moved by the experiences and struggles of the character, which was shown for both White women (Sharf & Friemuth, 1993; Sharf, Freimuth, Greenspon, & Plotnick, 1996) and young Hispanic women (Singhal & Rogers, 1999); that the adoption of health behaviors is more likely to occur when identification with the celebrities promoting a given behavior takes place (Basil, 1996); that young adults are able to learn about the risks and obligations tied to sexual activity when they identify with sexually active characters (Collins, Elliott, Berry, Kanouse, & Hunter, 2003); that the aggression of the viewer can be predicted by identification with aggressive television characters, but is not tied to the concepts of parasocial interaction and similarity with the character (Eyal & Rubin, 2003); and that listeners of a radio drama that featured a government-sponsored health campaign focused on HIV prevention reported stronger perceptions of efficacy and stronger intentions to practice HIV transmission (through abstinence, monogamy, or condom use) when they identified with characters in the radio drama (Smith et al., 2007).
Measuring identification. Once a clear definition for identification has been designated, the selection of a measure for the concept is much easier. One of the most cited measures of identification was developed by Cohen (2001a) based on prior research and measurement methods. Cohen (2001a) went about composing a measure of identification with media characters, because at the time no such measure existed. The measure includes four dimensions: (1) empathy, or being able to share the feelings of a given character; (2) sharing the perspective of the character; (3) motivation, or the extent to which the viewer shares the character’s goals; and (4) absorption, or the level that loss of self-awareness takes place during exposure (Cohen, 2001a). As such, the “more someone is absorbed in the text, empathizes with and understands a character, and adopts his or her goals, the more he or she may be said to identify with that character” (Cohen, 2001a, p. 256).

Linking identification to persuasion. Based on prior research, it is clear that media consumers seem to learn more from and model behavior performed by characters that they identify with (Bandura, 2002b). Considering the idea that identification with a given character might persuade the viewer to act similarly or adopt a new behavior, how does this process occur? What might be the theoretical rationale for why engagement with a character would influence the viewer to perform a desired outcome? To answer these questions, most identification scholars rely on Bandura’s (1977) social cognitive theory (SCT), originally known as social learning theory (SLT). SCT is the primary theory identified when discussing the concept of identification (Bandura, 1977). In fact, SCT, as a whole, is often recognized as the theoretical mechanism for EE and its effects (Moyer-Gusé, 2008; Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010). As many media scholars would agree, television and other mass media play a substantial role in the development and socialization of individuals in society. SCT is one way to better understand behavior adoption
and persuasion, as there is a wide variety of attractive characters on television that are used as models for behavior (Hoffner, 1996).

SCT distinguishes four mechanisms by which individuals learn via modeled behavior. The four mechanisms include: (1) attention, (2) retention, (3) production, and (4) motivation (Bandura, 2002b). With the first mechanism, viewers are more prone to pay attention to a television program with “attractive characters that discuss salient issues” (Smith et al., 2007). For the second mechanism, retention is essential, as individuals cannot be influenced by actions they observe if they are not remembered. The third mechanism of production involves translating the portrayed behavior into an appropriate course of action (Bandura, 2009). And finally, for the fourth mechanism, social endorsements and personal benefits may lead to motivation to model the behavior (Smith et al., 2007). When these mechanisms are properly combined there is an increased chance of the adoption of the given behavior (Bandura, 2002b). One of the key propositions of SCT is that people are much more likely to imitate a behavior that they have seen demonstrated or performed than one that is only recommended or discussed (Bandura, 2004a, 2004b). Another element to consider is tied to the fact that not all models (or characters demonstrating the behavior) are as effective as others in producing behavior change in the viewer. In a number of situations, identification is a strong driving force because characters that viewers can identify with are much more successful at activating the behavior change process (Murphy et al., 2012). In fact, previous research has found that identification is linked to increased attention and behavior modeling (Sood, 2002).

Also essential to the process of persuasion through identification and SCT is efficacy (Bandura, 2000), also known as personal efficacy or self-efficacy. Efficacy is defined as a “belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required to produce given
attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). Based on the four mechanisms discussed, the chance of behavior adoption taking place is dependent on identification and efficacy. SCT is strongly grounded in the concept of personal agency, or that individuals assess, plan, and execute their own behavior (Smith et al., 2007). An essential element of SCT is that the viewer does not adopt every observed behavior (Bandura, 2004b). Bandura (2002a) noted that no matter what factors “serve as guides and motivators, they are rooted in the core belief that one has the power to produce desired effects by one’s actions, otherwise one has little incentive to act or to persevere” (p. 270). That being said, research has shown that motivation to perform a behavior is more likely to take place when a character is rewarded for their behavior as opposed to when a character is punished in some way for a given behavior. As such, rewarded behavior of a character reinforces the value of said behavior for the viewer, but punished behavior of a character discourages behavior adoption (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010). Considering this idea, research has shown that viewers learn about social norms and standards of conduct from both positive and negative behavior models (Hoffner, 1996).

**Character involvement hypotheses.** The hypotheses presented in this section are connected to a hypothesized model for character involvement that was designed for the purpose of this dissertation research and is based on previous work conducted in the areas of entertainment-education, EE effects, identification, and social cognitive theory and the concept of increased emotional understanding through depictions of musical performance.

**H1:** When a musical performance is present as opposed to the original song or an instrumental version, television content featuring social issues will be more effective at increasing identification with characters helping others deal with these social concerns due to increased emotional understanding (Juslin & Laukka, 2003; Smith et al., 2007).
H2: Identification with helping characters will lead to behavioral intentions and behavior to assist people dealing with the featured social issues (Kincaid, 2002).

H3: Identification with helping characters will lead to efficacy regarding the participants’ capability to help others in similar situations (Smith et al., 2007).

H4: Efficacy on the part of the participants will lead to behavioral intentions to help people dealing with different social issues (Smith et al., 2007).

H5: Efficacy on the part of the participants will lead to helping behavior (Slater, 1999).

H6: Behavioral intentions to help people dealing with different social issues will lead to helping behavior (Oliver, Dillard, Bae, & Tamul, 2012).

Figure 1

Hypothesized Character Involvement Model

Narrative Involvement

Within the EE perspective, narrative involvement is tied to transportation, a concept originally introduced by Green and Brock (2000) from a term coined by Richard Gerrig (1993). Transportation is defined as “the process by which an individual becomes immersed into a story, losing track of the real world as he or she experiences the unfolding events in the story” (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010, p. 29). A narrative is a story with “an identifiable beginning, middle, and end that provides information about scene, characters, and conflict; raises unanswered questions
or unresolved conflict; and provides resolution” (Hinyard & Kreuter, 2007, p. 778). Green and Brock (2000) conceptualized transportation into a narrative as “a distinct mental process, an integrative melding of attention, imagery, and feelings” (p. 701). As such, transportation has three main components: cognitive engagement (connected to attention), emotional engagement (connected to affect), and mental imagery.

Transportation is similar to other constructs such as flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), absorption (Tellegen & Atkinson, 1974), and presence (Biocca, 2002), but transportation, in particular, considers the last two components, emotional response and mental imagery, which are not always reflected in other engagement constructs (Green et al., 2008). While the loss of awareness via transportation is similar to the process of identification, the idea of taking the perspective of the character based on their goals and emotions is not required of transportation (where it is required for identification). With transportation, the viewer is immersed in the narrative, but can also maintain a separate perspective from the characters (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010). However, transportation into a narrative world does make the individual more susceptible to the claims and assertions made within the context of the story (Green, 2004).

**Key studies on transportation.** Building on work conducted by previous researchers (see Gerrig & Prentice, 1991, among others), Green and Brock (2000) first tested transportation with the use of a nine-page story called *Murder at the Mall* about a young women whose sister is killed by a psychiatric patient. Participants who reported high levels of transportation also reported “higher perceptions of violence, more opposition to freedoms for psychiatric patients, and a greater sense of injustice” (Green & Brock, 2005, p. 127), which were claims that were not mentioned explicitly but were only implied within the story (Green & Brock, 2005). Since 2000, numerous studies have been conducted on the subject of transportation. Some of those studies
have found: that belief change can occur regardless of whether the story is labeled as fact or fiction or whether a positive or a negative tone is applied (Green & Brock, 2000); that viewers of advertisements may disregard the strength of an argument when they are transported into a narrative, and that transportation leads to more positive feelings in regards to ad attitudes and brand evaluations (Escalas, 2004); that familiarity with narrative themes leads to increased transportation, and that transportation can lead to higher perceptions of realism (Green, 2004); that everyday beliefs can be swayed due to transportation into a narrative that contains false information, and that the level of belief change increases over time (Appel & Richter, 2007); and, finally, how much a person enjoys the effort needed to be immersed in a narrative has a direct effect on how transported they actually become, and that transportation does not decrease with repeated exposure to a narrative, even if the individual does not choose to encounter it again (Green et al., 2008).

**Measuring transportation.** When measuring transportation, the process is more complicated than one would hope. To measure transportation, viewers are asked, “the extent to which they forgot about their surroundings while viewing and felt present in the mediated environment they were viewing” (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010). Originally, Green and Brock (2000) developed a measure of transportation with 15 items (11 general items and 4 mental imagery items), including: “I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the narrative” and “After finishing the narrative, I found it easy to put it out of my mind.” Depending on the context of the study, the mental imagery items can be dropped, as those items are difficult to interpret with the use of visual content (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009). While this scale provided adequate reliability in the original study (Green & Brock, 2000) and several subsequent studies for Green (Green, 2006; Green, Brock, & Kaufman, 2004; Green et al., 2008), others
have had to adopt only certain items as, in some instances, the scale has been found to not be unidimensional and often produces unreliable results (Escalas, 2004; Oliver, Dillard, et al., 2012; Slater, Rouner, & Long, 2006).

The revised measurement method outlined by Oliver, Dillard, et al. (2012) may continue to prove promising, which uses seven of the 15 original, general measures to create two scales: story impact and story involvement. Story impact uses the following four items: “While I was reading the narrative, I could easily picture the events in it taking place,” “The narrative affected me emotionally,” “The events in the narrative are relevant to my everyday life,” and “The events in the narrative have changed my life.” Story involvement uses three items: “While I was reading the narrative, activity going on in the room around me was on my mind (reverse coded),” “I was mentally involved in the narrative while reading it,” and “I found my mind wandering while reading the narrative (reverse coded).” For the transportation measure discussed here, the items can be adapted for written narratives (books, short stories, etc.), visual narrative (like films or television programs), and radio as well.

**Linking transportation to persuasion.** Previous research has shown that narratives are effective tools of persuasion due to the fact that the mind is biologically wired for stories and that narratives are an excellent way to store and retrieve information (Green & Brock, 2005). Considering this idea, how does transportation actually work? Green and Brock’s (2000) theoretical framework for transportation and persuasive narratives has specific elements that are not always clear. First, when transported into the narrative, the viewer loses his/her awareness of the outside world and instead is focused completely on the narrative world he/she is experiencing. Next, due to immersion in the narrative world, the viewer experiences increased emotions and motivations as if they in fact were actually taking part in the events of the
narrative. Finally, the viewer eventually exits the narrative world and the process of transportation ends, but often a cognitive change has occurred due to strong engagement with the narrative.

The cognitive change that has taken place during the transportation process is the element that has been shown to lead to persuasion (Green & Brock, 2002). Research has shown that transported individuals are more likely to adjust their real-world attitudes and beliefs based on the presentation of new or different claims that are present within the narrative (Green, 2004). When transportation takes place, the individual is often temporarily separated from his or her own personal experiences (Green & Brock, 2000). As such, persuasion occurs because transported viewers may have incorporated story information in place of real-world information that was originally present in their cognitive belief structures (Green, 2008). Additionally, individuals who have been transported into a narrative are more likely to view it as a real experience and, as such, the messages or lessons of the narrative have a much stronger impact on them and their lives (Green & Brock, 2000).

Over the years, the theory surrounding narrative persuasion and transportation has often been labeled differently, including the transportation-imagery model (Green & Brock, 2002), narrative transportation theory (Escalas, 2004), or, simply, transportation theory (Green & Brock, 2000). However, these theories appear to be just extensions of the transportation concept. One theory that has been applied to the concept of transportation to help explain narrative persuasion is the extended elaboration likelihood model (E-ELM) (Moyer-Gusé, 2008; Slater & Rouner, 2002). One reason the E-ELM has been applied here, as opposed to the elaboration likelihood model (ELM), is that the ELM posits that the more an individual is involved in an issue, the more attention will be given to arguments that are relevant to the message. Based on the quality
of the arguments presented, attitude change may be a long-term effect. However, research conducted about narratives shows that involvement with the issue, or a persuasive topic, is not as important when the message is presented in narrative form (Slater & Rouner, 2002). In the context of EE, the E-ELM places an emphasis on story involvement/engagement (as opposed to issue involvement) and, as such, viewers who are engaged in a narrative are less critical of new information (Kreuter et al., 2007; Shrum, 2004). In addition to suggesting that viewers will be less critical of persuasive messages when engaged with a narrative, the E-ELM posits that transportation has the ability to affect our attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors due to a reduction in the ability to counterargue the messages presented, thus leading to persuasion (Moyer-Gusé, 2008).

Message counterarguing is a type of resistance that Slater and Rouner (2002) described as the “generation of thoughts that dispute or are inconsistent with the persuasive argument” (p. 180). Connection to the story and perceptions of realism lessen the likelihood that we might dispute the ideas found within the narrative, since the world of the narrative seems so real to us (Green, 2008). The more transported an individual is (which is tied to the narrative’s appeal, production quality, and the inconspicuous nature of the persuasive content), the less likely that counterarguing will occur (Slater & Rouner, 2002). In fact, it has been claimed that engagement with a narrative (i.e., transportation) and the process of counterarguing are completely contradictory (Slater & Rouner, 2002). In addition, transportation may also lead to persuasion due to the fact that the viewer no longer has access to real-world facts, thus making them more accepting of the narrative world and as such, unable to grasp the contradictions being made in narrative (Green & Brock, 2000).
**Narrative involvement hypotheses.** The hypotheses presented in this section are connected to a hypothesized model for narrative involvement that was designed for the purpose of this dissertation research and is based on previous work conducted in the areas of entertainment-education, EE effects, transportation, and narrative persuasion and the concept of increased emotional understanding through depictions of musical performance.

Figure 2

*Hypothesized Narrative Involvement Model*

H7: When a musical performance is present as opposed to the original song or an instrumental version, television content featuring social issues will be more effective at increasing transportation into the narrative due to increased emotional understanding (Green & Brock, 2000; Juslin & Laukka, 2003).

H8: Transportation into the narrative will lead to less counterarguing (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010).

H9: Less counterarguing with the arguments presented in the narrative will lead to empathic attitudes towards people who experience the featured social issues (Green & Brock, 2000).
H10: Less counterarguing with the arguments presented in the narrative will lead to behavioral intentions and behaviors to help others who experience the social issue featured (Green, 2004).

H11: Empathic attitudes towards people who experience the featured social issue will lead to behavioral intentions to help others in similar situations (Oliver, Dillard, et al., 2012).

H12: Empathic attitudes towards people who experience the featured social issue will lead to helping behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005).

**Emotional Involvement**

When asked to identify the emotion associated with the feelings we receive when we see acts of virtue or moral beauty, many people would be unable to offer one specific word. Previous research has found that people use words like “happy” or “moved” (Algoe & Haidt, 2009), but those words can be applied to a number of different contexts. Over the past 10 years, several studies (Algoe & Haidt, 2006; Freeman, Aquino, & McFerran, 2009; Keltner & Haidt, 2003; Silvers & Haidt, 2008) have been conducted that provide evidence for the existence of an emotion that discussed by Thomas Jefferson (1771/1975) and was labeled by Jonathan Haidt (2000) as elevation. Elevation is an emotional state that is triggered by watching people display strength of character (Keltner & Haidt, 2003) and “acts of charity, gratitude, fidelity, generosity, or any other strong display of virtue” (Algoe & Haidt, 2009, p. 2).

Jefferson (1771/1975) stated that elevation results in distinct physical responses, including the opening or “dilation” of the chest and the feeling of being “elevated” or uplifted by viewing these “acts of virtue” (Haidt, 2003a, p. 276). Feelings of elevation adjust our thought-action repertoire and make similar behavior more likely (Haidt, 2000). Jefferson believed that
reading about these acts of virtue may lead individuals to want to be a better person and may even cause them to inwardly commit to imitate the virtuous example (Jefferson, 1771/1975). In fact, one needs to only hear about a virtuous act secondhand to experience heightened feelings of love and a desire for affiliation with the moral individual (Haidt, 2000). Being moved emotionally, desiring to be a better person, and pledging to copy a virtuous example can lead to a moral transformation when witnessing such acts of extraordinary goodness (Aquino, McFerran, & Laven, 2011).

Haidt (2003b) situated elevation within a family of “other-praising” emotions in that they arise from other’s admirable deeds (Algoe & Haidt, 2009). In addition to elevation, the other-praising emotions include gratitude and admiration (Algoe & Haidt, 2009). Admiration, elevation, and gratitude all share similar emotional properties, including the idea that each “results from an eliciting event, produces physical changes in the person, is a phenomenological experience, and motivates a certain type of action tendency” (Aquino et al., 2011, p. 704). Although there are several similarities between the other-praising emotions, research supports the idea that elevation is conceptually different from both gratitude and admiration (Algoe & Haidt, 2009). While elevation is an emotional response to moral excellence that is selfless, gratitude is a reaction to any type of moral excellence that benefits the individual directly (Algoe & Haidt, 2009). In terms of admiration, it is often defined as an emotional response to non-moral excellence, while elevation is a reaction to moral excellence (Algoe & Haidt, 2009). Important to note is that elevation is also strongly related to the family of awe-related states, such as inspiration and awe itself; however, elevation does not usually involve perceived power (Keltner & Haidt, 2003), making it distinct from the other awe-related states.
To combine the elements discussed in this section into a single conceptual definition, elevation is an emotional response to witnessing acts of virtue and moral beauty that leads to specific responses and the selfless desire to become a better person and act in that manner. While elevation possesses each hallmark of all basic emotions, the only element lacking is a “distinctive facial expression” (Haidt, 2003b, p. 864).

**Elicitors and responses.** Whereas the opposite of elevation, social disgust, is elicited by moral depravity, elevation is elicited by moral beauty (Haidt, 2003b). Powerful elicitors of elevation include morally beautiful acts of benevolence, charity, and kindness (Haidt, 2003b). Elicitors also include viewing displays of “humanity’s higher or better nature” (Haidt, 2003b, p. 864) and primarily ones that benefit the well-being of others (Schnall, Roper, & Fessler, 2010). These acts are, at times, unexpected (Haidt, 2000); however, whether they are anticipated or not, the important thing to remember is that witnessing moral excellence and human goodness can trigger affective and physical responses (Freeman et al., 2009). With regard to affective responses, words that are often used to describe this feeling include surprised, stunned (Haidt, 2000), moved, touched, or inspired (Haidt, 2003a). These descriptors suggest that cognitive processes are being changed, especially in terms of viewing “humanity in a more optimistic way and triggering more prosocial goals” (Haidt, 2000, p. 3). In addition, even though elevation is often tied to positive feelings, descriptors like *touched* and *inspired* tend to reflect mixed affective responses (Oliver, Hartmann, & Woolley, 2012), or high levels of both positive and negative affect.

As noted earlier, with regard to physical responses, feelings of elevation can lead to an opening, expansion, or “dilation” of the chest (Jefferson, 1771/1975). Previous research has confirmed this response (Haidt, 2003a), which has also been described as *warm, uplifting* (Haidt,
2000), *pleasant* (Keltner & Haidt 2003), and even *pleasurable* (Algoe & Haidt, 2009). In addition to feelings in the chest, other physical responses associated with elevation include a lump in the throat (Algoe & Haidt, 2009), goose bumps, and even tears (Silvers & Haidt, 2008). Interestingly, it has been speculated that a number of these physical responses may be caused by the release of the hormone oxytocin (Silvers & Haidt, 2008), which increases when people have received signals of trust (Zak, Kurzban, & Matzner, 2005). As such, witnessing acts of virtue can be seen as a signal of trust, “which could explain the link between witnessing such acts and the physiological sensations associated with moral elevation” (Aquino et al., 2011, p. 704).

**Measuring elevation.** Based on prior research and tied to the reactions outlined in the previous section, elevation is often measured with either physical responses, affective responses, or both. For physical responses, the manifestations of affective responses can be measured by a series of bodily reactions that have been identified by Silvers and Haidt (2008) and Algoe and Haidt (2009). These physical responses include warmth in the chest, lump in the throat, chills, tingles, goose bumps, and tears. After exposing study participants to elevating stimuli, such as a narrative video clip about Mother Teresa (Haidt, 2000), participants can be asked to indicate at what level they experienced these physical responses on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from did not feel at all (1) to experienced through most of the clip (7).

In the past, affective responses have been measured in one of two ways. One means of measuring affective responses is to ask the individuals to respond to several closed-end affect items. The affective reaction items often employed are based on prior research conducted by Oliver, Hartmann, et al. (2012). After conducting a confirmatory factor analysis on a variety of affect items, including positive affect, negative affect, and meaningful affect which reflects
elevation, Oliver, Hartmann, et al. (2012) found that the several items loaded high for meaningful affect. These elevation items included *touched, moved, meaningful, compassion, emotional, inspired,* and *tender.* Individuals are asked to indicate at what level they experienced these meaningful affective items on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from *not at all* (1) to *very much* (7). Other affective reaction items might include surprised, stunned (Haidt, 2000), uplifted, and, simply, elevated (Algoe & Haidt, 2009).

As mentioned earlier, while elevation is usually linked to positive feelings, descriptors like *touched* and *inspired* can also reflect mixed affective responses (Oliver, Hartmann, et al., 2012). Mixed affective reactions are evident when high levels of both positive and negative affect are present. Considering this avenue, elevation and its affective responses have also been measured by computing mixed-affect scores. With prior methods outlined by Ersner-Hershfield, Mikels, Sullivan, and Carstensen (2008), mixed affect has been measured with the use of positive and negative affect items. Measured in the same way that meaningful affect items are measured, positive affect includes items such as *cheerful, happy,* and *joyful,* while negative affect includes *sad, gloomy,* and *melancholy* (Oliver, Hartmann, et al., 2012). Employing procedures used by Ersner-Hershfield et al. (2008) and using the affect scores collected from the participants, individuals with high levels of both positive and negative affect are seen as having a high mixed-affect score. Not surprisingly, those participants with low levels of both positive and negative affect are seen as having a low mixed-affect score. Additionally, those that had high levels of either positive or negative affect, but low levels of the contrasting affect (such as high positive and low negative affect) are seen as having a low mixed-affect score. As such, high mixed-affect scores might help to predict affective responses of elevation (Oliver, Hartmann, et al., 2012).
How elevation may function. Due to its conceptual, emotional, and cognitive complexity, it is extremely difficult to surmise exactly how elevation functions and what might be the specific process involved (Aquino et al., 2011). However, previous research has noted that when trying to understand how it functions, elevation fits nicely within the broaden-and-build model (Haidt, 2000) introduced by Fredrickson (2000). Fredrickson (1998) suggested that positive and negative emotions are profoundly different. According to Fredrickson (1998), negative emotions, such as anger, fear, and disgust, limit our focus to only the most immediate concern. In contrast, positive emotions, such as joy, contentment, interest, and love, *broaden* our perspective thus motivating us to *build* skills and resources for our future. Algoe and Haidt (2009) believed that other-praising emotions, including elevation, offer support to the theory behind Fredrickson’s broaden-and-build model. Elevation and the rest of the other-praising emotions do not result in any immediate behavior (much like a fight or flight response). Instead, the other-praising emotions “change people’s cognitions and motivations in ways that make it easier for them to build relationships and skills, especially if such opportunities present themselves in the environment” (Algoe & Haidt, 2009, p. 22). In connection with Fredrickson’s (2000) broaden-and-build model, elevation results in changes in our cognitive process as well as our subsequent behavior, both of which will be prosocial in nature over an extended period of time (Algoe & Haidt, 2009).

Elevation in mass communication research. When considering elevation and its related responses, one question concerns how it can be situated in mass communication research. When Jefferson (1771/1975) discussed feeling “elevated,” his dialogue was in connection to feelings, experiences, and subsequent behavior following exposure to the dominant form of mass communication at the time: books. No matter where these elevating narratives are housed, in
books, films, television programs, news, video games, advertising, or the Internet with inspiring YouTube videos (Oliver, Hartmann, et al., 2012) or uplifting news articles (Berger & Milkman, 2010), one of the most common themes present is a social focus that involves an eagerness to love, be with, and help others (Haidt, 2000). In one of the first laboratory studies on elevation, participants were shown portions of a documentary about the life of Mother Teresa (Haidt, 2000). Often present in studies of this kind are control conditions to differentiate feelings of elevation form other emotions (Haidt, 2003a). In this study, the control conditions included a comedy sequence and an interesting, but unemotional documentary (Haidt, 2000). When compared to the participants in the control conditions, those in the elevation condition “reported feeling more loving and inspired, they more strongly wanted to perform prosocial and affiliative actions, and they were more likely to actually volunteer to work at a humanitarian charity organization” (Haidt, 2000, p. 4). In a subsequent piece, Haidt note that those in the elevation condition for this early study also reported different physical responses, such warm, pleasant, or tingling feelings in their chest (Haidt, 2003a).

Other studies have found that a number of different stimuli can elicit feelings of elevation, such as watching a gang member give up their seat on a train to an elderly individual, viewing a video clip from the movie Titanic where the band continues to play as the ship begins to sink, and viewing a news story about Mother Teresa (as opposed to watching a documentary) (Haidt, 2003a). Aquino et al. (2011) noted that literature and film are full of different examples of these acts of virtue that prompt elevation. Aquino et al. (2011) mentioned narratives about moral exemplars like Desmond Tutu and Mahatma Gandhi, but they also cited two famous examples, one in literature and one in film: “Think of Sydney Carton sacrificing his life to save the husband of the woman he loves in A Tale of Two Cities or of Liam Neeson portraying Oskar
Schindler in the cinematic depiction of the German businessman’s effort to save Jews during the Holocaust” (p. 716).

Quite recently, Oliver, Hartmann, et al. (2012) tested the idea that meaningful entertainment is a powerful elicitor of elevation and mixed affect. Previously, Oliver and Raney (2011) had claimed that some entertainment could do more than fill *hedonic* needs for pleasure. In contrast to hedonic needs, they discussed *eudaimonic* needs that are connected to greater insight, wisdom, and meaning. These eudaimonic needs can often be satisfied by exposure to meaningful entertainment. According to Oliver, Hartmann, et al. (2012), meaningful entertainment includes dramatic films known as “sad films,” “tear jokers,” or “tragedies” that “may actually tell a quite comforting, even transcendental, story” as they “grapple with questions of life’s profundities, and… lay bare the vulnerabilities of the human condition” (p. 361). Examples of these films include *Sophie’s Choice*, *Hotel Rwanda*, and *Schindler’s List*, that while they might lead to deep sadness, “also depict characters that embody profound and moving virtues such as strength, courage, wisdom, and sacrifice” (Oliver, Hartmann, et al., 2012, p. 361). Based on results from their study, Oliver, Hartmann, et al. (2012) found support for the idea that meaningful films lead to feelings of elevation (meaningful affect) through portrayals of moral virtue.

Considering these elements and the current state of research in the area of mass communication and elevation, the portrayals that are most likely to elicit feelings of elevation are the types that display selfless acts of virtue and moral goodness. Portrayals of this kind are often found in powerful dramas and compelling tragedies making them the most relevant genres to consider in this context. That being said, Oliver, Hartmann, et al. (2012) also found that the portrayal of virtue in motion pictures did not fully account for why participants named films as
meaningful, suggesting that additional elements of entertainment beyond only acts of virtue may be able to elicit the physical and affective responses that are associated with elevation. However, based on the lack of research, the possibilities for additional portrayals and genres that might result in feelings of elevation are numerous (Oliver, Hartmann, et al., 2012).

**Expected outcomes.** To understand how elevation can be harnessed for prosocial purposes, recognition of what outcomes elevation leads to is essential. At this point, the action tendency associated with elevation has been just briefly mentioned (Aquino et al., 2011). The action tendency, or specific motivation, tied to elevation has been labeled by some scholars as “emulation” or a desire to do charitable acts of virtue (Algoe & Haidt, 2009), follow the example set by the moral exemplar, or even to be become a better person (Haidt, 2003b). By witnessing an act of virtue, the viewer is motivated to make a similar, prosocial act as well (Schnall et al., 2010). In contrast to gratitude, the desire to help someone and open one’s heart (Keltner & Haidt, 2003) is not directed at the exemplar or benefactor that performed the original act, but instead to people generally (Silvers & Haidt, 2008). Additionally, studies conducted to differentiate the other-praising emotions have found that admiration leads to a desire to emulate only the admired person and then to improve one’s self by working harder to accomplish personal goals. In contrast, elevation has been shown to lead to a desire to emulate the virtuous role model, but only generally and in a way that the individual wishes to do good for more than just themselves or the exemplar of the virtuous act (Algoe & Haidt, 2009).

Not surprisingly, several studies have established a causal link between elevation and prosocial behavior (Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Aquino et al., 2011; Freeman et al., 2009; Schnall et al., 2010). Empirical support has shown that individuals “who experience elevation are more likely to want to help others, give money to charity, and list prosocial actions when asked to
write about their life goals” (Freeman et al., 2009, p. 74). Interestingly, the prosocial behavior effect found in one study could not be explained by mere modeling or imitation because the participants who reported feelings of elevation participated in helping behaviors, like taking part in an unpaid study, which had nothing to do with the elevating stimuli that focused on mentoring underprivileged kids (Schnall et al., 2010). As Schnall et al. (2010) noted, “elevation inspired helping in spirit, not in kind” (p. 319). Previous research that links affect to social judgments might be the best way to find theoretical support for why feelings of elevation lead to behavior change (Freeman et al., 2009). One explanation can be found with Forgas’s (1995) affect infusion model, which posits that positive affect, or in our case elevation, informs cognition and can have profound effects on judgments. Another explanation, which was discussed earlier, is tied to Fredrickson’s (2001) broaden-and-build model. The broaden-and-build model “suggests that positive emotions increase behavioral repertoires and expand people’s sense of self so that it includes others” (Freeman et al., 2009, p. 74).

**Harnessing elevation.** With this background on elevation in mind, including what elicits it and the outcomes it produces, there are many different types of media that can be utilized to elicit elevation and, as such, questions about how elevation can be harnessed and what impact it might have should be considered. If the desire is to harness elevation’s prosocial potential, a medium or genre needs to be selected and then, hopefully, elevation can be applied. Consider news programming on television and imagine a newscast with less negative and sensationalized news stories. Instead, this hypothetical newscast includes true stories about acts of kindness, virtue, and goodness and shares those stories with their viewers. Feelings of elevation elicited from viewing those acts may lead to further good and additional acts of selfless service. One might ask: do the stories shared always have to be true? Jefferson (1771/1975) noted that we
“never reflect whether the story we read be truth or fiction” (p. 350). Entertainment media could also feature more stories that might elicit feelings of elevation, instead of the overabundance of sex, profanity, and violence. Additionally, there is a range of different media and genres that could house elevating content. Jefferson (1771/1975) wrote of great literature and how it can nurture moral development through the presence of moral emotion such as elevation. This reasoning allows other narrative-capable media to be considered, including radio, film, television, video games, and the Internet. With this consideration, the possibilities are too numerous to count, let alone describe in a concise manner.

So what might be the impact of elevation and elevating media? Some scholars believe that elevation can serve as a “moral reset button” for the mind (Haidt, 2003b, p. 864). Haidt (2003a) believed that this reset button had the potential to erase “feelings of cynicism… replacing them with feelings of hope, love, and optimism and a sense of moral inspiration” through powerful, elevating experiences (p. 286). Previous research has shown that witnessing a moral exemplar push their moral reset button, by doing acts of moral goodness, can lead to a “virtuous ripple effect” (Haidt, 2003b, p. 864). This ripple effect often results in behavior change in at least the immediate context (Freeman et al., 2009). Further research would need to be done to make supported claims of the possible long-term effects of experiencing elevation.

That being said, elevation is especially interesting to study as its definition alone posits that it has the ability to spread through social groups and communities, improving people and situations as it moves from one person to another (Haidt, 2000). If elevation has the potential to result in additional acts of service, then this “upward spiral” might be a means of bettering society as a whole (Fredrickson, 2000). As Haidt (2000) noted, “Efforts to promote and publicize altruism may therefore have widespread and cost-effective results” (p. 4).
One important area where elevation might be a tool for the betterment of society is as a means of lowering racial biases and leading people to possess more positive attitudes toward a number of stigmatized groups (Freeman et al., 2009). Consistent with this reasoning, Freeman et al. (2009) showed that not only did witnessing acts of moral goodness lead study participants to give more money to charity, but also that elevation led some White participants with a high social dominance orientation (SDO) to ignore beliefs that might have kept them from donating to a social out-group (in this case, the United Negro College Fund). These results suggest that elevation might help to lead more people to be more accepting and welcoming of others.

As Haidt (2003a) noted, moral development is a process that is often slow and, for some, evolves over the course of a lifetime. However, many of us have had powerful, emotional moments that have wrought a major change within us and affected the rest of our lives. Previous studies and other prior research have shown that elevation motivates prosocial behavior that is entirely disinterested in who is helped; making elevation what is arguably the most ideal moral emotion (Haidt, 2003b). Jefferson (1771/1975) wrote, “Now every emotion of this kind is an exercise of our virtuous dispositions; and dispositions of the mind, like limbs of the body, acquire strength by exercise” (p. 350). He went on to note, “exercise produces habit; and in the instance of which we speak, the exercise being of the moral feelings, produces a habit of thinking and acting virtuously” (p. 350). Elevation has the potential to be a force for goodness and virtue, but more research needs to be done to fully understand how to harness its emotional power for the benefit of countless individuals.

**Emotional involvement hypotheses.** The hypotheses presented in this section are connected to a hypothesized model for emotional involvement that was designed for the purpose of this dissertation research and is based on previous work conducted in the areas of elevation
and mass communication and the concept of increased emotional understanding through depictions of musical performance. Feelings of elevation should function well in the study context, as the narratives feature acts of moral beauty (Haidt, 2000) where characters are shown helping others deal with a specific social issue. The concluding musical numbers with narrative-congruent songs allow for a continuation of elevation as they involve a group of friends rallying around and building up a specific character as they sing to and with them.

Figure 3

Hypothesized Emotional Involvement Model

H13: When a musical performance is present as opposed to the original song or an instrumental version, television content featuring characters helping others deal with social issues will be more effective at increasing feelings of elevation due to increased emotional understanding (Juslin & Laukka, 2003; Oliver, Hartmann, et al., 2012).

H14: Feelings of elevation will lead to behavioral intentions to help and empathic attitudes toward people who experience the featured social issues as well as more positive explicit feelings about groups that are dealing with the featured social issues (Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Ramasubramanian & Oliver, 2007).

H15: Positive explicit feelings will lead to behavioral intentions and behavior to help others who experience the social issue featured (Ramasubramanian & Oliver, 2007).
Research Questions

Despite the presence of three possible mechanisms (involvement with character, narrative, and emotions) for EE effects, several theoretical questions remain unanswered, especially when considering the fact that some of the elements contained in each mechanism relate to the others, yet do not overlap completely (Murphy et al., 2001). In fact, while quite a bit of research has been conducted in terms of the effects of EE, much less is known about the proposed mechanism that lead to these effects (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010). Some researchers have even noted that EE research has been able to answer the what question in terms of the effects of EE, however, the questions that still remain concern the how and why regarding the effects observed (Bae, 2012; Singhal & Rogers, 2002). Is there one specific involvement model that can be associated with all EE effects (Moyer-Gusé, 2008)? If not, which involvement model produces the most significant results? Or might it be that each of the three mechanisms provides some evidence of attitude and/or behavior change (Murphy et al., 2011)? In conjunction with these questions, the first research question asks:

RQ1: What are the differences in terms of strength/model fit for the proposed models for character, narrative, and emotional involvement?

In addition to examining the effectiveness of each involvement mechanism, differential effects may be present due to the social issue featured in the narrative. While several music conditions will be presented, the proposed study will also feature two narratives focused on different social issues. The social issues featured will be homophobic bullying and self-acceptance. While the primary aim is to test these two conditions together to increase understanding of overall effects, the question of possible differences still exists. Additionally, in
terms of possible differences, there is interest concerning the impact of participant gender on the results of the involvement models. As such, the second and third research questions asks:

RQ2: Are the overall effects of the involvement models similar for both social issues featured in the study?

RQ3: Are the overall effects of the involvement models similar for both males and females?

Continuing with the possibility of individual differences, there is also interest concerning whether significant differences exist based on familiarity and liking of the television program used (Glee) and the popular music featured in the different music conditions (including “Just the Way You Are” by Bruno Mars and “Born This Way” by Lady Gaga). Additionally, the level of enjoyment with the video clip viewed may have an impact on the results of the involvement models. As such, we proposed the fourth, fifth, and sixth research questions:

RQ4: Do the overall effects of the involvement models vary based on familiarity with Glee or the featured popular music?

RQ5: Do the overall effects of the involvement models vary based on liking of Glee or the featured popular music?

RQ6: Do the overall effects of the involvement models vary based on enjoyment of the featured video clip?

Finally, involvement or connection with the social issue featured in the context of the study may be consequential in viewer response. Issue involvement is defined as “the extent to which an individual believes an issue is of intrinsic importance or has significant consequences for his or her own life” (Bae & Kang, 2008, p. 87). Issue involvement has been shown to be a
principal element in the process of persuasion (Skumanich & Kintsfather, 1996), especially in terms of behavior change (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). The final research question asks:

RQ7: Do the overall effects of the involvement models vary based on involvement with the featured social issue (homophobic bullying or self-acceptance)?
Chapter 3

Methodology

The dissertation study conducted had a 4 (music format: musical performance, original song, instrumental, and no music for a control group) X 2 (social issue featured: homophobic bullying and lack of self-acceptance) between-subjects design. An experimental design was selected, as it is the standard method for identifying the causal effects of media messages on a range of dependent variables. Since the main focus of this dissertation research concerns the idea that entertainment media that addresses social issues may lead to subsequent, specific behavioral intentions and behavior, an experimental approach is particularly well-suited to investigate the questions of interest.

Experiment Sample

Undergraduate students enrolled in courses within the College of Communications at The Pennsylvania State University were asked to participate in this study and received course credit for doing so. Participants were recruited with in-class announcements and follow-up emails. The study participants ($N = 325$) were 59.8% female, 75.4% White/Caucasian, and ranged in age from 18 to 29 ($M = 19.85, SD = 1.55$). Freshmen were the largest percentage of the study participants (41.9%), with sophomores (22.2%) and juniors (20.9%) almost equally represented. To obtain an adequate sample size for this experiment while using path analysis of the proposed models, the goal for a minimum of 200 participants was obtained. In most cases, 200 participants are usually considered adequate, and the participant total for this study satisfies Kline’s (2011) standard of 200 cases. Additionally, considering the fact that all three models are relatively simple and will each be tested on the same sample, the standard of 5 cases per parameter outlined by Bentler and Chou (1987) was met as well.
**Study Procedures**

Following approval for the study by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), study participants were recruited. The follow-up emails sent to the recruited students included a link to an online sign-up sheet for the students to select a time to participate in the laboratory experiment. For course credit, students could participate in the study or complete an alternate assignment (journal article summary and critique) if they did not want to/could not participate. The experiment was conducted in the New Media Wing of the Media Effects Research Lab (MERL), one of the research centers in the College of Communications, over 11 days between Tuesday, March 9th and Friday, March 26th, 2013. The study questionnaire and stimuli were presented using MediaLab software that is installed on 10 computers in the New Media Wing of this lab.

When the participants arrived at the lab, they were asked to read and sign the informed consent form. The consent form clearly explained that the participants had the opportunity to end participation at any time, as well as the researcher’s commitment to and promise of confidentiality. The first portion presented via MediaLab explained the procedures and overview of the study. Following this initial portion, the study began with an opening questionnaire that asked a series of demographic questions and several items about personal involvement with different social issues. Following those measures, participants were randomly exposed to one of eight different video clips based on the 4 X 2 experimental design of the study (the stimulus material will be explained in the next section). After stimulus exposure had taken place, the participants completed the study by answering the closing questionnaire. Upon completion, participants were debriefed, filled out a student information survey on Qualtrics to guarantee that they would receive course credit, thanked for their participation, and excused to leave. The
names of those who completed either the study or the alternative assignment were given to their instructors when all of the data had been collected.

**Stimulus Material**

Study participants were randomly assigned to one of the four music conditions. For the four music conditions, study participants in the musical performance condition viewed an 8-minute clip of the television program *Glee*, which depicted a character’s struggles with one of the two social issues and how their friends in the glee club helped them through this struggle. The 8-minute clip was followed by a two and a half minute musical performance where the social issue featured was the focus of the song. In the original song condition, the participants began by viewing the same 8-minute clip, but instead of the musical performance, the clip featured a slideshow of images from *Glee* with the original song being played (performed by the original artist and not the glee club). In the instrumental condition, the participants also began by viewing the same 8-minute clip that excluded the musical performance and instead featured a slideshow of images from *Glee* with an instrumental version of the song being played. Lastly, in the no music/control condition, the participants also viewed the same 8-minute clip excluding the musical performance and instead depicting a slideshow of images from *Glee* with no music or other sound being played.

Participants were also randomly assigned to a narrative that featured characters dealing with one of two different social issues: homophobic bullying or self-acceptance. Two different social issues were included in this study in order to test whether there might be a similar effect regardless of the issue featured.

In the *homophobic bullying narrative*, the character being harassed based on his sexual orientation is named Kurt Hummel (played by Chris Colfer), a founding member of the glee
club. The scenes that were used to create the homophobic bullying narrative were taken from three episodes: “Never Been Kissed” (Falchuk & Buecker, 2010), “The Substitute” (Brennan & Murphy, 2010), and “Furt” (Murphy & Banker, 2010). In those episodes, Kurt is being mentally abused and, eventually, physically abused by a schoolmate, Dave Karofsky (played by Max Adler), because Kurt is open about his homosexuality. Over the course of the narrative, the glee club and Kurt’s family take action to protect him from Karofsky. For the musical performance condition, the musical number “Just the Way You Are” (Mars, Lawrence, Levine, Walton, & Cain, 2010) is sung by Kurt’s new stepbrother and fellow glee member Finn Hudson (played by Cory Monteith) and the rest of the glee club.

In the self-acceptance narrative, the character dealing with a lack of self-acceptance is Rachel Berry (played by Lea Michele), another founding member of the glee club. The scenes that were used to create the self-acceptance narrative were taken from one episode, “Born This Way” (Falchuk & Gomez-Rejon, 2011). In that episode, Rachel has recently broken her nose and is debating whether to get an elective rhinoplasty (a “nose job”), in addition to the needed septoplasty (a corrective surgical procedure performed to straighten the nasal septum). A nose job would do away with her distinctive nose that is a sign of her Jewish heritage, and former boyfriends, Finn and Noah “Puck” Puckerman (played by Mark Salling), discourage this procedure. For the musical performance condition, the musical number “Born This Way” (Germanotta & Laursen, 2011) is sung by most of the members of glee club.

**Measurement**

Several measures, such as demographic questions and issue involvement items, were asked before exposure to the stimulus material. However, the study participants responded to most of the measures following random exposure to a video clip. Unless otherwise noted, the
measures used a 7-point Likert scale with response options ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). The complete MediaLab questionnaire, including all measurement items and instructions, can be found in the appendix. Descriptive statistics for the study variables are presented in Table 1. Means and standard deviation for the study variables by condition are presented in Table 2. Bivariate correlations between the variables included in the involvement models are presented in Table 3.

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics*

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<td>Social issue narrative</td>
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*Note:* Behavior was coded as did not sign pledge = 1; did sign pledge = 2. Counterarguing (closed-ended) was coded as positive = 1; neutral = 2; negative = 3. Enjoyment (median split) was coded as low enjoyment = 1; high enjoyment = 2. Gender was coded as male = 1; female = 2. Issue involvement (median split) was coded as low involvement = 1; high involvement = 2. Social issue narrative was coded as homophobic bullying = 1; lack of self-acceptance = 2.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Lack of self-acceptance</th>
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Table 3

*Bivariate Correlations*

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*Note:* *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01.*
General involvement measures. Empathic attitudes were assessed using seven items adapted from Batson et al. (1997). The empathic attitude scale was used to assess attitudes toward people who face the featured social issues on a regular basis. Examples of these items include: “For most people dealing with homophobic bullying, it is their own fault that they are being bullied” and “Our society does not do enough to help people who are struggling with self-acceptance.” The scale produced strong reliability, Cronbach’s alpha = .82.

Behavioral intentions were measured using four items adapted from Peng, Lee, and Heeter (2010). The behavioral intentions scale was used to assess willingness and intent to help people who are faced with the social issues featured in the video clips. Study participants were asked about their intent to help these individuals by donating money, signing a petition, discussing the situation with family or friends, and forwarding a link regarding the social issue featured. The scale produced strong reliability, Cronbach’s alpha = .85.

Behavior was assessed by providing the study participants with an opportunity to sign an online pledge, related to the social issues featured in the video clip they watched. While pledging behavior might be similar to behavioral intentions, completion of the online pledge involved a decision to act and the subsequent behavior required to follow through on that decision. At a minimum, each online pledge asked for the individual’s first and last name and their email address. The behavioral measure was tracked and recorded by the MediaLab software. In the homophobic bullying condition, participants were directed to the It Gets Better Project pledge, which reads: “Everyone deserves to be respected for who they are. I pledge to spread this message to my friends, family and neighbors. I'll speak up against hate and intolerance whenever I see it, at school and at work. I'll provide hope for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other bullied teens by letting them know that it gets better” (It Gets Better Project, 2010). In the self-
acceptance condition, participants were directed to the Born This Way Foundation pledge, which reads: “This way, towards bravery where youth are empowered. This way, towards acceptance where humanity is embraced. This way, towards love where individuality is encouraged” (Born This Way Foundation, 2012). The two results possible were either that they did not sign the online pledge (coded as 1) or that they did sign the online pledge (coded as 2). Results indicated that 49.5% of the sample signed the online pledge.

**Character involvement measures.** Identification was measured using Cohen’s (2001a) 10-item scale. Prior to presentation of the identification items, the participants were asked to select which of the characters that were helping Kurt (homophobic bullying condition) or Rachel (lack of self-acceptance condition) deal with their situation that they could most identify with. For the homophobic bullying condition, the options were: Rachel (selected by the participants 32.9% of the time); Artie, Mike, or Sam (28.1%); Mr. Schuester (15.6%); Finn (14.4%); Burt (8.4%); and Sue Sylvester (0.6%). For the lack of self-acceptance condition, the options were: Finn (29.7%); Puck (27.2%); Mr. Schuester (16.5%); Kurt (15.2%); and Quinn (11.4%). The 10-item identification scale asked the participant whether they perceived the helping character as being similar to themselves. Examples for the two social issue conditions include: “I tend to understand the reasons why Rachel does what she does” (homophobic bullying condition) and “During viewing, I felt I could really get inside Finn’s head” (lack of self-acceptance condition). The scale produced strong reliability, Cronbach’s alpha = .87.

**Efficacy** is defined as a “belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). This 6-item efficacy scale was based on each participant's capability to perform behaviors related to the behavioral intentions and behavioral measure discussed earlier. The items asked whether the participants
know how to donate money, sign a petition or a pledge, discuss the situation with family or friends, find additional information regarding the social issue featured, and forward a link via email to an acquaintance. The scale produced strong reliability, Cronbach’s alpha = .88.

**Narrative involvement measures.** Transportation was measured with an adapted version of Green and Brock’s (2000) modified 11-item transportation scale (excluding the mental imagery items). As mentioned earlier, transportation is defined as “the process by which an individual becomes immersed into a story, losing track of the real world as he or she experiences the unfolding events in the story” (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010, p. 29) and the 11-item transportation measure seeks to obtain a understanding of the participants’ level of transportation into the narrative. This measure performed quite well in this study, Cronbach’s alpha = .82.

**Counterarguing** was measured using two different methods. The first method was an open-ended item that asked the participants to write a sentence or two regarding their thoughts about the arguments put forth in the video clip regarding the social issue featured. The open-ended measure was employed to serve as a means of obtaining the participants’ attitudes about the arguments presented without influencing them in any way. Using a similar method employed by Mazzocco, Green, Sasota, & Jones (2010), the statements provided were coded as *positive* (consistent with the themes of the narrative; 74.8% of the responses), negative (inconsistent with the themes of the narrative; 3.7% of the responses), and ambiguous/neutral (some mix of both agreement and disagreement with the narrative’s arguments; 21.5% of the responses). The researcher coded all of the responses and a secondary coder was employed to assess reliability on 20% of the sample (65 responses). An intercoder reliability analysis using Cohen’s Kappa was conducted to test consistency between the two coders. The analysis revealed an acceptable level of intercoder reliability, Kappa = 0.89 (*p* < .001), 95% CI (0.762, 1.008).
The second method used to assess counterarguing was a four-item measure adapted from previous research (Nabi, Moyer-Gusé, & Bryne, 2007). Two examples include “While watching the clip, I sometimes found myself thinking of ways I disagreed with what was being presented” and “I found myself looking for flaws in the way information was presented in the clip.” The scale produced strong reliability, Cronbach’s alpha = .81. With the goal of using the multiple-item, closed-ended measure for data analysis purposes, a correlation was ran to determine whether the closed-ended counterarguing measure (seven-point Likert scale with five items) and the open-ended counterarguing measure (coded as positive, ambiguous/neutral, or negative) were measuring similar constructs. There was a significant, positive correlation between the closed-ended and the open-ended measures, $r = .38, p < 0.001$. Additionally, the open-ended counterarguing measure was also tested within the narrative involvement model as opposed to the closed-ended (which is reported in the results section) to determine the similarity or difference in the included paths. With the use of the open-ended counterarguing measure, there were no substantive differences in the paths: transportation to counterarguing ($\beta = -.26, p < .001$) and counterarguing to behavioral intentions ($\beta = -.02, p = .77$), behavior ($\beta = -.15, p = .10$), and empathic attitudes ($\beta = -.12, p = .06$). As such, the closed-ended measure was employed for analysis of the narrative involvement model.

**Emotional involvement measures.** *Elevation* was measured with meaningful affect items used previously by Oliver (2008) and Oliver, Hartmann, et al. (2012). Participants were asked to indicate at what level they experienced a number of affective items from not at all (1) to very much (7). The elevation items were mixed with other general affect items to disguise measurement intent. The affective reaction items included touched, moved, emotional,
meaningful, tender, uplifted, tearful, and inspired. The scale produced strong reliability, Cronbach’s alpha = .90.

*Positive feelings* toward the group dealing/struggling with the social issue featured in the narrative were measured with several feeling thermometers, which are a good indicator of explicit feeling about any number or type of groups (Ramasubramanian & Oliver, 2007). With feeling thermometers, participants rate their overall favorability to different groups on a 9-point scale ranging from zero degrees (or unfavorable) to 100 degrees (or very favorable). Higher responses indicate more warmth or positivity toward a given group (Hugenberg & Bodenhausen, 2003). In this study, the participants were asked about several groups that are dealing with several social issues, including: race/ethnic-based discrimination, domestic violence, homophobic bullying, poverty, lack of self-acceptance, and religious intolerance. The additional social issues were included to disguise measurement intent.

**Additional variables.** *Familiarity with the television program and the featured song* were measured with two single-item measures asking the participant to rate the degree to which they were familiar with *Glee* and the song featured in the experimental condition. The anchors for the television program were: *watch it frequently* (7) and *never seen it before* (1). The anchors for the featured songs were: *listened to it many times* (7) and *never heard it before* (1).

*Liking of the television program and the featured song* was measured with a two-item measure asking the participant to rate the amount they generally like *Glee* and the song featured in the experimental condition, with the extremes being *very much* (7) and *not all* (1). The items produced satisfactory reliability, Cronbach’s alpha = .73.

*Enjoyment* was measured with four items asking how enjoyable they found the clip they had just watched. These items included: “The video clip I just watched was very good,” “The
video clip I just watched was boring/uninteresting (reverse coded),” “I appreciated the video clip I just watched,” and “I enjoyed the video clip I just watched.” The scale produced strong reliability, Cronbach’s alpha = .94.

**Involvement with the social issue featured**, the only additional variable measured before stimulus exposure, was adapted from Zaichkowsky’s (1986) 20-item Personal Involvement Inventory (PII). A total of 18 items was used to measure involvement with several social issues, while only the three items for the featured social issue were used for data analysis. The social issues included race/ethnic-based discrimination, domestic violence, homophobic bullying, poverty, lack of self-acceptance, and religious intolerance. Using homophobic bullying as an example, the three distinct items included: “Homophobic bullying is relevant to me,” “Homophobic bullying is important to me,” and “Homophobic bullying is of no concern to me” (reverse coded). These three items were selected as they have shown to be unified conceptually (Mittal, 1989). The scales produced satisfactory reliability, including a Cronbach’s alpha = .76 (involvement with homophobic bullying) and .75 (involvement with lack of self-acceptance).
Chapter 4

Results

Character Involvement

H1 predicted that when a musical performance is present as opposed to the original song or an instrumental version, television content featuring social issues would be more effective at increasing identification with characters helping others deal with the featured social concerns. A one-way ANOVA revealed no significant differences for identification between the musical conditions, $F(3, 321) = 1.25, p = .30$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. Although there were no significant differences in means, identification scores were lowest in the control condition ($M = 4.78, SD = 0.90$), but were consistently higher in the instrumental condition ($M = 4.91, SD = 0.77$), the original song condition ($M = 4.92, SD = 0.94$), and, particularly, the musical performance condition ($M = 5.04, SD = 0.87$). Due to the lack of a significant difference, H1 was not supported.

The musical performance condition, the original song condition, and the instrumental condition were entered as separate predictors in a path model, using dummy coding to compare each condition to the control condition. Since this model (and each subsequent model) employed a dichotomous dependent variable (behavior), a WLSMV (weighted least square means and variance adjusted) estimator was used via Mplus. Path analysis was employed to test H2-H6 and the hypothesized character involvement model had an acceptable degree of fit (see Figure 4), $\chi^2(9, N = 325) = 6.62, p = .68$; RMSEA = .000 (90% confidence interval = .000 to .050); CFI = 1.000. A well-fitting model should possess a non-significant chi-square, a CFI greater than .95, and an RMSEA rating less than .05 (Kline, 2011). Modification indices did not suggest any changes to the model. The path analysis indicated that when compared to the control condition,
the musical performance condition was able to predict identification with the characters helping others deal with the featured social issues \((\beta = .19, p < .05)\), but the original song condition \((\beta = .09, p = .23)\) and the instrumental condition \((\beta = .5, p = .55)\) were not, thereby partially supporting **H1** in this context.

Figure 4

*Final Character Involvement Model*

As **H2** predicted, the model showed that identification predicted behavioral intentions to help people dealing with the social issues featured \((\beta = .12, p < .001)\); however, identification was unable to predict behavior to pledge one’s self to the cause \((\beta = .01, p = .91)\), thus only partially supporting **H2**. In addition, identification predicted efficacy regarding the participants’ perceived capability to help others in similar situations \((\beta = .39, p < .001)\), thereby supporting **H3**. Consistent with **H4** and **H5**, efficacy on the part of the participants predicted behavioral intention to help people dealing with different social issues \((\beta = .76, p < .001)\) and behavior to pledge one’s self to the cause \((\beta = .54, p < .001)\). Unfortunately, **H6** was not supported as behavioral intention to help people dealing with different social issues did not predict behavior to pledge one’s self to the cause \((\beta = -.02, p = .87)\).

To assess whether indirect effects were present in the character involvement model, bootstrapping procedures using 2000 bootstrap samples was employed. The analysis showed that
the musical performance condition was indirectly related to efficacy via identification ($\beta = .07, p < .05$). In addition, the musical performance condition was indirectly related to behavioral intentions via identification and efficacy ($\beta = .05, p < .05$).

**Narrative Involvement**

**H7** predicted that when a musical performance is present as opposed to the original song or an instrumental version, television content featuring social issues would be more effective at increasing transportation. A one-way ANOVA revealed a significant difference for transportation between the musical conditions, $F(3, 321) = 3.50, p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$. Pairwise comparisons using LSD revealed a significant difference between the musical performance condition ($M = 4.65, SD = 0.91$) and the control condition ($M = 4.18, SD = 1.01$). However, contrary to **H7**, there were no significant differences for the other conditions, including the instrumental condition ($M = 4.47, SD = 0.88$) and the original song condition ($M = 4.47, SD = 0.91$), thus only partially supporting this hypothesis.

Again, the musical performance condition, the original song condition, and the instrumental condition were entered as separate predictors in a path model, using dummy coding to compare each condition to the control condition. Using Mplus and a WLSMV estimator, a path analysis was employed to test **H8-H12** and the hypothesized narrative involvement model resulted in a poor fit, $\chi^2(15, N = 325) = 102.46, p < .001$; RMSEA = .134 (90% confidence interval = .110 to .159); CFI = .696. However, modification indices suggested a path from transportation to empathic attitudes. Adding that path, the revised narrative involvement model had a more acceptable degree of fit (see Figure 5), $\chi^2(14, N = 325) = 18.01, p = .21$; RMSEA = .030 (90% confidence interval = .000 to .065); CFI = .986. After conducting a Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-square difference test (Satorra, 2000), the results indicated that the modification led to
significant model improvement, $\Delta \chi^2(1) = 47.60, p < .001$. No additional paths were suggested. The path analysis indicated that when compared to the control condition, the musical performance condition ($\beta = .27, p < .001$) and the original song condition ($\beta = .17, p < .05$) were able to predict transportation into the narrative, but the instrumental condition ($\beta = .12, p = .11$) was not, thus partially supporting H7 as well.

Figure 5

*Final Narrative Involvement Model*

Consistent with H8, the model revealed that transportation led to less counterarguing or, as the model indicates, a significant negative association between transportation and high levels of counterarguing ($\beta = -.33, p < .001$). H9 was not supported due to the fact that counterarguing failed to predict favorable empathic attitudes toward people who experience the featured social issues ($\beta = -.01, p = .75$). The model showed that counterarguing was unable to predict behavioral intentions to help people dealing with the social issue featured ($\beta = -.05, p = .08$), but was able to predict behavior to pledge one’s self to the cause ($\beta = -.16, p < .05$), thus H10 was partially supported. Additionally, as H11 and H12 proposed, favorable empathic attitudes predicted behavioral intentions ($\beta = .73, p < .001$) and behavior to pledge one’s self to the cause ($\beta = .23, p < .05$), thereby supporting both hypotheses. In the narrative involvement model, behavioral intentions predicted behavior ($\beta = .22, p < .05$), which supported H6 in this context.
(H6 was not supported in the character involvement model). Finally, for the route suggested by
the modification indices, transportation led to favorable empathic attitudes toward people who
experience the featured issues (β = .57, p < .001).

To assess whether indirect effects were present in the narrative involvement model,
bootstrapping procedures using 2000 bootstrap samples was employed. The analysis showed that
the musical performance condition was indirectly related to counterarguing via transportation (β
= -.19, p < .05). In addition, both the musical performance condition (β = .35, p < .01) and the
original song condition (β = .22, p < .05) were indirectly related to empathic attitudes via
transportation. Likewise, both the musical performance condition (β = .35, p < .01) and the
original song condition (β = .22, p < .05) were indirectly related to behavioral intentions via
transportation and empathic attitudes.

**Emotional Involvement**

H13 predicted that when a musical performance is present, as opposed to the original
song or an instrumental version, television content featuring social issues would be more
effective at increasing feelings of elevation. A one-way ANOVA revealed a significant
difference for elevation between the musical conditions, $F(3, 321) = 5.19, p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 =
.05$. Pairwise comparisons using LSD revealed a significant difference between the musical
performance condition ($M = 4.51, SD = 1.46$) and the control condition ($M = 3.64, SD = 1.45$).
However, contrary to H13, there were no significant differences for the other conditions,
including the instrumental condition ($M = 3.96, SD = 1.37$) and the original song condition ($M =
4.02, SD = 1.35$), thus only partially supporting H13.

Again, the musical performance condition, the original song condition, and the
instrumental condition were entered as separate predictors in a path model, using dummy coding
to compare each condition to the control condition. Using Mplus and a WLSMV estimator, a path analysis was employed to test H14-H15 and the hypothesized emotional involvement model had a poor fit, $\chi^2(14, N = 325) = 62.92, p < .001$; RMSEA = .104 (90% confidence interval = .078 to .130); CFI = .831. However, modification indices suggested one change to the model: a route from positive feelings toward the focal group to empathic attitudes. The revised emotional involvement model had a more acceptable degree of fit (see Figure 6), $\chi^2(13, N = 325) = 9.19, p = .76$; RMSEA = .000 (90% confidence interval = .000 to .039); CFI = 1.000. After conducting a Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-square difference test (Satorra, 2000), the results indicated that the modification led to significant model improvement, $\Delta \chi^2(1) = 66.31, p < .001$. The path analysis indicated that when compared to the control condition, the musical performance condition ($\beta = .28, p < .001$) and the original song condition ($\beta = .15, p < .05$) were able to predict feelings of elevation, but the instrumental condition ($\beta = .09, p = .26$) was not, thus partially supporting H13 as well.

Figure 6

Final Emotional Involvement Model

As H14 predicted, the model showed that feelings of elevation successfully predicted behavioral intentions to help people dealing with the social issues featured ($\beta = .23, p < .001$), positive explicit feelings about groups that are dealing with the featured social issues ($\beta = .14, p$
<.01), and favorable empathic attitudes toward people who experience the featured social issues
(β = .41, p < .001). Additionally, as H15 predicted, positive explicit feelings predicted behavior
to pledge one’s self to the cause (β = .18, p < .05); however, it was unable to predict behavioral
intentions to help people dealing with the social issue featured (β = .04, p = .21), thereby only
partially supporting H15. In the emotional involvement model, behavioral intentions again
predicted behavior (β = .32, p < .001), which supported H6 in this context (H6 was not supported
in the character involvement model but was supported in the narrative involvement model).
Additionally, in this model, H11 again predicted favorable empathic attitudes leading to
behavioral intentions (β = .54, p < .001) supporting H11. However, this model did not predict
behavior to pledge one’s self to the cause (β = .10, p = .29), thus not supporting H12. Finally, for
the route suggested by the modification indices, positive feelings led to favorable empathic
attitudes toward people who experience the featured social issues (β = .48, p < .001).

To assess whether indirect effects were present in the emotional involvement model,
bootstrapping procedures using 2000 bootstrap samples was employed. The analysis showed that
the musical performance condition was indirectly related to empathic attitudes via elevation (β = .
.26, p < .01). In addition, the musical performance condition was indirectly related to behavioral
intentions via elevation (β = .19, p < .05). Likewise, the musical performance condition was
indirectly related to behavioral intentions via elevation and empathic attitudes (β = .19, p < .01).

Model Fit Differences

RQ1 asked about the differences in strength/fit for the proposed involvement models
(character, narrative, and emotional). Using model fit as an indicator of the overall strength of
the three different mechanisms, the goal of this research question was to determine which model
or models possessed the best fit. While not a statistical test, RMSEA is a helpful indicator of
model fit. Often AIC and BIC are used to make comparisons between nonnested models, but, unfortunately, the WLSMV estimator used in Mplus does not provide either. As mentioned previously, RMSEA statistics for the proposed models were .000 (character involvement), .030 (narrative involvement), and .000 (emotional involvement). According to Kline (2011), RMSEA is a “badness-of-fit index where a value of zero indicates the best fit” (p. 205). Based on this distinction, the character involvement and emotional involvement models had the same level of fit, which is also the best fit possible. While not at the exact same level, the narrative involvement model is still less than .05, making the model a close fit (Kline, 2011). These findings suggest that while the character involvement and emotional involvement models possessed the best fit, the narrative involvement model was still a good-fitting model.

**Multiple-group Analysis: Social Issues Featured and Gender**

**RQ2** asked whether the overall effects of music and the involvement mechanisms in each model were similar for both of the social issues featured (homophobic bullying or lack of self-acceptance). Multiple-group analysis was employed to test the invariance of the structural weights in the models for the different issues featured. The analysis revealed no significant differences between the restricted and unrestricted character involvement models, \( \Delta \chi^2(18) = 16.14, p > .05 \); narrative involvement models, \( \Delta \chi^2(24) = 20.96, p > .05 \); or emotional involvement models, \( \Delta \chi^2(26) = 17.96, p > .05 \). As such, the involvement models were similar for both social issues featured.

**RQ3** asked whether the overall effects of music and the involvement mechanisms in each model were similar for both males and females. Again, multiple-group analysis was employed to test the invariance of the structural weights in the models, this time for participant gender. The analysis revealed no significant differences between the restricted and unrestricted character
involvement models, $\Delta \chi^2(18) = 25.41, p > .05$; narrative involvement models, $\Delta \chi^2(24) = 24.67, p > .05$; or emotional involvement models, $\Delta \chi^2(26) = 30.64, p > .05$. Consequently, the involvement models were also similar for participant gender.

**Familiarity, Liking, Issue Involvement, and Enjoyment**

The remaining research questions asked whether there might be varying results in the models when considering several variables, including familiarity with *Glee* or the featured music (RQ4), liking of *Glee* and the featured music (RQ5), enjoyment of the video clip watched (RQ6), and issue involvement (RQ7). To control for these variables, regression analyses were conducted and unstandardized residuals were saved to be included in new path analyses. By introducing these covariates and running each of the final models in Mplus, a few paths became non-significant, including musical performance to identification in the character involvement model ($\beta = .10, p = .17$), counterarguing to behavior in the narrative involvement model ($\beta = -.10, p = .06$), empathic attitudes to behavior in the narrative involvement model ($\beta = .10, p = .14$), original song to elevation in the emotional involvement model ($\beta = .06, p = .39$), and elevation to positive feelings in the emotional involvement model ($\beta = .06, p = .26$).

Regression analyses were again conducted on all the variables in hopes of explaining the variance and identifying which variables might be the culprits of the significance loss in the path analyses. For identification, $F(5, 319) = 29.20, R^2 = .31, p < .001$, both enjoyment ($\beta = .47, p < .001$) and issue involvement ($\beta = .10, p < .05$) were significant. For behavioral intentions, $F(5, 319) = 30.58, R^2 = .32, p < .001$, both issue enjoyment ($\beta = .31, p < .001$) and involvement ($\beta = .34, p < .001$) were significant. For transportation, $F(5, 319) = 31.85, R^2 = .58, p < .001$, both enjoyment ($\beta = .69, p < .001$) and issue involvement ($\beta = .15, p < .001$) were significant. For counterarguing, $F(5, 319) = 10.41, R^2 = .14, p < .001$, enjoyment ($\beta = -.36, p < .001$) was
significant. For elevation, $F(5, 319) = 46.62, R^2 = .42, p < .001$, both enjoyment ($\beta = .50, p < .001$) and issue involvement ($\beta = .15, p < .01$) were significant. And finally, for positive feelings, $F(5, 319) = 14.73, R^2 = .19, p < .001$, issue involvement ($\beta = .39, p < .001$) was significant.

Clearly, based on these regression analyses, two variables played consequential roles in loss of significance: enjoyment and issue involvement.

For those variables that did not play a consequential role in the regression analyses (familiarity with *Glee*, familiarity with the featured music, and liking of *Glee* and the featured music), new regression analyses were conducted (excluding issue involvement and enjoyment) and unstandardized residuals were saved to be included in new path analyses. When introducing only these covariates, the paths in each of the three involvement models remained significant. Based on these results, familiarity with *Glee*, familiarity with the featured music, and liking of *Glee* and the featured music were determined to be inconsequential.

RQ6 was concerned with whether the overall effects of music and the involvement mechanisms in the models were similar for those participants with different levels of enjoyment of the video clip they viewed. To answer RQ6, a median split for enjoyment was utilized to create a categorical variable and determine those participants with low enjoyment and those participants with high enjoyment (median = 5.50). Again, the median split was employed to allow for multiple-group analysis to test the invariance of the structural weights in the models for low and high enjoyment of the video clip. The analysis revealed no significant differences between the restricted and unrestricted character involvement models, $\Delta \chi^2(18) = 12.05, p > .05$; narrative involvement models, $\Delta \chi^2(24) = 24.58, p > .05$; and emotional involvement models, $\Delta \chi^2(26) = 19.80, p > .05$. Consequently, the overall involvement models were similar regarding level of enjoyment.
RQ7 was concerned with whether the overall effects of music and the involvement mechanisms in the models were similar for those participants with different levels of involvement with the social issues featured. To answer RQ7, a median split for issue involvement was utilized to create a categorical variable and determine those participants with low involvement with the social issue featured and those participants with high involvement with the social issue featured (median = 5.33). The median split was employed to allow for multiple-group analysis to test the invariance of the structural weights in the models for low and high involvement with the featured social issue. The analysis revealed no significant differences between the restricted and unrestricted character involvement models, $\Delta \chi^2(18) = 18.04, p > .05$; narrative involvement models, $\Delta \chi^2(24) = 23.80, p > .05$; and emotional involvement models, $\Delta \chi^2(26) = 25.54, p > .05$. As such, the overall involvement models were similar for level of issue involvement.

**Entertainment-education Model**

Because each involvement model could explain EE effects, the apparent interpretation is that all three mechanisms are at play in the EE process. As such, variables from each of the three models were combined into one EE model. The combined model was constructed using the strongest paths and substantial indirect effects found in the previously analyzed models (see Figure 7 for the newly hypothesized model). The first portion of the model consisted of paths from the three musical presentation conditions (compared to the control condition) to the three involvement mechanisms: identification, transportation, and elevation. The three involvement mechanisms were allowed to covary. For the character involvement portion of the model, paths from identification to efficacy, efficacy to behavioral intentions, and efficacy to behavior were included. For the narrative involvement portion of the model, paths from transportation to
counterarguing, transportation to empathic attitudes, counterarguing to empathic attitudes, counterarguing to behavior, empathic attitudes to behavioral intentions, empathic attitudes to behavior, and behavioral intentions to behavior were included. Finally, for the emotional involvement model, paths from elevation to empathic attitudes and elevation to behavioral intentions also were included.

Figure 7

Hypothesized Entertainment-education Model

Using Mplus and a WLSMV estimator, a path model was employed to test the combined model. The combined model resulted in a poor fitting model, $\chi^2(28, N = 325) = 112.21, p < .001; \text{RMSEA} = .096 (90\% \text{ confidence interval} = .078 \text{ to } .115); \text{CFI} = .877$. However, modification indices suggested logical changes to the model over the course of three revisions. These changes involved paths from transportation to efficacy, identification to empathic attitudes, and, lastly, efficacy to empathic attitudes. The revised involvement model had an acceptable degree of fit (see Figure 8), $\chi^2(25, N = 325) = 35.49, p = .07; \text{RMSEA} = .036 (90\% \text{ confidence interval} = .000 \text{ to } .061); \text{CFI} = .985$. After conducting a Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-square difference test (Satorra, 2000), the results indicated that the modifications led to significant model improvement, $\Delta \chi^2(3) = 76.72, p < .001$. 
The path analysis indicated that when compared to the control condition, the musical performance condition predicted transportation ($\beta = .27, p < .001$) and elevation ($\beta = .26, p < .001$), but failed to predict identification ($\beta = .13, p = .06$). When compared to the control condition, the original song condition predicted transportation ($\beta = .17, p < .05$) but failed to predict identification ($\beta = .07, p = .33$) or elevation ($\beta = .11, p = .10$). The instrumental condition failed to predict identification ($\beta = .06, p = .40$), transportation ($\beta = .10, p = .20$), and elevation ($\beta = .09, p = .19$). For the first involvement mechanism, identification failed to predict efficacy ($\beta = .04, p = .67$) or empathic attitudes ($\beta = -.07, p = .46$). Transportation predicted efficacy ($\beta = .46, p < .001$) and counterarguing ($\beta = -.41, p < .001$), but failed to predict empathic attitudes ($\beta = .24, p = .17$). The last involvement mechanism, elevation, predicted behavioral intentions ($\beta = .14, p < .001$) but failed to predict empathic attitudes ($\beta = .08, p = .47$).

Efficacy predicted three variables, including behavioral intentions ($\beta = .62, p < .001$), behavior ($\beta = .43, p < .01$), and empathic attitudes ($\beta = .58, p < .001$). Counterarguing predicted behavior ($\beta = -.15, p < .05$) but not empathic attitudes ($\beta = .02, p = .67$). Empathic attitudes predicted behavioral intentions ($\beta = .18, p < .001$) but not behavior ($\beta = .04, p = .67$). Finally, behavioral intentions failed to predict behavior ($\beta = .04, p = .74$). To assess whether indirect
effects were present in the combined involvement model, bootstrapping procedures using 2000 bootstrap samples were employed. Finding only one indirect effect in the model, the analysis showed that the musical performance condition was indirectly related to counterarguing via transportation ($\beta = -.11, p < .01$).
Chapter 5

Discussion

Impact of Music Presentation

As outlined in the music-related hypotheses, the actual independent variable being analyzed was music presentation and not the narratives per se, since each participant was exposed to the same social issue narrative (depending on the condition they were assigned to: homophobic bullying or lack of self-acceptance). At the beginning of each involvement model, several conditions were employed to distinguish the impact of the four types of music presentation present in the study. Considering prior research that has established how music, and especially musical performance, can increase the level of emotional understanding (Juslin, 2000; Juslin & Laukka, 2003), one goal of the study was to examine the impact of music when key elements of music presentation are removed. The key elements included the performance aspect (which was only present in the musical performance condition), the lyrics (which were not present in the instrumental and control conditions), and music itself (which was not in the final portion of the narrative clip viewed by the participants in the control condition).

By manipulating the independent variable of musical presentation, the study conjectured that the one condition that contained all three elements (performance, music, and lyrics) would be more effective at increasing levels of involvement via the three mechanisms tested: identification (H1), transportation (H7), and elevation (H13). As noted previously, the primary reasoning behind these hypotheses was the impact of emotional understanding and the argument that each involvement mechanism possesses an emotional element to varying degrees. For identification, one of the variable’s four dimensions is empathy or the ability to share and understand the feelings of others (Cohen, 2001a). For transportation, one of the key factors of the
variable is that it possesses an emotional component (Green & Brock, 2000). And finally, as an emotional state (Haidt, 2000), elevation should clearly be heightened due to the possibility for increased emotional understanding.

Results indicated that, in most cases, the impact of each condition increased via the inclusion of additional music elements: no music to instrumental, instrumental to music and lyrics, and music and lyrics to the presence of a musical performance. The only exception to this general pattern was that for transportation, the mean was exactly the same for both the instrumental condition and the original song condition. However, the findings were not significantly different when comparing each of the four conditions, which failed to fully support the three music presentation hypotheses. While lack of significance existed for differences between the four conditions, findings did indicate that there was a significant difference between the musical performance condition and the control condition for both transportation and elevation (but not for identification).

The absence of significance for music presentation on identification may be due to the fact that its ties to emotion (through empathy) are only one of four important dimensions, which also include sharing perspective, motivation, and absorption (Cohen, 2001a). For transportation, and definitely for elevation, the significant findings could be interpreted that heightened emotional understanding via musical performance served to enhance the effectiveness of these two involvement mechanisms. This conclusion may not be surprising considering that elevation is an emotional state (Haidt, 2000) and that the emotional component that transportation possesses helps to set it apart from other engagement constructs such as flow or presence (Green et al., 2008). In addition to the idea that music can efficiently communicate/express emotions (Juslin, 2000; Kalinak, 2010; Scherer & Zentner, 2001), musical performance, in particular, has
been found to have a strong influence on emotional expression (Juslin & Laukka, 2003). The impact of musical performance on emotional expression may be strong to a certain extent, but based on the results of this study, music presented in other ways (without performance or lyrics) is also a powerful amplifier of involvement mechanisms like transportation and elevation, but they appear to fall short of being significantly better than no music whatsoever. Notwithstanding, additional research would be required to reinforce this interpretation.

Clearly, music presentation, as an independent variable, has an impact on several involvement mechanisms in the context of social issues featured in entertainment television. As such, the study’s findings indicate that music can serve to enhance the effectiveness of EE messages by amplifying the emotional components of a given narrative. The results distinctly showed that music heightened the impact of the involvement mechanisms included in the study, as the control condition, which featured no music during the final portion of the clip, was less likely to predict identification, transportation, or elevation. Moving up the conditions, and adding additional musical elements in each condition, the impact of music presentation became increasingly intensified. To strengthen the impact of EE messages featuring social issues, the results indicate that extensive inclusion of music, and especially musical performance, can increase emotional involvement, which can lead to subsequent positive and prosocial effects such as attitudinal and behavioral change related to the featured issues.

**Character Involvement Model**

Given that SCT is often recognized as the primary theoretical framework for studies in entertainment-education (Moyer-Gusé, 2008; Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010), it is not unexpected that **H2-H6** produced a well-fitting model with no suggested changes. As a number of previous studies have shown, exposure to a media narrative can lead to identification with fictional
characters (see Collins et al., 2003; Huesmann et al., 1984; Sharf & Friemuth, 1993; Sharf et al., 1996; Singhal & Rogers, 1999; and Smith et al., 2007 among others). Of the three music conditions, only the musical performance condition significantly predicted identification with the helping characters depicted in the narrative. Although, the postulated presence of added emotional understanding via the musical performance condition significantly predicted identification in comparison to the control condition; neither the original song condition nor the instrumental condition led to heightened identification compared to the control condition. Despite the fact that there are a variety of attractive characters present on television (Hoffner, 1996), previous SCT scholars have noted that not all of these characters are as effective at leading to identification for the viewers as others might (Murphy et al., 2012). The lack of identification with helping characters in the original song and instrumental conditions is somewhat surprising, as participants had a range of at least five characters to choose from when asked whom they most identified with.

In the past, identification has been associated with several outcomes, including changes in behavioral intentions and even behavior (Bandura, 2002b; Kincaid, 2002). Even so, in this study context, identification failed to predict behavior directly, but was found to impact behavioral intentions. As such, behavioral intentions to help people who are dealing with the social issues featured in the narratives were prompted by identification with fictional characters that were producing different helping actions and behaviors in the context of the narrative. Additionally, identification was shown to influence efficacy or the belief in the participants’ capabilities to execute actions (Bandura, 1997; Smith et al., 2007) that would benefit those struggling with the featured social issues. Consistent with prior research (Bandura, 2000; Slater, 1999), efficacy was shown to lead to behavioral intentions to help those dealing with the featured
social issue and with behavior to pledge one’s self to the cause discussed in the narrative clip. Lastly, for the final hypothesis of the character involvement model, behavioral intentions failed to predict behavior. This finding appears to be contradictory when compared to other study contexts (see Oliver, Dillard, et al., 2012 for an example and the other involvement models in this research), though it may be due to that fact that efficacy accounted for much of the variance predicting behavior. Additionally, results showed that behavioral intentions and behavior were significantly, positively correlated, $r = .33, p < .01$ (see Table 2). Bandura (2004a; 2004b) noted that individuals are more likely to execute a given behavior when said behavior is demonstrated. Considering that pledging behavior was not modeled in either social issue narrative (only helping behavior generally) and that behavioral intention was unable to predict behavior on its own, these factors are further evidence of the need for efficacy on the part of the participant to result in behavior to assist those struggling with different social issues.

Additionally, several indirect effects along a similar overarching path were present in the character involvement model. As noted earlier, the musical performance condition (when compared to the control condition) was indirectly related to efficacy via the involvement mechanism in this model: identification. Moreover, the musical performance condition was also indirectly related to behavioral intentions via identification and efficacy. One of the primary results of identification with media characters is behavioral intentions to act in ways similar to the behavior models (Bandura, 2002b; Kincaid, 2002). The indirect effect between the musical performance condition and behavioral intentions is further evidence of this overarching relationship between media exposure and behavioral intentions through identification (character involvement) and efficacy.
Narrative Involvement Model

As Hinyard and Kreuter (2007) noted, stories often include elements such as scenes, characters, unanswered questions, unresolved conflict, and resolution. Likely tied to the presence of several essential story elements in the video narrative, H8-H12 with the addition of a suggested route resulted in another well-fitting model. While the character involvement model and the narrative involvement model both produced acceptable results in terms of model fit, the key difference between the two is that the narrative involvement model did not require the participants to take the perspective of one of the fictional characters and, instead, focused on connection with the overall narrative (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010). Both the musical performance and the original song conditions produced significant paths leading to immersion within narrative (transportation). Congruent with previous research (Green & Brock, 2000), this transportation allowed the participants to lessen their awareness of the outside world and focus their concentration on the narrative itself. Results indicated that the type of music present was an indicator of transportation: both musical performance and music with lyrics heightened transportation, though instrumental condition was not significantly different from the control condition. One important distinction to discuss is the fact that, of the three models tested in this study, the narrative involvement model possessed the lowest level of fit (however, it did result in a strong fit overall). Green and Brock (2002) noted that the persuasive involvement process is due to a cognitive change that takes place during narrative exposure. Lack of better fit for this model might possibly be tied to length of exposure. Perhaps with a longer narrative clip, the results might produce a better fit for the involvement model.

Based on theory surrounding narrative persuasion (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010; Slater & Rouner, 2002), a primary result of transportation into narratives is decreased counterarguing with
the arguments or claims present in the story. Consistent with this prior research, the model indicated that transportation led to less counterarguing with the claims found in the social issue narratives. While counterarguing predicted pledging behavior (Green, 2004), contrary to prior research, counterarguing failed to lead to favorable empathic attitudes toward those dealing with the social issue featured (Green & Brock, 2000) or with behavioral intentions to help those individuals (Green, 2004). As expected, favorable empathic attitudes were successful in predicting behavioral intentions (Oliver, Dillard, et al., 2012) as well as pledging behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). Additionally, in the context of the narrative involvement model (as opposed to the character involvement model), behavioral intentions did lead to participant pledging behavior.

Modification indices for the initial hypothesized model did suggest an additional path that was not proposed prior to the start of data collection. The path from transportation to empathic attitudes seems plausible, as during model creation, before the variable of counterarguing was added to the proposed model, a path between elevation and empathic attitudes was present. The assumption made to exclude that route was due to the presence of extant research regarding the need for favorable empathic attitudes to take a route through counterarguing first (and not directly from transportation) (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010; Slater & Rouner, 2002). However, following other possible routes that do not include the cognitive act of counterarguing, those transported into a narrative may still be susceptible to claims made in the story world (Green, 2004). The path from transportation to favorable empathic attitudes was likely due to the idea that when immersed in a narrative, we are likely to adjust our real-world attitudes (Green, 2004) possibly via routes other than the reduction of counterarguing.
In an EE context, one of the key implications of message consumption is that by reducing the possibility for counterarguing, the presented narratives can impact individuals who might typically be resistant to persuasion (Slater & Rouner, 2002). However, one area of inquiry that might be important to consider - and one that is rarely discussed in narrative persuasion research - is whether counterarguing is necessarily a negative process. Several clear justifications could be presented for the benefits of counterarguing, including the idea that, as rational consumers of media content, individuals should be able to identify the messages being presented and possess the mental capacity to make a conscious decision about whether we accept or reject the argument being presented. Considering this perspective, it is important to acknowledge that often the primary target of a persuasive narrative are those who would be resistant to the message presented. Within the context of an EE message featuring social issues, the desired effect may be positive or prosocial in nature. Despite the favorable impact desired, the ability to counterargue a complete message or individual aspects of that message is normatively a beneficial ability to possess.

A number of indirect effects, many following along a similar overarching path (transportation to empathic attitudes), existed in the involvement model. Separate from the overarching path was the musical performance condition’s indirect effect on counterarguing via transportation. The remaining indirect effects all shared the one specific path: transportation to empathic attitudes, which as previously discussed is a key relationship to consider (Green, 2004). For the musical performance condition, it was indirectly related to empathic attitudes via transportation and to behavioral intentions via transportation and empathic attitudes. Finally, for the original song condition, it was also indirectly related to empathic attitudes via transportation and to behavioral intentions via transportation and empathic attitudes. In total, the results
regarding indirect effects revealed that the path between empathic attitudes and behavioral intentions was also a notable and anticipated route for several of the indirect effects (Oliver, Dillard, et al., 2012).

**Emotional Involvement Model**

With a focus on emotional involvement and the use of elevation as a discrete emotion, H14-H15, a few previously hypothesized paths, and one suggested additional path led to another well-fitting model. Similar to prior research showing that meaningful films can produce feelings of elevation (Oliver, Hartmann, et al., 2012), the social issue narratives featured in the study, paired with musical performance and the original song (Juslin & Laukka, 2003), were able to predict feelings of elevation when compared to the control condition. As with the narrative involvement model, the results of the emotional involvement model indicated that the type of music present was an indicator of the featured involvement mechanism (elevation), as the instrumental condition was again unable to predict a significant relationship when compared to the control condition. Consistent with prior research showing that elevation can increase one’s desire to love and help others (Freeman et al., 2009; Haidt, 2000), the subsequent paths leading from elevation (behavioral intentions, positive feelings, and empathic attitudes) were all significant.

Viewed as causing a change to the cognitive process (Algoe & Haidt, 2009) or as a moral transformation (Aquino, McFerran, & Laven, 2011), the ensuing effects of elevation were expected. First, feelings of elevation were shown to result in behavioral intentions to help people who struggle with the featured social issues (Schnall et al., 2010). In prior research, Algoe and Haidt (2009) identified this effect as emulation or the desire to do charitable acts of virtue. Second, feelings of elevation elicited from the narrative resulted in positive explicit feelings
about groups that are dealing with the social issues featured in the narrative (Ramasubramanian & Oliver, 2007). And finally, feelings of elevation were also shown to lead to empathic attitudes toward people who struggle with the featured social issues (Algoe & Haidt, 2009). Intriguing to note is that these variables were all focused on individuals dealing with the featured social issues, but elevation is not necessarily discerning about who the recipients of this desire to love and help others are (Freeman et al., 2009; Haidt, 2000). Silvers and Haidt (2008) noted that the cognitive change produced by elevation is not directed at anyone in particular and instead focuses on people generally. Research on elevation argues that this emotion makes us feel closer or more empathic with humanity in general (Silvers & Haidt, 2008). As such, it makes sense that feelings of elevation resulting from a narrative about a specific character could be generalized to feelings of empathy toward the specific social group as those individuals are part of humanity as a whole.

Moving to the next group of remaining paths proposed within the emotional involvement model, positive feelings toward those dealing with the featured social issue were found to significantly predict pledging behavior, but not behavioral intentions (Ramasubramanian & Oliver, 2007). The failure of positive feelings to predict behavioral intentions could be possible due to the fact that the positive feeling measure used only one item and may have failed to capture understanding of the full concept being measured or it may have been that the behavioral intentions measure asked about a range of different behaviors that the participants may feel unable to complete collectively and the behavioral measure asked the participants to take part in just one specific behavior. Additionally, this inability of positive feeling to predict behavioral intentions may be tied to the amount of variance being accounted for by other variables that strongly predicted behavioral intentions, namely elevation and empathic attitudes.
Empathic attitudes failed to result in pledging behavior as was predicted (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005) and instead was shown to lead to behavioral intentions (Oliver, Dillard, et al., 2012), which is a direct contrast when compared to the results for positive feelings and whether or not they predicted behavior or behavioral intentions. Additionally, in this involvement model (as with the narrative involvement model, but not the character involvement model), behavioral intentions were found to significantly predict pledging behavior (Oliver, Dillard, et al., 2012). Results indicating that behavior was predicted within the emotional involvement model was an encouraging one considering that elevation was not hypothesized to lead directly to behavior, as elevation does not necessarily result in immediate action (Algoe & Haidt, 2009). Finally, modification indices for the initial hypothesized model suggested only one additional path: from positive feelings to empathic attitudes. Given the context of emotional involvement and due to the fact that thoughts and feelings often lead to congruent attitudes (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005), the suggested path from feelings to attitudes seems reasonable and consistent with extant theorizing.

Lastly, three indirect effects were found within the emotional involvement model, all originating with the musical performance condition. The first indirect effect showed that the musical performance condition had an indirect effect on empathic attitudes via elevation. The second indirect effect used a similar route with the musical performance condition indirectly affecting behavioral intentions via elevation and empathic attitudes. Finally, the last indirect effect of the emotional involvement model also showed that there was an indirect effect between the musical performance and behavioral intentions; however, this time it was only via elevation. The three indirect effects highlight the impact of the music performance condition on empathic attitudes and behavioral intentions via the involvement mechanism of elevation.
**Involvement Models**

Excluding the first research question, the residual analyses provided evidence for a lack of differential effects for each of the remaining variables, including the social issue featured (RQ2), participant gender (RQ3), familiarity with *Glee* or the featured music (RQ4), liking of *Glee* and the featured music (RQ5), enjoyment of the video clip (RQ6), and issue involvement (RQ7). Most surprising is the absence of a difference for the social issue featured (homophobic bullying and lack of self-acceptance) considering the increased awareness of issues connected to the LGBTQ community such as equal rights and gay marriage. Taking into consideration these findings, the primary area to discuss regards what was asked in the first research question: a possible key difference(s) in strength or fit for the proposed models, including character involvement through identification, narrative involvement through transportation, and emotional involvement through elevation. The impetus for this question was the idea that even though the EE perspective often examines the involvement mechanisms individually, prior research usually focuses on answering the question of *what* effects take place and is less likely to investigate the *how* or *why* questions, especially in terms of the possible differences between the three involvement models (Bae, 2012; Singhal & Rogers, 2002). Prior research has asked about the presence of one specific involvement model that can be associated with all EE effects (Moyer-Gusé, 2008) and whether the different involvement models will produce similar or differential effects (Murphy et al., 2011).

Based on the similar results present in terms of model fit (especially for the character involvement model and the emotional involvement model) and the lack of a statistical test to determine any clear evidence (only a helpful indicator), at this stage of theoretical questioning no definite distinction can be made about which involvement mechanism can be best attributed to
the EE process. The inability to make a firm distinction about whether one involvement mechanism might be more effective than another is not surprising considering that the key variables (identification, transportation, and elevation) are very much interrelated. In fact, Busselle and Bilandzic (2008) noted that identification and transportation are just part of a broader concept known as narrative engagement. And Murphy et al. (2011) noted that the EE process might actually be the result of the emotional aspects present in each of the three involvement mechanisms. In addition, as the discussion regarding the impact of music presentation alluded to, emotion is key for identification with fictional characters, transportation into a narrative, and, of course, feelings of elevation.

**Entertainment-education Model**

Taking the next logical direction for this line of research, the involvement mechanisms and a number of the additional study variables were combined into an overarching EE model. One of the primary reasons for the inclusion of a range of variables in one model is that while some of the elements contained in each mechanism relate to the others, primarily identification, transportation, and elevation, they do not overlap completely (Murphy et al., 2001). While the final EE model provided an acceptable degree fit and the chi-square test did indicate a significant difference between the initial model and the final version, further research is required to find the most effective means of combining these variables into overarching models. The reasoning for this recommendation is that some of the paths suggested by the modification indices resulted in non-significant paths that were significant in prior models. One possible reason for this contrast is that the combined model had considerably more paths included within the model, which, in turn, increased the number of parameters present.
Another likely possibility for the differences in significance (for the same paths in different models) could be tied to the issue of multicollinearity. Considering specific paths present in the individual models and comparing them to same paths in the combined model, multicollinearity can cause inconsistent results when even minimal changes are made to a model. While this usually does not cause a notable impact on the overall model fit, multicollinearity does have an effect on the results of individual predictors. For example, transportation was highly correlated with both identification and elevation (see Table 2), which means that there is a chance that these variables were measuring the same or very similar overarching constructs. Needless to say, multicollinearity might be a key component to account for why several paths in the final model were different from the same paths in the individual models. Avenues for additional inquiry in relation to this issue are discussed in the future research section.

The overall impact of the music presentation conditions on the involvement mechanisms (when compared to the control condition) was consistent with the individual models and, again, was possibly tied to the presence of increased emotional understanding (Juslin, 2000; Juslin & Laukka, 2003). Not surprisingly, all the music presentation conditions failed to consistently predict identification as was originally expected (Smith et al., 2007), however, identification had been predicted by the musical performance condition originally when in the context of the character involvement model. Nearly identical results were found for transportation, with both the musical performance and original song conditions significantly predicting transportation into the narrative (Green & Brock, 2000), while the instrumental was unable to do the same, as seen in the narrative involvement model. The last of the involvement mechanisms, elevation, was again predicted by the musical performance condition and unable to be predicted by the instrumental condition (Oliver, Hartmann et al., 2012). Unfortunately, the original song
condition failed to predict elevation in this context when it had previously done so in the emotional involvement model. Despite this deviation, the results of the combined model did prove to be quite similar to the results of the individual models in terms of the music presentation conditions predicting the three involvement mechanisms.

In the combined EE model, the paths from identification to efficacy and empathic attitudes were both non-significant. This was unexpected, as identification with fictional characters has often been shown to lead to feelings of efficacy (Smith et al., 2007) and was significantly predicted in the character involvement model. Additionally, the path from identification to empathic attitudes was suggested in the second revision to the combined model, but, after the third revision, significance failed to hold for that route. For transportation, the routes from transportation to counterarguing (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010) and efficacy (a route suggested in the first revision of the model) were significant, but not anticipated was the failure of transportation to predict empathic attitudes as it had via a suggested route in the narrative involvement model. Quite interesting, though, is the suggested path between transportation and efficacy. The possibility for a theoretical relationship between these variables, as previously established in separate involvement models, is not surprising. The cognitive act of being lost in a narrative and susceptible to the claims found in the story (Green, 2004) could be seen as being a reason for viewer beliefs that they can perform different story-congruent actions (Bandura, 1997). Lastly, in this involvement context, elevation was unable to predict favorable empathic attitudes as expected (Algoe & Haidt, 2009), as it had done the same in the emotional involvement model. The likely reason for this result is that two of the suggested paths led to empathic attitudes and accounted for much of the variance. However, as in the emotional
involvement model, feelings of elevation were able to predict behavioral intentions of helping behavior (Schnall et al., 2010).

Efficacy was found to be an impactful component in the combined EE model as it led to three different variables: behavioral intentions, behavior, and empathic attitudes. The resulting predictions for efficacy to behavioral intentions and behavior were consistent in both the character involvement model and the combined model (Kincaid, 2002). The significant path between efficacy and empathic attitudes was the final suggested route from the modification indices. This relationship is a compelling one to consider, since the two variables were not present in the same involvement model prior to their appearance in the combined model. In terms of this finding, it seems possible that an individual’s belief that they could perform helping behaviors for individuals dealing with different social issues could lead a person to have favorable empathic attitudes towards those that would being helped by the possible behaviors.

With results holding consistent for counterarguing and empathic attitudes when compared to the narrative involvement and emotional involvement models, counterarguing was shown to predict behavior but not empathic attitudes (Green, 2004), and empathic attitudes were shown to predict behavioral intentions (Oliver, Dillard, et al., 2012) but not behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). Finally, behavioral intentions failed to predict behavior in this involvement context (Oliver, Dillard, et al., 2012). The lack of significance for this final path was similar to the finding associated with the character involvement model, but contrasted the narrative and emotional involvement models where behavioral intentions were found to predict behavior.

One of the final elements to discuss is the result that was found when testing for indirect effects in the combined EE model. Using bootstrapping procedures, as had been done with the individual involvement models, only one indirect effect was identified in the combined
involvement model. The indirect effects analysis showed that the musical performance condition was indirectly related to counterarguing via transportation. In terms of this finding and the previously discussed findings for the combined model, future research should seek to determine the best means and methods to combine a number of involvement variables into overarching EE models. Clearly, the creation and further testing of overarching, well-fitting EE models is an important prospect for research in the area of EE effects, narrative engagement/involvement, and media psychology.

The Possibility of Long-lasting Effects

A key point to consider is whether the attitude change identified in this study had a lasting effect. To address this consideration, especially in terms of character involvement and narrative involvement, the routes discussed within the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) need to be outlined, including both the peripheral processing and central processing (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Peripheral-route processing is typically thought to result in only temporary attitude change, as attention is focused on attention to source cues, number of messages, and so on. Central-route processing has the potential for long-lasting attitude change as attention is focused on the arguments of the message. In addition to lasting attitude change, central-route processing is also seen to be highly predictive of lasting knowledge change and future behavior (Skumanich & Kintsfather, 1996). Based on previous research surrounding the ELM and the E-ELM (Moyer-Gusé, 2008; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Skumanich & Kintsfather, 1996; Slater & Rouner, 2002), the attitude change present in this study likely follows the peripheral route, as a focus on the arguments of the message are not a primary component of narrative consumption.

When applying these results outside the experimental setting, Singhal and Rogers (1999) noted that, “A serial entertainment-education format provides opportunities for additional
cognitive rehearsal of responses consistent with the implicit persuasive message, as well as cognitive rehearsal and social reinforcement through discussion of the serial with others. Entertainment-education serials commonly become the focus of such discussions” (Slater & Rouner, 2002, p. 188). According to Slater and Rouner (2002), these reinforcement opportunities can serve as a significant moderator of long-lasting attitudinal and behavioral effects.

The emotional involvement perspective employed in this study, namely elevation, should be considered as well. Previous research conducted in this area of inquiry has suggested that when individuals witness acts of moral beauty and goodness, the resulting effect for some people is a “lasting imprint on their memory” (Aquino, McFerran, & Laven, 2011, p. 715). Aquino, McFerran, and Laven (2011) also noted that whether this “lasting imprint” leads to lasting changes in thought processes and behavior is a question that remains unanswered. In fact, Oliver, Hartman, and Woolley (2012) called for further exploration into how long-lasting these positive effects are, following exposure to elevating media content. As can be seen, additional inquiry is needed to properly answer the question of long-lasting effects from an emotional involvement perspective.

**Potential Limitations**

No matter what social scientific research method is employed, no study is unencumbered by the inherent features of empirical observation. As the creation of a perfect experiment is impossible, every study has its own specific limitations and this project was no different. Nevertheless, before discussing any other study limitations, two areas should be mentioned first: temporal order and path inflation. First, in terms of temporal order, it is prudent to note that presumptions made about the temporal order of effects within a path model, like the ones proposed and examined in this study, may be erroneous (Kline, 2011). To address this concern,
previously supported theory and prior research were used to strengthen the reasoning behind the hypothesized models and individual paths. However, the results of this study should be read and interpreted while considering the possibility of a differing temporal order. Second, in terms of path inflation, some of the path results may have been inflated due to shared traits of the participants (or a majority of the participants). Individual differences often serve as a catalyst for increased (or decreased) media influence (Oliver & Krakowiak, 2009). Several personality traits, including predispositions toward empathy, understanding, and the like, could possibly be an impetus for result inflation. The remaining study limitations can be grouped into three areas: the artificial nature of experiments, the stimulus material employed, and the participant sample.

**Artificial nature of experiments.** In order to incorporate the required level of control, all laboratory experiments produce one distinct drawback: artificiality. In order to prevent participant fatigue, experimental sessions were kept under 45 minutes and the social issue narratives were shortened to fit into this allotted timeframe. While this shortened version was effective at eliminating some of the unnecessary scenes and other character plots, selectivity based on an ideal running time caused some social issue content to be cut. Additionally, prior research has shown that media effects are often heightened over an extended period of time (Slater & Rouner, 2002), many times from further or even repeated viewing. Laboratory experiments such as the one conducted for this dissertation are only able to test the impact of one, isolated exposure. As such, the effects might be quite minimal when compared to the impact of consistent exposure.

Furthermore, in terms of artificiality, the delivery of the behavioral measure (online pledge behavior) was not necessarily natural, as a narrative-congruent pledge was presented shortly after viewing the stimulus material. Although direct presentation may not take place often
in natural settings, social issues narratives are often accompanied with public service announcements or other issue-compatible messages that offer means to learn more about a specific issue via web addresses, phone numbers, and hashtags.

**Stimulus material employed.** Because of a reliance on existing media, selection possibilities for stimulus material were limited to what is currently available in entertainment media. Due to the specific research focus of this study, the need for content from a prime time television program that depicts storylines featuring social issues and contains a musical performance element limited the selection of stimulus to basically one possibility: *Glee*. The use of popular television programming in the context of an experiment like this results in several possible mediating or moderating variables that are difficult to dissect. While familiarity and liking of the program was measured, other factors such as previous exposure, preconceived notions, and knowledge of storyline development may have impacted a number of the measured variables. Additionally, it is important to note that the social issues featured in the stimulus materials (as well as the others shown on *Glee*) are not completely representative of all social issue narratives found in entertainment television and may not cover all aspects of a given issue.

In addition to the featured television content, the inclusion of popular music may have also affected the study process. For what is likely due to a number of reasons, including narrative-congruence as well as commercial goals, *Glee* primarily uses popular music for its musical numbers. Several of the included variables may have been impacted because the participants were either familiar or unfamiliar with the featured songs. For example, the presence of a song that a participant knows and enjoys (or does not enjoy) may have affected their level of transportation into the narrative. One possible solution might be to devise experiment-specific content, however, any creation of stimulus material that does not come with any built-in
assumptions and is solely for study purposes, would likely be incredibly expensive and difficult to produce.

**Participant sample.** For what was essentially a convenience sample (undergraduate students receiving course credit for research participation), it is important to note that sample is quite appropriate for this line of research, as undergraduates represent a key portion of the coveted 18 to 24 television viewer demographic. Notwithstanding, there are a few areas to note in regards to study limitations and the participant sample. Firstly, earlier research has shown that this age group is much more receptive to varying viewpoints and that they are quite susceptible to attitude change at this point in their lives (Alwin, Cohen, & Newcomb, 1991). While they do represent a key viewer demographic for television programs like *Glee*, they might be more easily swayed by media exposure than someone in an older demographic. As such, this point raises the issues of generalizability for the study findings. Although the results might not be generalizable to other age groups, it is very likely that the findings can be extended to others in this age group. Moreover, in terms of generalizability, another limitation of the participant sample involves the issue of social desirability. Unfortunately, study participants often make decisions regarding how to answer study questions based not necessarily on how they really feel, but instead on what is socially desirable or acceptable. As such, in the context of a study focused on thoughts, feelings, attitudes, behavioral intentions, and behaviors regarding different social issues, social desirability is an obvious concern.

**Practical Implications**

As with any line of research that involves the use of existing media, the practical applications and implications associated with the knowledge gained from this study are important to discuss. A key implication often discussed by EE scholars is connected to the
possible widespread persuasive impact that a given EE message has; primarily because of its ability to reach such a large audience of media consumers (Moyer-Gusé, 2008; Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010). There is the potential for considerable changes in knowledge, attitudes, behavioral intentions, and behavior because of a message’s probable widespread impact and because EE messages are presented within the context of entertainment.

When considering the practical implications of EE research, it is important to differentiate how this line of research and the content that it studies is unique when compared to other types of media message. First, EE messages often produce effects that are different than other media content that discusses similar topics; mainly in terms of the significant impact that emotion has on involvement with a given issue (Bae, 2012). The opportunity to engage emotionally with individual characters and social issue narratives can result in effects not possible with exposure to other types of media, such as a news story shown via a brief television segment or a magazine article. And second, one of the most important implications of EE content is that it allows for opportunities to impact those that might be resistant to specific media messages in another context (Slater & Rouner, 2002). Where a media consumer might be defensive about the presentation of a specific issue in a news broadcast or another media channel, mediated exposure to a sympathetic character via an engrossing social-issue narrative could impact viewers in positive ways.

Much has been said about the impact of programs that feature the portrayal of individuals dealing with different social issues. Speaking of a pivotal, early episode from the first season of Glee in which Kurt comes out to his father, co-creator and executive producer Ryan Murphy said the following to Deadline.com:
The show at that point really took off. I think that the episode and those performances and that writing and direction that Brad [Falchuk] did, it became a water cooler thing. Then after that, I was so shocked that I got so much feedback. ‘That episode made me talk to my Dad.’ Or, ‘That episode showed me how to talk to my child.’ I thought so you can do entertainment and maybe do something responsible and socially relevant. That’s when I got interested in looking at the impact that we possibly can have and what can we do with that… I am bombarded daily by groups and children. Gays, handicapped groups, disability groups… Because I hear from those kids who watch the show that it means so much to them to see an outlet that portrays what they’re going through (Finke, 2011).

Given the interest of a media producer in recognizing the positive changes that can come about by consumption of a program they created, the topics addressed and results obtained by this research are important to consider. Additionally, considering the previous comment from Murphy, this study allowed for an opportunity to investigate, analyze, and dissect the effects of media consumption of this kind. Hopefully, this research and similar future studies will be able to add to our knowledge of how television programming and other entertainment media can be employed as an ongoing strategy for social change initiatives. However, rarely do we see partnerships between health organizations or advocacy groups with writers and producers of entertainment media. Well-known previous examples of this type of collaboration include when the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) worked with the producers of Beverly Hills, 90210 and ER to feature storylines related to the dangers of skin cancer and the necessity for vaccinations/overuse of antibiotics, respectively (Sherry, 2002). While messages from the It Gets Better Project and The Trevor Project have been paired with episodes of Glee in the past, the partnerships illustrated between the CDC and different television programs are less likely to
be seen in the current media landscape. Further emphasis on social-issue narratives in entertainment programming and strong, effective partnerships between content creators and advocacy groups could help persuade individuals to adopt perspectives and behaviors that would lead to better lives for themselves and others.

Based on the results gathered from this study and similar studies of its kind that focus on health issues, messages that are entertainment-based and feature prosocial content, regardless of the purpose for inclusion, can be seen and could possibly be employed as a practical means of assisting in the persuasion of media consumers on a given issue that impacts society. Stronger partnerships between media content producers and a range of advocacy groups would be beneficial to many media consumers. *Glee* features a number of social issues on a consistent basis, but that program is often the exception to the rule in terms of the range and frequency of social issue inclusion in entertainment television. Fulfilling the possibility for television to serve as an instrument of social change, more media producers could include narratives about different social issues, and advocacy groups could seek out opportunities to partner with different entertainment programming producers to spread their positive and prosocial messages. The practical implications for this line of research are a promising area to consider when thinking about how often social-issue content could exist within entertainment television programming.

**Future Research**

The results contained in this study afford the opportunity to call for additional research in the areas of media effects, entertainment-education, and the impact of television exposure on attitudes and behaviors related to different social issues. Among many questions that scholars might examine with further research in this domain, three areas of focus may prove to be
particularly fruitful: entertainment-education and involvement, the measurement of emotional involvement, and social issues in entertainment television.

**Entertainment-education and involvement.** Future research is needed to further test different ways to combine the three involvement mechanisms into one model. The final model tested in this study used the significant paths identified in the individual involvement models as a guide to designing one complete model. After modifying the model, the resulting model possessed a satisfactory level of fit; however, some proposed paths that were expected to follow their predictions proved to be non-significant, resulting in questions about the impact of multicollinearity within the model. Further research could seek to address this issue in one of at least two different ways. The first would involve elimination of variables that are contributing to the multicollinearity present in the model. The second means of addressing this issue would be to combine some of the variables that are proving to be redundant.

Additionally, future research should seek for further explanation/understanding regarding the differences between the three different involvement mechanisms. One question might ask how the variables of identification and transportation are related or unrelated due to the possibility of both elements serving as underlying constructs of a broader concept: narrative engagement (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2008)? In addition, future research could help to distinguish the impact of the four dimensions of identification: empathy, shared perspective, motivation, and absorption (Cohen, 2001a). One or more of these dimensions may prove better at predicting attitude and/or behavior change than the others. Finally, future research could assist in further explaining of the impact that music has on character, narrative, and emotional involvement. Research in the area of music and its effects is clearly lacking in terms of definitive claims and conclusions, and findings from this study found no significant differences in terms of music
presentation for identification. In another context, would varying levels of music presentation be able to suggest a stronger impact on identification or would the non-significant results hold consistent?

**Measurement of emotional involvement.** As noted in the review of prior literature, emotional involvement is often studied in a number of different ways. One possible approach is to study emotional involvement with just one discrete emotion (Nabi, 2002a; 2002b), such as elevation in the present study. For the study of social issues in entertainment media, other possible discrete emotions of interest might include sadness, anger, sympathy, or, even empathy (one of the dimensions of identification). However, it is important to note that in this study context, the tone of the media message did seem to match the emotional state of the participants, which has been found to increase attention and message acceptance (DeSteno et al., 2004).

Another prospective method is to research the impact of emotions with a focus on valence, such as positive affect as opposed to negative affect (Tal-Or & Cohen, 2010). A focus on emotional valence may produce a wealth of understanding considering the fact that some scholars view positive and negative emotions as acutely different, since negative emotions have been shown to limit our focus to immediate concerns and positive emotions are believed to broaden our perspective (Fredrickson, 1998). Lastly, in terms of emotion, while the construct of emotional understanding was proposed as the underlying component at play involving the impact of music (Juslin, 2000; Juslin & Laukka, 2003), the concept/variable was not actually measured in the study. Future research concerned with involvement mechanisms and musical impact should consider employing some type of measure for emotional understanding.

**Social issues in entertainment television.** Three subareas of research are worth examining when considering the focus on social issues found in different entertainment media
and the need to test the hypothesized models in other study contexts. These three areas include: varying social issues, social issues featured in different genres, and additional/prolonged effects. For varying social issues, entertainment television has depicted a range of social issues for many years. Using *Glee* as an example, the musical dramedy has produced numerous episodes focused on a variety of issues including poverty, gun violence, teen pregnancy, underage drinking, acceptance, disabilities, stigmatization, and discrimination. Although the present study showed no significant differences in the involvement models for the two social issues featured (homophobic bullying and lack of self-acceptance), some discrete social issues may lead to contrasting results.

In terms of studying social issues featured in different genres, *Glee* is considered a dramedy that includes both humorous and serious content. The approach taken by a dramedy to discuss a given social issue might be quite different from the ways in which a program that is solely a drama would address the issue. A mix of genres might result in differential effects when a similar social issue is featured. One genre area that might be promising for studying social issues in entertainment media is science fiction/fantasy. Due to opportunities these genres have for bending the rules/norms on a given story context, science fiction and fantasy has often been a place where social issues can be examined in new and compelling ways. Several programs come to mind, including *Battlestar Galactica, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Doctor Who, Supernatural,* and *The X-Files,* where the social commentary is not always evident to the viewer without a deeper reading of the text.

Finally, in terms of social issues in entertainment television, additional avenues may be explored, such as long-term effects via a follow-up survey some time after the experiment is conducted, continued exposure to similar content tied to viewing patterns for programs like *Glee,*
the impact of social issue media exposure on implicit attitudes as opposed to solely explicit attitudes, and other behavioral measures that go beyond online pledge completion. Inclusion of these additional variables could be the means for providing added information concerning audience effects when social issues are featured in entertainment television content.
Chapter 6

Conclusion

Summary

The research conducted in this dissertation study sought to employ the EE perspective (Singhal & Rogers, 2004) to examine the impact of entertainment television that features the discussion of discrete social issues within episodic storylines. From a media effects/media psychology perspective, a central question of this research asked whether this type of content can lead to favorable attitudes, behavioral intentions, and helping behavior involving those that are struggling with the featured social issues. Previous research has identified three possible involvement mechanisms associated with EE effects: character involvement, narrative involvement, and emotional involvement (Murphy et al., 2011). As such, another primary question put forth by this research concerned which of the EE involvement mechanisms can best be attributed to the process of attitude and behavior change in the context of social issues in entertainment television. A secondary question to this research focus involved examining if and how music presentation within television content plays a role in character, narrative, and emotional involvement.

Employing an experiment that presented television content with one of two social issues (homophobic bullying or lack of self-acceptance) and one of four different types of music presentation (musical performance, original song, instrumental, or no music/silence), models comprising character involvement variables including identification, narrative involvement variables including transportation, and emotional involvement variables including elevation were analyzed via path analyses using Mplus. Results from the character involvement model revealed that efficacy and behavioral intentions associated with helping those struggling with the featured
social issues were predicted by identification and that behavioral intentions and behavior could be predicted via efficacy on the part of the individual. Findings gathered from the narrative involvement model showed that decreased counterarguing and favorable empathic attitudes were predicted by transportation. Additionally, favorable empathic attitudes led to behavioral intentions. For behavior, it was predicted by empathic attitudes, decreased counterarguing, and behavioral intentions (in this involvement context). Finally, results from the emotional involvement model revealed that behavioral intentions, positive feelings toward the focal group featured in the television content, and empathic attitudes were all predicted by elevation. Furthermore, positive feelings predicted empathic attitudes and behavior, empathic attitudes predicted behavioral intentions, and, again, behavioral intentions predicted behavior as it had in the narrative involvement model.

The second primary question put forth by this research asked which of the EE involvement mechanisms could be best attributed to the process of attitude and behavior change in the context of social issues in entertainment television. No clear distinction could be made when comparing the three involvement models analyzed in this research. Each involvement model had quite similar levels of model fit, and each predicted changes in attitude, behavioral intentions, and behavior in varying ways. Taking the next logical direction for this research, the involvement mechanisms and a number of the additional study variables were combined into an overarching EE model, as it was clear that each of the involvement mechanisms were at play in the EE process. When combined into a single model, transportation was found to predict decreased counterarguing and efficacy (via a newly suggested path), and elevation again predicted behavioral intentions while identification failed to have a significant impact on any of the subsequent variables. Empathic attitudes were found to lead to behavioral intentions and
decreased counterarguing predicted behavior. Efficacy proved to be a significant component of the combined EE model as it predicted behavioral intentions, behavior, and empathic attitudes.

The final question considered in this research focused on understanding if and how music presentation within television content played a role in character, narrative, and emotional involvement via their respective primary variables: identification, transportation, and elevation. Results indicated that there was no overall effect for the four types of music presentation present in the study. However, when comparing the musical performance condition and the control condition, significant results were obtained in relation to transportation and elevation but not identification. Within the involvement models, the music performance condition (when compared to the control condition) was found to predict identification, transportation, and elevation, while the original song condition was also shown to lead to transportation and elevation. The significant findings for the music presentation conditions were also obtained when the overall EE model was combined; however, in the complete model, the musical performance condition failed to predict identification and, the original song condition failed to predict elevation as they had in the individual models.

**Conclusion**

Previous research in the realm of EE and its effects has found significant changes in the knowledge, attitude, and behavior of media consumers via exposure to content that is both entertaining and somewhat educational (Bae, 2012; Bae & Kang, 2008; Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010; Murphy & Cody, 2003; Murphy et al., 2011; Slater & Rouner, 2002; Smith et al., 2007). The research conducted in this dissertation adds to scholarly understanding of EE in several ways. First, EE is often applied in the context of health issues and behaviors. The focus of this study was to apply the principles of EE and its effects to a different area of interest: social issues.
As is evident by the findings present in this study, the EE perspective can be successfully incorporated in the context of social issues and awareness. Second, within EE research, each of the involvement mechanisms have typically been employed individually or studied separately. Taking the next logical step in the progression of EE research, this dissertation combined all three mechanisms into a complete EE model with each of the involvement variables present. And, finally, within the realm of EE effects and outside of it, music presentation is often understudied, especially in the context of musical performance in television and film content. This research sought to increase understanding of the impact of music presentation in television programming when social issues are featured.

Some media scholars are unconvinced that television can serve as a forum for the discussion of social issues for a number of reasons. Gitlin (1979) noted that the “major social conflicts are transported into the cultural system, where the hegemonic process frames them, form and content both, into compatibility with dominant systems of meaning” (p. 264). However, others hold a very different perspective. Newcomb and Hirsch (1983) argued that television has the potential to serve as a public, cultural forum where the nation thinks aloud about relevant social issues. They were convinced that television does not exist in a world of its own and is quite capable of having an influence on television viewers. Newcomb and Hirsch viewed the range of reactions to the medium as vast and immeasurable and believed that the viewing public often create their own meaning based on personal experiences. Newcomb and Hirsch (1983) stated that the “forum offers a perspective that is as complex, as contradictory and confused, as much in process as American culture is in experience” (p. 53). From a perspective that views television as a cultural forum, the understanding is that the television world is often similar to the real world and serves as a place to discuss social issues. With this perspective, the
more we understand the medium, the more we will understand ourselves. EE researchers
Greenberg et al. (2004) noted that social change is clearly an effect of television consumption in
a range of different contexts. The research conducted for this dissertation study provides further
evidence for what a number of media studies and media effects scholars have come to
understand: that television has the ability to serve as an instrument of social change.
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APPENDIX

MediaLab Questionnaire

*Note:* Unless otherwise noted, the measures will use a 7-point Likert scale with response options ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

**Guidelines Agreement**

To participate in this extra credit opportunity, each person needs to agree to follow the study guidelines. This will ensure that each study session runs smoothly. Please read over the study guidelines...

1. Do not use your mobile phone during the study. Make sure it is on silent and keep your phone in your pocket or bag.

2. Do not talk with other participants while the study is in session.

3. Keep your eyes forward on your computer.

4. Read the each instruction page, statement, and question carefully.

5. Raise your hand if you have any questions or problems.

6. Allow each Web page to load (at least 5 to 10 seconds might be needed).

7. Raise your hand when you reach the end of the study.

If you wish to continue your participation, select that option near the bottom of the page. If you do not wish to continue, please raise your hand and inform the individual conducting the session.

Thank you!
Welcome Message

Welcome to our study: Television and Viewer Perceptions. In this study, you will answer a series of questions, watch a 12-minute video clip, and then finish the study by answering several series of questions and completing some related tasks. The study should take 35 to 45 minutes. Throughout the study, please read each question carefully before selecting your response. The first series of questions will concern your personal demographics.

Demographic Questions

1. What is your age?

2. What is your gender?
   - Male
   - Female

3. What is your race/ethnicity? Please select all that apply.
   - White/Caucasian
   - Black
   - Asian
   - Hispanic/Latino
   - Indian Subcontinent
   - Middle Eastern/Arabic
   - Native American/Alaskan Native
   - Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
   - Other
   - Prefer not to answer
3. What is your year in school?
   - Freshman
   - Sophomore
   - Junior
   - Senior
   - Other

**Involvement with the Social Issue Featured** (adapted from Zaichkowsky, 1986; Mittal, 1989)

For the next series of statements, you will be asked about your feelings concerning several different issues, including a number of social issues. Social issues are matters that directly or indirectly affect a person or many members of a society. When responding to these statements, please indicate your feelings on a personal level, or in other words: how these issues impact you personally, your family members, and your friends.

1. The issue of race/ethnic-based discrimination is relevant to me.
2. The issue of domestic violence is relevant to me.
3. The issue of homophobic bullying is relevant to me.
4. The issue of poverty is relevant to me.
5. The issues of lack of self-acceptance/self-esteem are relevant to me.
6. The issue of religious intolerance is relevant to me.
7. The issue of race/ethnic-based discrimination is important to me.
8. The issue of domestic violence is important to me.
9. The issue of homophobic bullying is important to me.
10. The issue of poverty is important to me.
11. The issues of lack of self-acceptance/self-esteem are important to me.

12. The issue of religious intolerance is important to me.

13. The issue of race/ethnic-based discrimination is of no concern to me (reverse coded).

14. The issue of domestic violence is of no concern to me (reverse coded).

15. The issue of homophobic bullying is of no concern to me (reverse coded).

16. The issue of poverty is of no concern to me (reverse coded).

17. The issues of lack of self-acceptance/self-esteem are of no concern to me (reverse coded).

18. The issue of religious intolerance is of no concern to me (reverse coded).

19. Religious intolerance is relevant to me.

20. Religious intolerance is important to me.

21. Religious intolerance is of no concern to me (reverse coded).

**Video Clip Instructions**

In the next portion of the study, you will watch a video clip from a television program that has been edited for time. The clip will be about 12 minutes long. The clip will end with a musical performance/slideshow of images with music playing in the background/simple slideshow of images. Please pay attention to the clip and stay off your cell phone. You can adjust the volume in two places: the dial on the monitor and also on the headphones cord. Make sure that the sound is working properly as soon as the clip begins. Please see the person conducting the study session if you have any problems or questions. Put the headphones on and then press Continue.
Transportation (Green and Brock, 2000)

You may now take off the headphones. They will not be needed for the remainder of the study.

For the upcoming series of items, please provide your agreement or disagreement with a number of statements regarding your experience while viewing the video clip.

1. While I was watching the narrative, I could easily picture the events in it taking place.
2. While I was watching the narrative, activity going on in the room around me was on my mind (reverse coded).
3. I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the narrative.
4. I was mentally involved in the narrative while watching it.
5. After finishing the narrative, I found it easy to put it out of my mind (reverse coded).
6. I wanted to learn how the complete narrative ended.
7. The narrative affected me emotionally.
8. I found myself thinking of ways the narrative could have turned out differently.
9. I found my mind wandering while watching the narrative (reverse coded).
10. The events in the narrative are relevant to my everyday life.
11. The events in the narrative have changed my life.

Identification (Cohen, 2001a)

The next series of questions asks about how you identified with characters featured in the video clip. Identification concerns how much you could connect with the characters based on their identity, goals, and perspectives.
**Homophobic bullying narrative:** Which of the following characters that were helping Kurt deal with his situation could you identify with the most?

1. Artie, Mike, and Sam
2. Burt
3. Finn
4. Mr. Schuester
5. Rachel
6. Sue Sylvester

**Lack of self-acceptance narrative:** Which of the following characters that were helping Rachel deal with his situation could you identify with the most?

1. Finn
2. Kurt
3. Mr. Schuester
4. Puck
5. Quinn

1. While viewing the video clip, I felt as if I was part of the action.
2. While viewing the video clip, I forgot myself and was fully absorbed.
3. I was able to understand the events in the program in a manner similar to that in which *character X* understood them.
4. I think I have a good understanding of *character X*.
5. I tend to understand the reasons why *character X* does what he or she does.
6. While viewing the video clip I could feel the emotions *character X* portrayed.

7. During viewing, I felt I could really get inside *character X’s* head.

8. At key moments in the video clip, I felt I knew exactly what *character X* was going through.

9. While viewing the video clip, I wanted *character X* to succeed in achieving his or her goals.

10. When *character X* succeeded I felt joy, but when he or she failed, I was sad.

**General: Affective Reactions**

For the next series of statements, please indicate at what level you experienced the given emotion while viewing the video clip (1 = not at all, 4 = somewhat, 7 = very much).

1. While viewing the video clip, I felt fearful.

2. While viewing the video clip, I felt sad.

3. While viewing the video clip, I felt guilty.

4. While viewing the video clip, I felt hostile.

5. While viewing the video clip, I felt shy.

6. While viewing the video clip, I felt self-assured.

7. While viewing the video clip, I felt attentive.

8. While viewing the video clip, I felt serene.

9. While viewing the video clip, I felt alert.

10. While viewing the video clip, I felt determined.

11. While viewing the video clip, I felt afraid.

12. While viewing the video clip, I felt ashamed.

13. While viewing the video clip, I felt nervous.

14. While viewing the video clip, I felt upset.
15. While viewing the video clip, I felt angry.
16. While viewing the video clip, I felt content.

**Elevation: Affective Responses** (Oliver, 2008; Oliver, Hartmann, et al., 2012)

1. While viewing the video clip, I felt touched.
2. While viewing the video clip, I felt moved.
3. While viewing the video clip, I felt emotional.
4. While viewing the video clip, I felt tender.
5. While viewing the video clip, I felt uplifted.
6. While viewing the video clip, I felt tearful.
7. While viewing the video clip, I felt inspired.
8. While viewing the video clip, I felt surprised.
9. While viewing the video clip, I felt stunned.

**Counterarguing** (open-ended)

In the space provided, please write a sentence or two regarding your thoughts about the arguments put forth in the video clip regarding the issue of homophobic bullying - lack of self-acceptance/self-esteem.

**Counterarguing** (adapted from Nabi, Moyer-Gusé, & Bryne, 2007)

In the next series of items regarding the issue of homophobic bullying - lack of self-acceptance/self-esteem, please indicate your thoughts about the arguments put forth in the video clip (by the narrative generally and not by individual characters).
1. I found myself actively agreeing with the information presented in the clip (reverse coded).
2. I found myself actively disagreeing with the information presented in the clip.
3. While watching the clip, I found no flaws in the arguments presented (reverse coded).
4. It was easy to agree with the arguments made in the video clip (reverse coded).
5. While watching the clip, I realized I often agreed with the information that was being presented (reverse coded).

**Efficacy** (Bandura, 1997)

For the next series of questions, please indicate your ability to take several actions that would benefit those dealing with homophobic bullying - struggling with self-acceptance/self-esteem.

1. I would be able to donate money to an advocacy program for those dealing with homophobic bullying - struggling with self-acceptance/self-esteem.
2. I would be able to sign a petition to build pressure needed to help those dealing with homophobic bullying - struggling with self-acceptance/self-esteem.
3. I would be able to discuss the situation of those dealing with homophobic bullying - struggling with self-acceptance/self-esteem with my friends or family.
4. I would be able to forward the link to a news story about people dealing with homophobic bullying - struggling with self-acceptance/self-esteem to my family or friends.
5. I would be able to sign an online pledge to assist those dealing with homophobic bullying - struggling with self-acceptance/self-esteem.
6. I would be able to find additional information online regarding homophobic bullying - self-acceptance/self-esteem.
**Feeling Thermometers** (Hugenberg & Bodenhausen, 2003; Ramasubramanian & Oliver, 2007).

For the next series of questions, please rate your overall favorability to the following groups dealing with different social issues. Favorability is the quality or degree of being viewed pleasingly or encouragingly (using a 9-point scale ranging 1 = very unfavorable, 3 = unfavorable, 5 = neutral, 7 = favorable, and 9 = very favorable).

1. Rate your overall favorability to people who are racial/ethnic discriminated against.
2. Rate your overall favorability to people who are the recipients of domestic violence.
3. Rate your overall favorability to people who are the victims of homophobic bullying.
4. Rate your overall favorability to people experiencing poverty.
5. Rate your overall favorability to people struggling with a lack of self-acceptance.
6. Rate your overall favorability to people dealing with religious intolerance.

**Empathic Attitudes** (adapted from Batson et al., 1997)

For the next series of questions, please indicate your agreement with the following statements about people dealing with homophobic bullying - struggling with self-acceptance/self-esteem.

1. People dealing with homophobic bullying/struggling with self-acceptance have no one to blame but themselves for their troubles. (reverse coded)
2. For most people dealing with homophobic bullying/struggling with self-acceptance, it is their own fault that they are being bullied/struggling. (reverse coded)
3. How much do you personally care about the difficulties for those dealing with homophobic bullying/struggling with self-acceptance? (1 = not at all, 5 = somewhat 7 = very much)
4. Compared with other social problems we face today (e.g., homelessness, education, drugs, AIDS, environmental protection, energy conservation) how would you rate the importance of
helping those dealing with homophobic bullying/struggling with self-acceptance? (1 = not at all important, 5 = somewhat important, 7 = extremely important)

5. Our society should do more to help people who are dealing with homophobic bullying/struggling with self-acceptance.

6. In general, what are your feelings toward people dealing with homophobic bullying/struggling with self-acceptance? (1 = extremely negative, 7 = extremely positive)

**Behavioral Intentions** (adapted from Peng, Lee, & Heeter, 2010)

For the next series of questions, please indicate how likely it is that you would perform different actions to help people dealing with homophobic bullying/struggling with self-acceptance (1 = not likely at all, 4 = undecided, 7 = very likely).

1. How likely is it that you would donate money to help fund crucial awareness and advocacy programs for those dealing with homophobic bullying/struggling with self-acceptance?

2. How likely is it that you would sign a petition to build the political pressure needed to help those dealing with homophobic bullying/struggling with self-acceptance?

3. How likely is it that you would discuss the situation of those dealing with homophobic bullying/struggling with self-acceptance with your friends or family?

4. How likely is it that you would forward the link to a news story about people dealing with homophobic bullying/struggling with self-acceptance to your family or friends? (1 = not likely at all, 7 = very likely)
Behavioral Measure: Homophobic Bullying

This next portion of the study will give you the opportunity to sign an online pledge related to the social issues featured in the video clip you watched (homophobic bullying). The pledge comes from the It Gets Better Project and asks you to get involved in spreading a message of hope to LGBTQ youth. The pledge reads, “Everyone deserves to be respected for who they are. I pledge to spread this message to my friends, family and neighbors. I'll speak up against hate and intolerance whenever I see it, at school and at work. I'll provide hope for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other bullied teens by letting them know that it gets better.” At a minimum, the pledge asks for your first and last name and your email address. You are not required to complete the pledge as part of this research study, but we wanted to provide you with the opportunity.

Please consider your decision carefully (It Gets Better Project, 2010).

1. I would like to make the pledge right now.

2. I would rather not make the pledge.

Instructions for Signing Pledge: Homophobic Bullying

Thanks in advance for choosing to make the It Gets Better Project pledge. On the next screen, the pledge will be shown. Please allow the page to load and then enter your email address, first name, last name, and zip/postal code. After you hit Submit Form, you will be given the option to answer five additional questions. When you are finished, you can press the Continue option at the bottom right corner of the screen.
Behavioral Measure 1: Lack of Self-acceptance/Self-esteem

This next portion of the study will give you the opportunity to sign an online pledge related to the social issues featured in the video clip you watched (lack of self-acceptance/self-esteem). The pledge comes from the Born This Way Foundation and asks you to join efforts to create a braver and kinder world. The pledge reads, “This way, towards bravery where youth are empowered. This way, towards acceptance where humanity is embraced. This way, towards love where individuality is encouraged.” At a minimum, the pledge asks for your first and last name and your email address. You are not required to complete the pledge as part of this research study, but we wanted to provide you with the opportunity. Please consider your decision carefully (Born This Way Foundation, 2012).

1. I would like to make the pledge right now.
2. I would rather not make the pledge.

Instructions for Signing Pledge: Lack of Self-acceptance/Self-esteem

Thanks in advance for choosing to make the Born This Way Foundation pledge. On the next screen, the pledge will be shown. Please allow the page to load and then enter your email address, first name, last name, and zip/postal code (and your cell number if you wish). After you hit Submit Form, you can press the Continue option at the bottom right corner of the screen.

Final Instructions

For the next series of questions, please indicate your familiarity and liking of the television program you encountered while watching the video clip and a song you did not encounter.
Familiarity with the Television Program and the Featured Song

For the next series of questions, please indicate your familiarity and liking of the television program you encountered while watching the video clip and a song you did not encounter.

1. To what degree are you familiar with the television program *Glee* (1 = never seen it before, 4 = watch it occasionally, 7 = watch it frequently)?

2. To what degree are you familiar with the song *Just The Way You Are* by Bruno Mars/*Born This Way* by Lady Gaga (1 = never heard it before, 4 = listen to it occasionally, 7 = listened to it many times)?

Liking of the Television Program and the Featured Song

1. How much do you like the television program *Glee* (1 = not at all, 4 = neither like nor dislike it, 7 = very much)?

2. How much do you like the song *Just The Way You Are* by Bruno Mars/*Born This Way* by Lady Gaga (1 = not at all, 4 = neither like nor dislike it, 7 = very much)?

Enjoyment

For the next series of questions, please indicate your enjoyment of the video clip you watched.

1. The video clip I watched was very good.

2. The video clip I watched was boring/uninteresting (reverse coded).

3. I appreciated the video clip I watched.

4. I enjoyed the video clip I watched.
Debriefing Statement: Page 1

Your participation in this study is nearly complete. The debriefing statement for this study will be presented on the next two pages. If you are interested, the debriefing statement will give you an idea of what we are hoping to research with this study.

Debriefing Statement: Page 2

In this study we are evaluating the effects of character, narrative, and emotional involvement with television programs featuring different social issues (either homophobic bullying or lack of self-acceptance). We are examining the results of these types of programs on increased knowledge, favorable attitudes, behavioral intentions, and actual behaviors related to the featured social issues and people experiencing these hardships.

We asked other Penn State students like you to complete several measures about their thoughts and reactions to the television narrative viewed. The questionnaires were designed to measure your thoughts on several social issues and the effects of television.

Debriefing Statement: Page 3

We expect that the findings of this study will help us understand more about how people evaluate this type of TV programming and what their effect might be on the general viewing audience.

If you have any questions about this study or would like to learn about the findings (at the end of the fall 2013 semester), please feel free to contact us.
Additionally, due to the nature of this study and its emphasis on different social issues, should you need to talk with a professional about a similar situation you have had or are currently experiencing, please contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 814-863-0395.

Drew Shade (dds195@psu.edu)
Mary Beth Oliver (mbo1@psu.edu)

Last Page in MediaLab

Thank you for your participation. You will need to complete one final short survey that will ensure you receive course credit for your research participation. Raise your hand and the individual conducting the session will direct you to that short survey. Thanks again!

Course Credit Questions (Qualtrics)

1. What is your last name?
2. What is your first name?
3. What is your Penn State ID (i.e., abc123)?
4. What class is this course credit for?
5. Who is the instructor of that class?
Drew D. Shade
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EDUCATION
The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA – May 2014
Ph.D. in Mass Communications
Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA – May 2010
M.A. in Media Studies
Utah Valley University, Orem, UT – August 2008
B.S. in Communication; Emphasis in Theory and Practice
Utah Valley State College, Orem, UT – December 2006
A.S. in Communication

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS:


Shade, D., Kim, K., Jung, E., & Oliver, M. B. (forthcoming). Using the “New Directions” to move media viewers in the right direction: Examining the effects of Glee narratives on attitudes and behavioral intentions toward stigmatized groups. Provisionally accepted for Glee and “New Directions” for Social Change (B. C. Johnson and D. K. Faill, Eds.).


ACADEMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Recipient of the Harold F. Martin Graduate Assistant Outstanding Teaching Award that recognizes graduate assistants for outstanding teaching performance, sponsored by The Graduate School and the Office of the Vice President and Dean for Undergraduate Education, The Pennsylvania State University, January 2014

Top paper award for “Don’t Stop Believin’: Using Elevating Media and Music to Influence Attitudes Toward Stigmatized Groups”, Mass Communication Division, National Communication Association (NCA), 98th Annual Convention, November 2012