**Gender Stereotyping and Sitcoms**

**Marriage, Relationships, and Gender Stereotyping : A Content Analysis**

**Purpose**: This exercise is a borrowed from a similar activity in partial replication of a study conducted by Sommers-Flanagan et al. (1993). It is designed to examine gender, power, sexuality, and aggression in music videos. This exercise is similar and that we are looking for how males and females are portrayed in marriage on television.

**Instructions**:

For this project, you will need to four different sitcoms that have married couples ro couples in relationships. Shows that would work are Everybody loves Raymond, King of Queens, Family Guy, the Simpsons, That 70’s show, Home Improvement, ect)Using the data sheet on the following page, analyze the shows according to the coding system outlined below. Indicate the number of occurrences represented by each category. For each category, code the sex of the actor and the sex of the recipient.

*Dominance*: Code the power relationships. Place a check under the appropriate column for each occurrence of men and women exercising power (actors) or being subservient (recipients) to another person (man or woman). Who seems to be in control in the household?

*Implicit Stupidity* : This category includes scenes suggestive of stupid acts in the household.The use of “before and after” scenes are commonly used to imply off-camera stupidity. A room might be shown a mess when one of the couples is left in charge of the house or given a duty.

*Explicit Stupidity*: In contrast to off-camera aggression this category includes filmed acts suchas “making fun” , sarcasm, or outright derogatory comments

*Reinforcing Gender Roles* : This category includes “traditional gender roles”. Examples might include men fixing items, man coming home from work, women cleaning, cooking, traditional motherhood ect.

In your paper, respond to the following questions:

1. How were men portrayed in the sitcoms you watched? How were women portrayed? Do find these portrayals accurate?
2. What messages are sent to your age group watching these shows? What messages do you think are sent to my age group? How about your grandparents age group?
3. Finally compare and contrast the current sitcoms with a show from the 50’s such as Leave it to Beaver, Brady Bunch, Ozzie and Harriet, ect.)

Sitcom Code Sheet

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Male Actor | Female Actor |  | Notes | Notes |
| Implied Stupidity |  |  |  |  |  |
| Explicit Stupidity |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reinforcing Gender Roles  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Dominance |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |