THE CHANGING IMPORTANCE OF THE REAL AND SITCOM FAMILY:
EXAMINING GENERATIONAL BEHAVIOR TOWARDS FAMILY THROUGH
TELEVISION VIEWING HABITS

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A Masters Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department

Of the Jack J. Valenti School of Communications

University of Houston

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In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Masters of Communication

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By

Abigail T. Koenig

December 2011

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ABSTRACT

Generational researchers William Strauss and Neil Howe describe a generation as

"unique in acquiring a shared history that lends its members to a social and cultural

center of gravity." Two of the most studied generations are the Boomer generation,

people born between 1941 and 1961 and Generation X, people born between 1961 and

1981. Amongst the many generational differences of the two, there are significant

distinctions in how each cohort define and place value on the concept of family.

Additionally, within both generations the television played an important role. In the past

decade, television families have moved away from a traditional model towards a friends

and work-based family-type environment. As family values have transformed in reality

are their discernible changes to the family on the small screen? Is it possible that the

change in the television family is related to generational behavior? Are the changes in

television reflective of generational preferences? This study aims to explore if there is a

correlation between how the two generations value family and if it affects their choices in

viewing situational comedies.

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I. Background and Related Work

Introduction

It is commonly agreed among generational researchers that there is indeed a difference among cohorts born in different sociological and economical eras (Mannheim, 1952; Zuschlag & Whitbourne 1994). Seminal generational researcher Karl Mannheim (1952) describes generational differences as "a shared consciousness that unites and motivates people...[and] represents nothing more than a particular kind of identify of location, embracing related age groups embedded in a historical-social process." Each generation has its own specific characteristics based on the period in which they came of age. Strauss and Howe (2006) describe the movement between generations to be indices of cultural and societal developments. Two of the most researched generations have been the Baby Boomers and Generation X due to the groups' contrasting size (Market, 2004). These two generations have been described by researchers and sociologists as "polar opposites [and] fighting an involuntary cultural war with one another" (Gillette, 2000). If this is true, no one can agree, however, there are obvious differences between the two generations based solely on the socio-economic timeframe in which they grew up (Strauss & Howe, 2006).

Baby Boomers

The term "Baby Boom" was used to describe the massive influx of people having children post World War II. Baby Boomer has become a description of a cohort born between 1946 and 1961 that encompasses everything about this group from their personal habits, employment behavior and ways in which businesses market to them. Even as

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many of them now enter retirement, the Baby Boomers cannot escape this generational label. Strauss and Howe (2006) define the Baby Boomers as the generation who were not alive during World War II, but old enough to remember the "post-war America High" (p. 299).

Twenty-six million children were born between the years of 1946 and 1964. In fact, between 1947 and 1948, roughly nine months after V-Jay Day, it is said that a baby was born every eight seconds (Zeitz, 2005). The reasons for this "baby boom" are multifaceted. The Great Depression of the 1930s bottomed out as a national decline in birthrates (p.2). After America's victory in World War II, the GIs returned home to start families in more prosperous and less turbulent times. The economy had rebounded from the war with the gross national product growing by nearly 250% and per capita income by 35% (Coontz, 1992). As stated in a 1946 issue of *Fortune* magazine, the "boom" as it was being called, was not just in fertility, but also economics, education, housing and science (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Working-class families, now educated by the GI Bill moved into the realms of middle-class. Salaries increased by 61% and by the mid-1950s nearly 60% of the population were being labeled as "middle-class" (p. 24). It should also be noted that this newly expanding middle-class was predominantly white (Douglas, 2003).

The white middle-class took their growing families and moved out to the newly developed suburbs. By 1960, the number of American families that owned a home rose from 43 to 62% in twenty years and 85% of those homes were in the suburbs (Coontz, 1992). Suburban developments sprung up in mass causing families to have more privacy and level of togetherness. The extended families, typical of more urban areas, were not

established in the new suburban developments as they had been in the cities. The suburbs represented a safe-haven as well, perhaps, from an ingrained fear left over from the war. The houses themselves were "set back from the street and protected by a fence, and it had a low-slung roof and an attached carport, lending it a bit of the appearance of a well-fortified bunker" (Zeitz, 2005, p. 3).

It is argued that gender roles were heavily defined in the 1950s (Douglas, 2003). The woman's place was in the home cooking, cleaning and caring for her children. 1950s advertisers reported the growing number of women who agreed that housework was a "medium of expression" in their "femininity and individualism" (Coontz, 1992). Men, on the other hand, were the providers in the family and went to work and supported their wives and children financially.

Due to this focus on gender roles and domesticity, there is a certain stigma placed on the Boomers' childhood. An idyllic family life has been associated with the early years of the postwar generation (Coontz, 1992). Whether the Boomer generation lived through a golden age of innocence is debatable, but what is not debatable is that this era is filled with a nostalgia the Boomers have for their childhood (Zeitz, 2002).

Family became the focal point of postwar America. In a 1955 study done of married people, less than 10% of respondents said that they "sacrificed nothing" by getting married and having children (p.25). Suffice to say the importance of family lead to an increased interest in ones children. Children took on a more central role in the family. Having a child, and, even more so, multiple children, meant a couple had accomplished personal and civic duties (Douglas, 2003).

Being at the center of their parents' lives certainly had its own psychological impact on Boomer children. The amount of time parents, mothers in particular, focused on the child were paramount. Even among Boomer preschoolers who had working mothers, "four in five were cared for in their own homes usually by relatives, only 2% of Boomer children attended any type of child care" (Strauss & Howe, 1991, p. 305).

The 1950s marked the beginning of the youth culture. Children suddenly had buying power and marketers took to this new demand with children-centered television shows such as *Howdy Doody* and *The Disney Hour* (Coontz, 1993).

As Zeitz (2006) states:

> For boomer children, this cornucopia translated into billions of dollars' worth of Hula-Hoops, Davy Crockett raccoon-skin hats, Hopalong Cassidy six-shooters, bicycles and tricycles, Slinkys, Silly Putty, and skateboards (and, in California, the shining lure of Disneyland). (p. 5)

Dr. Spock's popular child and baby rearing handbook was read by millions of middle-class mothers. His book instructed the parents of the baby-boom generation to go "light on punishment", and to always remember, "happiness was the paramount objective of child rearing" (p. 10).

In addition to their lack of discipline, consumerism ran rampant among Boomer children. They were denied nothing. Businesses cashed in on these desires and a child-centric market grew. By 1959 more than 50 million persons under the age of 14 were being advertised to (Ashby, 2006). As Boomer children turned into pre-teen and teenagers their importance in the marketplace swelled. Some argue that teen culture did

not exist until the Baby Boomers became adolescents (p. 335). Whether that is true or not, it can't be denied that businesses placed a significant amount of time and effort into making teens feel like the center of the world. In 1951 a series of interviews with teens was presented by the *Ladies Home Journal* that declared "It's the kids telling us [the adults] instead of us telling them" (p.336). How could the Baby Boomer children not take their rising importance to heart or to ego?

Baby Boomers and Television

One of the most fundamental notions to consider when discussing Baby Boom children and teens is the influence of television. Of all the media that have been introduced since the advent of the printing press, it can be argued that television has had the most influence in spreading and influencing popular culture. Noted cultural critic Gilbert Seldes is credited with saying that no other "innovation marked the impact of mass culture more powerfully and quickly than television" (in Kammen, 1999, p. 183). By 1959 nine out of ten families had a television in their household (Ashby, 2006).

Among the variety of programming on early television, situational comedies were king. It has been argued (Douglas, 2003) that domestic comedies have taken on such an important role in television because of their reflection of reality and familiarity. Unlike soap operas or dramas, one can watch a situational comedy and feel right at home. Television situational comedies or "sitcoms" are almost a "mirror of family life" and a "barometer" for what is normal (p.19). What was normal for Baby Boom children and teens were traditional family models.

Popular sitcoms of the 1950s focused on every day life of the family. *Leave It To Beaver*, *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* and *I Love Lucy,* among countless others, portrayed a 1950s dreamland of domesticity and family togetherness. Similar to reality, TV families moved out of the city to the suburbs (Coontz, 1992). Fathers in sitcoms of the 1950s went to work while their wives stayed home taking care of their children and the domestic work. Ricky Ricardo, the husband of *I Love Lucy* may have explained it best when he described an ideal wife as someone who "cleans the house, has dinner on the table when he gets home and his slippers in hand, and of course, is a good mother to his children" (Douglas, 2003, p. 85).

Skill and Robinson (1994) echo this by suggesting that the traditional family model on television during this time reinforced this behavior; parents and children behaved in gender-specific, stereotypical ways. Morgan, Leggett and Shanahan (1999) concurred that television at the time "reinforced models of family," and Moore (1992) looking at television sitcoms beginning in 1942, as well, came to the same conclusion: television families maintained a traditional household. Cantor, (1991) similarly, found that primetime families were a "safety zone from the world, offering love, support, and harmony" (p. 210) and that the American Dream was alive and well in the television world, and the TV family presented one free from worldly cares.

What role, though, did this play in the mind of the Baby Boom child and adolescent? Did this traditional family model have a lasting impact on the way that Boomer adults may conceptualize the idea of and the term "family?" Gerbner's (1976) theory of cultivation would assess that the traditional family models would, indeed, have influence over Baby Boomers assessment of the concept of family. Cultivation relies on

the messages viewed and the reoccurring themes of these messages. While different television programs have different intended formats(i.e. dramas, comedies, reality shows) there is a commonality amongst them, such as "settings, casting, social typing, actions and related outcomes" (Morgan, Shanahan & Signorielli, 1994, p. 36). What people view on television is a symbol of their own surroundings. That being the case, we can assume that Baby Boomers would have seen the family as a place of togetherness with domestic virtues and assign high importance on children. How did this domestic importance impact the Boomer adult?

Baby Boomers Adulthood

As undeniably important to American popular culture as Boomer children were, their movement into adulthood has been even more monumental. Coming of age, as described, in an era of prosperity and self-importance, the Baby Boom adult looked at the world in the same manner, as if they were the center of it. Zeitz (2005) describes the Baby Boom cohort as never having enough:

> This quest for satisfaction has at times led to nadirs of narcissism and greed. As a generation the boomers have always seemed to want it all: cheap energy, consumer plenty, low taxes, loads of government entitlements, ageless beauty, and an ever-rising standard of living. They inherited a nation flush with resources and will bequeath their children a country mired in debt. (p. 8)

To the eye of a Boomer child, any problem seemed fixable by adults, including illness; Boomer children were given more shots and taken to more doctors than any other cohort. It is no wonder that as adults the nation's problems seemed easy to tackle.

Boomers fought for what they believed in and generally seemed to get their way. They demanded the vote, so they received the vote. They dodged the draft and marched on Washington. It was within their right to make demands and within their psyche to think they deserved everything in return (Zeitz, 2005).

If consumerism had an impact on Boomer children, that impact was just as strong on their adulthood. The growing materialism of the culture during the time when Boomers were coming into their own may have attributed to a decline in "family commitments and social solidarities" (Coontz, 1992, p. 172). Coontz argues that the counterculture that was the Baby Boomer's teenage and early adult years, such as Woodstock, protests and feminism, actually fueled consumerism. This generation was on the "search for personal fulfillment," which could be acquired through purchasing power (p.173). As women charged the workplace, their previous bra-burning sensibility turned into buying expensive bras. The workingwoman became a fashion statement. Feminism gave way to meaning "equality into the right to wear sexy clothing and smoke cigarettes." (p.174).

In addition to their changing outerwear, Boomers also changed their values. Where there was once a time of ill regard for authority and high regard for illegal drugs, Boomer adults and parents have done a 180-degree turn. By 1990, the Boomer drug phase had been stripped of its spiritual trimmings by the Boomers themselves who now say they never enjoyed what they repeatedly ingested (Howe & Strauss, 1991). In the 1980s Boomers charged to fight a war against drugs. In 1988 the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) was formed under President George Bush and a national focus on anti-drug messaging was sent out to the American youth (www.mediacampaign.org).

This came on the heels of former first lady Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No" program, designed to educate children about the dangers of recreational drug use (Elliot, 1993).

Their viewpoints on religion have been modified as well. The cohort of this generation is responsible for mega-churches, born again Christianity, evangelical and fundamentalist congregations. Between the years of 1970 and 1980 a "return to religion" was noted. An increase in regular worship rose from 35 to 42% amongst this group (Roof & Johnson, 1993). Similar changes in attitude were noted with regard to lessons learned about Vietnam, and war in general. While at one time Boomers stormed Washington and performed peaceful sit-ins, now they have altered their opinions. Today one in four Boomers considers Vietnam a noble cause and, following Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, Boomers were more inclined than any generation to believe it was the right thing to do. Strauss and Howe (1991) noted:

> A generation that when young "trusted nobody over 30 today trusts nobody under 30" agrees Pennsylvania history professor Alan Kors, observing how his peers seek to "cleanse the souls of the undergraduates of the political, social and moral sins" of their youthful trappings. (p.308)

Coontz (1992) argues that the very reason Boomers have ebbed and flowed from siding with the "man" to fighting against him over the years is due to their upbringing and, potentially, the family values television programming they consumed as children. A return to family values in the late 1970s and 1980s was rooted in the same marketing direction that was seen in the 1950s. Family values are attractive to advertisers. When Ozzie and Harriet had heartwarming talks over their kitchen appliances, this was rooted

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in sales tactics. When the need for household appliances slowed, so did the advertising for them, conversely, when the consumer products were updated with modern technology as in the 1980s, society saw a revival in family marketing, similar to what was seen in the 1950s.

How has the Boomer childhood influenced the Boomer adulthood? Did their traditional upbringing affect the way they raised their own children or has their "self-interest" affected their perceptions of family? Given the changes that have occurred to the American family over the past 20 years such as the rise in divorce, single-family households and women working outside the home, which had more of a lasting impact on their perception of family – traditional or non-traditional?

Generation X

Generation X, on the other hand, came of age without the same satisfying home life. Despite the family values their parents grew up with, broken marriages skyrocketed for Gen Xer's parents. From 1965 to 1975 divorce rates doubled. While their Boomer mothers had the security of their own mothers' keeping house, Boomer mothers of Gen X went to work. So much so that the percentage of mothers in the workforce went from 20 to 60% from 1960 to 1990. A majority of Gen X children not only grew up in single-parent households, but with their mothers off at work (Strauss & Howe, 1993).

During their childhoods Generation Xers were depicted in the media as lazy, uninterested and even ignorant (Strauss & Howe, 1993). Generation X has been given many undesirable names such as, "Latch-key Kids," "New Lost" generation, "MTV" generation, and the "Nowhere" generation. (Crowley, 2003). Even more unflattering is

how this generation has been stereotyped and categorized by the media. They have been called "slackers," "dumb," "lazy," "un-civic minded," "anti-government," and "apathetic," among a host of negative labels (Howe & Strauss, 1993, p. 17). As this generation came of age, they garnered some of the lowest test scores in years. From 1972 to 1982 the verbal portion of the SATs saw a 40% decline in the share of all students taking the test (p. 76). In 1983 the Department of Education declared that the American youth was bringing about *A Nation at Risk* and a subsequent report outlining the "rising tide of mediocrity" was published (p. 18). Examining the incompetence of Generation X became something of a national past time. As stated by Ben Wattenberg in his book *The First Universal Nation, "…*we won't be competitive in the nineties because our children are ill-educated, illiterate, under motivated, lazy, drug-addicted slobs" (p. 12).

Not only did a nation see problems with the youth on a conscious level, they also subconsciously feared them. A charge of "demon child" movies appeared in theaters, showcasing what America thought of its current youth. *The Exorcist,* about a devil-inflicted child, was the first R-rated movie to focus on the youth (Strauss & Howe, 1991). That movie was followed by *The Omen, Children of the Corn, Carrie, It's Alive!* (about a baby born with claws) and *Rosemary's Baby*, where the devil is the child's father.

In addition to the home life turmoil this generation faced, a harsh reality awaited them from birth. In 1990 when Gen Xers were hitting their stride, 2,200 kids dropped out of school on a daily basis, over 1,000 high school students were bringing guns to school and every day 1,000 unwed teenage girls gave birth (p.33). From 1970 to 1990 the official poverty rate of children rose to more than 7%. In a 1990 poll persons between 15

and 24 were asked whether they thought their lives were harder or easier than their parents at that age, an overwhelming 77% said harder (Strauss & Howe, 1991).

What made life easier on this generation was their ability to find solace in each other. A 1987 Louse Harris poll found that 41% of parents left their children home alone every day. This was not just after school either; a 1988 Census Bureau report found that half-million children were also being left alone before school. With an estimated seven million 6-12 year-olds spending the majority of their time without parental guidance, there was a need in these children to find outside council. Peers became another valuable source of support for this generation.

Peers may not have had the best influence over each other, as the term "peer pressure" came into being during this time frame, regardless, Generation X spent more time with their friends than with their families (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Kimberly Costello, a producer for the Generation X hit show *Melrose Place*, theorizes that daycares can also be a contributor to the importance of friendships to this group. "At age two they were taught how to get along with others… this generation has the ability to socialize in packs" (Owen, 1997, p.11). As Pauline Kael wrote in *The New Yorker* of this group:

> They've gained independence from adults at home. The kids are there to catch each other after the falls, and to console each other – they function as parents for each other (in Holtz, 1995, p. 54).

The television set became one of Generation X's closest companions. Where in the 1950s, the TV was a central family gathering to view households similar to their own, Gen Xer's parents used the television as the new babysitter. Beginning in the mid-1970s the effect of television on children came under fire as more and more parents left their children at home or often placed in front of the "digital babysitter." Warnings from psychologists and authors, such as George Gerbner and John Holt, of the negative impact of television on learning and socialization, began to emerge. Gerbner's theory of cultivation (1976) warned parents of the build up of media effects over time. Despite this type of advice, a poll taken in the summer of 1978 resulted in 55% of adults saying that children's shows on television had a "good effect" (Kammen, 1999).

By the middle of the 1980s television dominated American life with the average viewing up to seven hours a day. It wasn't uncommon for a household to have multiple televisions, even in children's bedrooms. Couple this with the emergence of cable, and all of a sudden there were myriad choices over what to watch and where. In terms of Generation X, they were the first group to have this type of control. According to television critic Douglas Rushkoff of adolescents of the 1980s, they don't just take in television as their predecessors did, "they have a living relationship with it" (Kammen, 1999, p. 208). Rushkoff in his book *Media Virus* quotes Timothy O'Leary in 1993 by observing that, "…Upstairs, Mom and Dad are in the living room – they're baby boomers – passively watching the news or prime time the way they passively watched Disney back when they were kids. And down in the kids' room, the kids are changing the screen…" (in Kammen, p.208). If they didn't like what was on, they had the power to change it.

In the early 1980s, a colloquium examining television programming noted that the "full range of teenage experience" was missing from film and television (Kammen, 1999, p.165). Television in particular was insistent on having authority figures assert their dominance and control by solving problems for their children. *TV Guide* writer Sally Bedell noted that rarely was it seen that adolescents went through their own type of "*sturm und drang* to come up with their own solutions" (p. 165). These decisions were best left to the adults. Father still knew best.

Tailoring television programming to explicit audiences gained traction in the 1970s, but it was not until the late 1980s that networks needed to cater to the new emerging "bosses" of the household – teenagers. The Fox Network saw an untapped market of money-spending teens. This group was picky and fickle and not particularly satisfied with the current state of network television. In general, teens have proved to be the most difficult of television viewing audience to reach and keep coming back. If the Generation X TV viewing audience was to be won over, they would have to be courted, and in a different way than previous teens. This group was too savvy to fall for anything that their "parents liked" (Kammen, 1999).

Generation X Adults

In 2009, Generation X represented 16% of the population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). As they continue to mature, it is becoming increasingly clear that despite their small size, they are a much different group than their predecessors. They are more ethnically mixed than the generation before, giving them a more tolerant view of diversity (Rick & Hicks, 1999). With the burgeoning world of mass communications and

technological advancements in communications, the "global village" of the media has broken down the race boundaries even further through the Internet and social networking. Technology has played a huge role in the lives of Generation X. The titans of technology such as Google, YouTube and Amazon, came from the minds of Gen Xers and this trend continues to grow.

Where they were at one time thought of as lazy and un-civic minded, adulthood has changed this perception. In the workplace, Gen Xers have climbed to the top of their posts. Thirty-five percent of males and 44% of females hold management positions. More than 20% of both sexes hold a college degree and more than 11% have a Master's degree or higher (U.S. Census, 2009). Potentially due to the volatile nature of the economic situation in which they were raised, financial security is deemed important to them. They are concerned about job security and "maintaining their standard of living." The Generation X poverty rate is 2-3% below the national average (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). This is a driven generation, out to shake themselves of the "lost" title they were given by the media.

However, in terms of emotional intelligence, Generation X may still have some growing up to do. Because of a lack of parental guidance, Generation X has in a sense remained the "new lost" (Strauss & Howe, 1991). There is lagging in connection to family and a connection to the past. The landscape in which their associations were formed was clouded by "the media, the new economy" and a "cultural dissonance" (Strenger, 2004). This dissonance spilled into the work place for adult Gen Xers. If they did not have a good job and a career path by the age of 30, they were likely to miss out on

something. Additionally, Gen Xers do not work for one company for their entire lives; they are job hoppers, moving from one place of employment to the next. If one job does not work out, another one will (p.501). Strenger assesses that this lack of foundation is due to the formation of identity of a "fatherless generation." Generation X, he argues, grew up with a lack of authority and their "passage into adulthood coincides with a genesis of a culture of their own making" (p.511). With this in mind it makes sense that the major influences on Generation X as adults, then, would be the media and their peers.

Given this inherent dissonance, it has been noted in multiple studies and articles that Generation X has a penchant for irony and sarcasm. Calavita (2004) performed a qualitative study on 15 persons categorized as members of Generation X and found reoccurring themes of sarcasm, irony, parody and satire as appreciated qualities in media, politics and entertainment. These themes were also noted as characteristics of the participants themselves. "The participants used entertainment media and popular culture in small parts as identity – as a means of developing and defining themselves…" (p. 147).

In terms of their entertainment choices, Generation X prefer their comedy to be "smart" with a "postmodern savviness" that is a little cynical, but humorous (p. 143). In terms of news television, Generation X follows the same path. During the 2000 presidential election 79% of those 30 and under were getting their political information from "infotainment" outlets such as late night talk shows and *The Daily Show* (a fake news program), among others (Pew Research Center, 2000). Calavita argues that this preference towards satire, whether in entertainment or politics, is rooted in the independent nature of the generation:

In different ways, all of these trends and phenomena contribute to and are functions of postmodern media culture, and not coincidentally they manifest themselves in the Generation Xers discussed here. Their tastes, practices, orientation (and uses and effects) revolve around individuality, identity play and work and identity politics, consumerism, and irony… (p. 148).

It has been noted how the media and the parental guidance (or lack there of) have influenced Generation X adulthood on an external scale. How has this influenced Generation X's more personal decisions in terms of family? Did the lack of parental authority have an adverse affect; do Gen Xers hold the family unit in higher regard because of it or have they followed a similar pattern of divorce to that of their parents?

Changes To the American Family

Taking the two cultural setting for these generations, it's easy to understand the scope of their differences. One, the Baby Boomers, came of age during an era where family togetherness swelled from a post-war fear of separation. The GI Bill gave young men higher career status, and electronic appliances that made life easier became a part of every day existence. Life in suburbia became the new normal. The other, Generation X, saw the happy families break apart, their childhoods encompassed with fear of an impending nuclear war; two of their most significant memories were the Challenger explosion and the AIDS epitomic (Strauss & Howe, 1992).

Within each generation, and specifically the two at hand, the term and concept of "family" takes on certain significance. Where at one time marriage and family was deemed to be the most meaningful chapter in a person's life, this is no longer the case

(Cherlin, 2004). The reasons behind the breakdown of the American family have been equated to a number of social and psychological factors, running the gamut from upbringing to economic factors to individualism. Marriage is becoming out of fashion and not a necessary part of the commitment of a couple. Cherlin describes the "deinstitutionalization" of marriage in both legal and social terms. In 1978, 1 in 6 births occurred outside of marriage, by 2002 that ratio doubled to 1 in 3.

Marriage and Family

Despite the seemingly traditional home life Baby Boomers grew up, their own marriage and family were anything but. Coontz (1992) argues that the 1950s traditional values were actually the anomaly throughout history and not the reverse. The decline of marriage and parenthood, she argues, had been building for 150 years (p. 187). Marriage has ceased to hold the same value that it once did. In 1967, half of all women in their 30s were married, by 1982 this number was cut in half (p. 186). Additionally, women have been noted with feeling less pressure to be married in order to mother a child. In a 1989 survey, 36% of single women claimed to "seriously consider raising a child on their own" (p. 186).

In terms of Boomer parents, the increased divorce rates and dual-salary households over the past two decades have been noted. It is a fair assumption that Boomer parents today would hold lax attitudes towards marital relations; this is not the case. A 2002 study done by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) compared the changing attitudes to Boomers in the 1970s and those currently. In 1970, only 6% of Boomers agreed that having sexual relations before marriage was "always

wrong," in 2002 that number shot up to 13%. In general it was found that Boomers today think the younger generation is less honest, less respectful and has no idea what is going on in the world (AARP, 2002). These responses may reflect the changing attitudes that accompany age, or a change in the values of this group of people.

In the 1990s family values became high priorities for companies marketing towards Boomers. While the move was not to a 1950s sense of idealism, there was a penchant of Boomer parents towards nostalgia. Grey Advertising, in its "Households of the 1990s" study, identified a renewed emphasis on families as "less a return to the '50s and more a transition from the glitzy, me-oriented '80s" (Fraizer, 2010, p. 15). Mothers were still working outside of the home, but said that family was just as, if not more, important to them. Similarly, Boomers are getting back into the marriage game. Where they once lead the charge in divorce, over 65% of people aged 42-60 years old are now married (U.S. Census, 2006).

Generation X has continued to redefine family values as well. People are waiting to get married until later in life if they are marrying at all. In 2000, the median age of marriage was 27 for men and 25 for women, a significant increase from 1960 when averages were 23 for men and 20 for women. It is not, however, that couples are no longer forming or living together. There has been a substantial rise in cohabitation amongst couples before marriage (Seltzer, 2001).

Potentially because they emerged from broken homes, Generation X are much more cautious about diving into a marriage. Cohabitation, living together without being married, increased in the 1970s through the 1980s, and surged through the 1990s. By 1997, 2.9 million couples were cohabitating, up 46% since 1990 (Seltzer, 2001). The

roles amongst cohabiting couples are also changing. Women in cohabitating unions do fewer hours of housework than employed wives do.

In a survey conducted in 2001 of members of Generation X's views on marriage, 62% agreed, "living with someone before you get married is a good way to avoid an eventual divorce" (Whitehead & Popenoe, 2001). The authors concluded that while marriage is not as widely popular as it once was, the current generation sees it as a "super relationship," one filled with "emotional intimacy and togetherness" (p. 13).

Cherlin (2004) found that even the meaning of marriage has changed vastly. People seek different rewards from marriage than they once did. Men and women's relationships are more egalitarian and marriage, while still a union, is more of a personal choice, an expression of one's self rather than a necessity. Additionally, the reasons to get married have diminished. Where at one time women were more reliant on a man for financial support and the law was not as favorable to children born outside of wedlock, this is no longer the case. This being said, marriage has not lost importance to Generation X; quite the opposite. Marriage has become more of a status symbol than it was before. Big lavish weddings have become the norm. The average cost of a wedding is $26,501, up $8,000 from 2002. Additionally, the cost of a wedding dress has risen 20% since 2009 (Pannone, 2011). Cherlin (2004) argues that the wedding is seen as a statement of a couple's development and self-identity rather than the act in which a couple legally weds.

Family and Work

Where Generation X and Boomers have met half way on marriage, how have they differed in their views on work and family obligations? Boomer women are torn between their need to work and their desire to stay home. A study done for *Advertising Age* (2010)

found that female Boomers, more than any other generation, agreed with the statement,

"It was much easier back in the day when women stayed at home and didn't have to

work." Once again, Boomers have a proclivity towards nostalgia.

Generation X has a different viewpoint. There has been a steady trend of putting

more importance on work. Fraizer (2010) profiled members of Generation X and their

attitudes towards work and family. Fraizer argues that women were putting work ahead

of family. Women were more inclined to go back to work after a baby was born, and

quickly. When profiling several working female Gen Xers, Fraizer found it commonplace

for the women to be just as committed to their career as to their family, if not more so (p.

10). One interviewee in particular is quoted with saying, "I really enjoy my job and love

going to work and I think I would go crazy if I stayed home with a baby." The eight-

week maternal time off, granted by many companies, is enough time in the opinions of

the subjects Fraizer profiled. Generation X mothers want to go back to work.

Work for both women and men has become paramount. The percentage of

working hours for mid-level and high-level careers has risen in men from 21 to 27% and

in women from 5 to 11% since 1970 (Gerson & Jacobs, 2004). In 2000, two-parent

households worked on average 82 hours per week compared with 78 hours in 1970 (p.

672). Is the increase in work hours over family hours preferred though, or a product of

the economics of our times? While more and more companies are offering "family

friendly" employment perks, such as flextime, telecommuting, paid parental leave and a

compressed work weeks, people are not taking advantage of them. In a study done of 384

companies, only nine reported that even one father took advantage of paid paternity leave

(Hochschild, 1996). Hochschild interviewed employees of a Fortune 500 company to find

out why, if these perks were offered, were people ignoring them? Hochschild argues that the work place has taken on new meaning and, emotionally, is the place where one finds support. At one point, the community and neighborhood were places where one would find companionship; this is not the case anymore (p. 689). Now work is where your friends are and as family life becomes "deritualized" the workplace becomes a ritual core.

Family life, to many, has become more work than being at work. Parents come home and have more pressure and demands thrust upon them. Hochschild interviewed several employees who were inclined to say, "I take a lot of overtime. The more I get out of the house, the better I am." Hochschild continued:

> … for some people work may be becoming more like family and family life more like work. Instead of the model of family as a haven from work, more of us fit the model of work as a haven from home (p. 690).

Over the last decade the number of family meals has dropped over 10% (p. 688). When asked if the decline in family time was seen as a negative thing, Fraizer (2010) found that women "had no desire to go back to the June Cleaver days…" and even if women were traditionalists at heart, "she loves her job and being able to work outside the home" (p. 6).

It is argued that the changing attitude towards the work family and the family at home is a harder pill to swallow for the Boomer generation than for their Xer successors. Once again, we see that Boomers look back on family life nostalgically, wishing for the "good old days." However, since Generation X did not have the same type of upbringing, they do not have the same sentimentality for the days of stay-at-home mothers and white

picket fences. The question that remains is how do these disparities in family ideal play out on television?

II. The American Family on Television

Boomers and the Television Family

From the very beginning of television's history the situational comedy has dominated the airwaves. Many television families were moved over from radio and thus kept in line with the already established family dynamic of the time. During the 1950s and the rise of television, the television families viewed on the small screen generally stayed within a specific mold. Domestic comedies were centered on white, middle-class homes, in suburbia (Douglas, 2003). Female roles were almost exclusively domestic, while the father was seen as the breadwinner and purveyor of the family law. Children were often the center of the family, but their parents drove the action. Episodes were mini morality plays, with the child getting into some type of trouble and then being redeemed with the guidance of his or her loving parents. "Father knows best" was not just the name of a television show of the time; it was the law of the landscape. Popular programs of the time were family-focused such as *Leave It To Beaver, The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* and *Father Knows Best,* among others.

The domestic roles of men and women were clearly defined on screen. Douglas (2003) describes husband and wife as playing roles in a "Tarzan and Jane principle," the male as provider and the female as his dutiful wife. Not only did the situational comedies of the 1950s illustrate these roles, they were encouraged as the correct way to live one's life. When these principles were violated, the outcome was always negative. One

example of violation was the Kramden family of *The Honeymooners*. Ralph Kramden was a "blue-collar" bus driver, always scheming for the easy way to do things. His wife was more assertive and smarter than Ralph. Consequently, Ralph's plans always backfired and he was not rewarded with the middle-class frills of a good home, good job or the ability to buy nice things for his wife.

During the 1970s there was a brief period where the traditional family model was broken in situational comedies. As more and more women entered the workforce, their actions were mirrored on television with the popular *Mary Tyler Moore Show.* Moore was a strong, single, independent, career woman and the face of many women of the time (Rabinovitz, 1989). Moore's family was her co-workers as these were the people she interacted with on a daily basis, and each character took on domestic roles comfortable to the television viewer.

> "The 'workplace family,' while not new to television sitcoms (*Our Miss Brooks* and *The Gale Storm Show* were among earlier incarnations of this sub-genre), was redefined in *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*. Here were characters easily defined by traditional familial qualities--Lou as the father figure, Ted as the problem child, Rhoda as the family confidante, and Mary as the mother/daughter around whom the entire situation revolved"
>
> (Hammil, www.museumtv.com)

Despite the liberal attitudes of the early 1970s, in society and on television, the latter part of the decade saw a switch. In 1979 the Rockford Institute, a conservative think tank, decried that the survival of a "responsible free society depends on strengthening the

ties and obligations, the sacrifices and rewards of family life" (Coontz, 1992, p.94,). This sentiment was echoed by the National Women's Organization, liberal Democrats, and union activists, who aligned themselves with the concept of "pro-family" (p. 95).

As Americans refocused their lives on traditional family values, their television counterparts followed suit. Skill, Robinson and Wallace (1987) looked at sitcom families from 1979-1984 and coded them as either "conventional" or "non-conventional" as based on the traditional model of family. What he found was that the majority of television families maintained a traditional household, consisting of two parents living in the home. Another study done by Cantor (1991) found that television families were a "safety zone from the world, offering love, support and harmony" (p. 214). Furthering the stereotype of traditional family values on television, Signorielli (1982) found that mothers were seen in their matriarchal roles, concerned with the family and their duties in the home. The situational comedies that grew in popularity of the time were similar to their 1950s predecessors. Prime-time television, once again, aimed its sights on capturing the "young, well-educated, socially-liberal affluent audience" (Morreale, 2003, p.209). This was partially based on advertising dollars and partially on the social and political landscape of the time. Programs like *The Cosby Show* and *Family Ties* marked a return to the traditional family sitcoms of the fifties.

> … it represented the socially conservative values of the Reagan era. After the
> somewhat dysfunctional television families of the 1970s, and in a cultural where
> nearly half of all marriages ended in divorce, the tight nuclear family harkened
> back to a simpler time (Morreale, 2003).

Even with the alternative family models that appeared in the 1980s television

landscape such as *Kate and Allie*, *Who's the Boss* or *Webster*, these families were based

in the middle-class cultural norms. Whether they featured two divorced parents getting

together, a male nanny coming to help a wealthy single mom, or the adoption of two

African-American children by a wealthy older Caucasian, these television families taught

lessons about good morals, honest values and togetherness. What was so attractive about

these traditional families to the Boomer generation? Was the sitcom family an extension

of the real family or were Boomers looking for, as Fraizer (2010) found, a way back to

the "simpler times" of their childhoods?

Generation X and the Television Family

With the onset of cable television, new niche networks were being developed

specifically for Generation X, further fragmenting the TV viewing between generations.

MTV and Nickelodeon were among the new cable channels that spoke to teens and

young adults. With MTV, in particular, everything moved much faster. The editing was

slicker, the humor more ironic and pop culture references were paramount (Owen, R.

1997). In addition to its stylistic form, MTV also brought teens together. As cable was

not as widespread in the 1980s and it is today, Gen Xers spent time at friends' homes that

had cable. Watching television with friends became the Generation X national past time

(Owen, 1997).

In the early 1990s, television took yet another turn towards Generation X

viewership. Up through the 1980s, teens were still not the focal point of a television

program. If anything, they were seen as a part of the "family sitcom unit" (Kammen,

1999). In the late 1980s, however, Fox Networks stated that the 18-34 demographic

would be its complete focus. This marketing plan was so triumphant that by 1993 the average Fox viewer was just 29 years old. In 1990, Fox Network struck gold with various programs such as *The Simpsons* and *Married With Children*. However, the dominated the American teen market with the drama *Beverly Hills, 90210.*

Beverly Hills, 90210 was one of the first primetime dramas to focus primarily on the teenagers in the family dynamic, as opposed to the parents. The show centered on a set of teen twins who moved from small town Minnesota to the glam and glitz of Beverly Hills. The twins and their parents held true to many of the domestic values seen in the situational comedies of the 1980s. Mom and Dad remained married and loving towards their children. Despite what went on in high school, the twins could always count on their parents emotionally and financially. In some ways this family model was just as, if not more, idealistic and unrealistic for family life of the time. However, the teens that watched did not seem to think so. In a 1993 article in the e-journal *Bad Subjects* academic Crystal Kile noted how 80% of students found the show to be "totally" identifiable and the "only show on television that really addresses the issues facing" teens (Kammen, 1999).

Beverly Hills, 90210 was a huge success and spawned multiple copycat youth ensemble dramas. Generation X was demanding more stories about themselves and the networks were happy to comply. What resulted was a long list of teen-centric programming such as *Dawson's Creek, 2000 Malibu Road, Yearbook, Class of '96, The Heights, Felicity, Models Inc.* and many more (Owen, 1997).

In terms of situational comedies, there was a paradigm move, as well. One of the defining features of the youth programming of the 1990s was its focus on a supportive

circle of friends (Kammen, 1999). As Generation X dominated the Nielsen ratings, the trend of friends over family that was seen in teen dramas emerged in sitcoms. It can be argued that *Seinfeld,* one of the biggest hits in sitcom history, took the first few steps into the "friends as family" device. None of the characters had a romantic relationship that lasted more than a few episodes, which made their friendships that much stronger and central to the plot. When something went wrong, and it inevitably did, the incredibly close group on *Seinfeld* was together to laugh at the misfortune of the situation (Owen, 1997).

In September of 1994, NBC premiered the show *Friends* about a group of "twenty-somethings" living in Manhattan, drifting through life with not much to count on save each other. *Friends* focused on six friends of mixed genders that could not seem to find love and happiness. Amid America's changing sense of family and talk of dysfunction and divorce, this group of friends forged their own family, one of unflappable devotion and support with the theme-song mantra of "I'll be there for you" (McCarroll, 2004).

The show became a phenomenal hit as quickly as its sophomore season. The creators and producers of *Friends* had been wary to label the show for Generation X, but it is arguably one. Writer Ginny Holbert of the *Chicago Sun-Times* stated, "Whether Generation X is a genuine social phenomenon or a marketing concoction, it's the motivating principal behind NBC's *Friends"* (in Owen, 1997, p.115). The series struck a particular chord with Generation X, as a drifting, soul-searching ensemble "always stuck in second gear," as the theme song goes, struggled with changing jobs and goals and "evolving notions of the ideal relationship" (McCarroll, 2004). Unlike earlier shows that

focused on the struggle within the family dynamic, the friends' struggle was an isolated, psychological one, yet they were all going through it together, an insider's perspective on how it felt to be growing up.

The Friends success gave way to a myriad of similar shows, ones that focused on either a group of friends or workplace families. In the past decade of the situational comedies rating in the top 50 television programs, only a quarter have centered on a traditional family (Nielsen Data). Programs that have consistent high ratings amongst sitcoms have been *The Office, Just Shoot Me, Scrubs, The Big Bang Theory, Will and Grace* and *How I Met Your Mother,* all centered around groups of friends and workplace camaraderie.

Why has the traditional domestic sitcom given way to the family of "friends?" As generational attitudes towards the meaning and importance of family changes, is this being reflected in television choices? Are Generation Xers killing off the domestic television family by simply tuning out or turning to the programs they find more accessible?

III. Theoretical Framework

Uses and Gratification

The theory of uses and gratification (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1974) contends that people actively seek out media to generate specific results or gratifications. According to theory, people look to their media to accomplish personal goals. Of the many facets of the theory, the scholars describe personal uses of media as a way to "provide a framework for one's day" (p. 20). This framework could be categorized into what West

and Turner (2007) describe as "personal identity," meaning the ways the media reinforce a person's individual values. The authors developed 35 different "needs" that they saw as a result of the psychological functions served by mass media and put them into five categories. One of these categories, specific to this study, is the "personal integrative need" (p. 429). People use media to reassure their status, gain credibility and stabilize their lives in an attempt to assure themselves that they have a status in society. In terms of situational comedies, viewers' attitudes and perceptions of their own lives may be reinforced by what they see on television as they identify with the characters and situations on television.

McQuail (1994) suggests that people use television for integrative and social interactions. The viewers are watching their television counterparts and can feel a sense of identification and belonging. If a television show portrayed a situation in which the majority of a person's time was spent with friends or work friends, this show may reinforce the viewers' perceptions of what is acceptable. For example, the characters of *Seinfeld* would rather spend time with each other than their relatives, thus reinforcing a model of acceptable behavior. Pomerantz (2004) describes the parents on shows such as *Seinfeld*, *Friends* and *Will and Grace* as an unflattering portrayal of parental units. "You had your sexpots, your suicides, your workaholics, your philanderers, your cross-dressers, everything but a decent human being," the author states (p. 36). As a viewer looking for justification for a fractured relationship with their own families, these characters serve as just that.

Palmgreen (1984) expanded upon uses and gratification with a model for Feishbein's (1963) expectancy value theory. Expectancy value theory places importance

on the viewers' attitude toward the media they choose to watch, suggesting "people orient themselves to the world according to their expectations (beliefs) and evaluations" (Palmgreen, 1984). In terms of this research, a person with a particular behavior or attitude (i.e. I prefer my friends to my family) will look at the consequences for having this behavior, and they will seek out media with positive consequences (i.e. the cast on *How I Met Your Mother* love and support each other like family).

Cantor (1991) found that people respond more to media that they find familiar and this makes the media more relevant to them. Oliver and Krakowiak (2009) discuss the selection and avoidance process that goes into actively choosing media. The authors relate this concept to Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance, which states that people seek out consistency in their attitudes and are motivated to alleviate any dissonance to those. In terms of media selection, people are motivated to seek out television programs similar to their own established beliefs. In contrast, viewers would avoid any media that gave them dissonance. If a person felt guilty for avoiding their home environment, they may avoid programming about a traditional family. Additionally, if a person believed a traditional family life was important, they may seek out media that reinforced this notion.

In conclusion, sitcom preference may be based on attitude, self-interest and congruency. People who are seeking validation for a preference for their friends or work family may seek out programming that reinforces this. Generation X members have found love and support through their friendships and place a high emphasis on their work environment. Additionally, waiting to have a family to further one's career and cohabitating, or dating multiple partners before settling down, is more acceptable to this

cohort. Has this generation changed the meaning of the word "family" and is this new family sought after in their television viewing habits?

Conversely, members of the Boomer generation have displayed more traditional domestic ideals in their later years. They have, in many ways, reverted back to their 1950s upbringing in terms of sexual activity, religious attitudes and importance of marriage and family. Do they, then, seek out television sitcoms that reinforce this behavior?

Is the trajectory of television sitcom families moving from traditional domestic models to a family of peers being lead by Generation X and do their Boomer counterparts also enjoy such programming? This study aims to examine how different generations define the importance of "family" and how this importance is reflected on their situational comedy viewing choices.

To examine if there is correlation between how generational cohorts, specifically the "Boomers" and "Generation X," define what family means to them and if this definition has any impact on what televisions sitcom families they prefer to watch, the following questions are being proposed:

RQ1: Is there a significant difference on the importance placed on the family unit within members of the "Boomer Generation" (1943-1960) and "Generation X" (1961-1981)?

To examine preference in sitcom families, it first needs to be established if the two generations do, indeed, have different definitions of what the word family means and if it is inclusive of co-workers and friends.

If the two generations are actively seeking out situational comedies based on their preferred definition of family and/or have a need to validate their concept of family, a third question will examine:

RQ2: Do generations use their situational comedy viewing choices to validate their family definition as role or identity based?

If there is indeed a difference in how generations define family, this study aims to examine if this definition has a correlation between that definition and what situational comedies a specific generation prefers to view.

RQ3: Is the importance of "family" within these two different generations reflected in their viewing choices of television sitcoms?

IV. Methodology

To examine if there are any significant differences in how each generation define the concept of family, a scaled-survey was utilized. Family researchers often use survey method in scholarly work. Traditional methods for examining television families have focused primarily on content analysis methods. However, this study intends to integrate the methods employed by Douglas (1996) and Douglas and Olson (1995) by using surveys (see Survey 1) to identify viewing habits and interests in television programs. If there are any significant differences found, a cross examination of the two data sets will be observed for correlations between the two.

Participants

An online survey, created through the web-based program Survey Monkey, was distributed to my own personal contacts. It was requested that participants send the information out to their own networks in an effort to broaden the scope of respondents. Additionally, I made use of the social media website Facebook. I personally sent a request to 86 people of mixed ages through Facebook and received 79 responses a 92.9% response rate. I emailed the survey to 44 people of mixed genders and age and received 36 responses, an 81.8% response rate. I would hypothesize 10%. A total convenience sample of 115 participants was assembled.

Of the completed surveys 32% fell into the Boomer category, leaving the remaining 78% in the Generation X category. The median age of the Boomer group was 57, and the median age of the Generation X group was 35 years old. Of both groups, 45 (39%) were male and 69 (60%) were female. Sixty-nine (60.5%) were married, 30 (26%) were single, 11 (9.6%) were divorced/separated and 4 (3.5%) were engaged to be married. There were no widowed respondents. Overall 64 (56%) of the respondents had children and 50 (43%) did not. To counter the disparity in the higher number of Generation X respondents, a random sample of 41 members of the Generational X category was removed before being analyzed.

Procedure

Because the family definition and television viewing are very different in nature, the survey was split into two measures. The first measure focused on how respondents define family. To define family, survey questions were based on the study done by Edwards and Graham (2009) as "Identity-based" or "Role-based."

"Identity-based," is characterized by "a focus on blood relations (consanguinity) and/or marital relations (conjugality) as a requisite for inclusion in a family" (p. 198). A five-point Likert scale asked respondents to rate such questions as, "A family is defined as a unit of people related either by marriage ties or blood ties" and "A family is defined as mother, father and children who make up the family."

The second definition of family, "Role-based," "conceptualizes family as a group that fulfills or enacts a set of roles and duties traditionally belonging to family, including the provision of love, support, guidance, education, nurture, and protection" (p. 199). That is to say, in role-based families, blood ties are not necessary. Respondents answered how likely they were to agree with such questions as "Your family does not necessarily have to be blood related" and "The people I work with are a part of my family." Questions were taken directly from the noted study.

Questions rooted in uses and gratification theory were based on Dos Santos et al.'s (2007) six factors for television preference scale: identification, information seeking, entertainment, apathy, excitement, and affiliation. Questions included specifically examined "identification" and "affiliation," which are directly related to a behavior of seeking validation from television choices.

The latter portion of the survey focused on viewing situational comedies. As this study aims examined differences in the types of television families (blood or work/friends), the programs in question were split up into two categories – "family-oriented" or "not family-oriented." Family-oriented programming was consistent with Thomas and Callahan (1982) definition that if a program had (1) most of its regular cast portrayed genetically or legally related persons and (2) the primary 'set' and/or dramatic

focus revolved around the family home. "Not family oriented" would then by default be programming where the majority of the characters are not legally-related persons.

As stated in the literature review, the paradigm switch from family oriented situational comedies to friend oriented ones began in the 1980s. As such, the survey included only situational comedies that ran from 1980 through the present. Since there were so many television programs that fit into this broad timeframe, only programs that ran for five or more years (consecutive, first run) were included, as well as sitcoms that began after 2006 that are currently airing. To determine which television sitcoms ran from 1980 through the present, programs were cross-analyzed using the website "Classic-TV.com," which lists the top 30 programs using Nielsen Television Ratings for each year dating back to 1950 (See Table 10). I then researched each individual program using their IMDB.com listing, the comprehensive television and film website.

To asses the viewing habits of respondents in terms of time spent watching television George Gerbner's (Gerbner et al., 1994) classification of television viewership as high (4 or more hours/day), moderate (2-4 hours/day), or light (less than 2 hours/day) was used. While this study is not looking for any correlations between time spent watching television or sitcoms, viewership is an important variable in accounting for any obvious outliers.

The survey was tested for reliability by performing Chronbach's Alpha. Of the first survey section on family definition, questions 8 and 21 were eliminated to achieve reliability. Of the second portion of the survey on sitcom choice, to achieve reliability of the scaled questions, question 4, 5 and 7 were eliminated. The final reliability of the survey was .782 (See Table 9).

V. Results

In order to examine if there was a significant difference in how the two generation's defined family (RQ1) and if there was a correlation between this definition and the choice in television sitcoms (RQ2 & RQ3) a variance of homogeneity test, Levene's Test for Equality of Variance was performed on the two measure of the survey. With "generations" being the independent variable, the data was tested for significant differences. Of the questions on family definitions significance was not found overall. Several questions had significant values $p < .05$ and while this does not suggest a variance of homogeneity, I wanted to make note of it. In table 1 and table 1A, questions 10, 14 and 19 had significant values. The questions with significant values asked whether groups considered their extended family to be too far way to be close with them ($F = 4.782$, df. 1, 77, $p < .032$), whether there was any specific criteria for the number of people considered to be a part of family ($F = 5.506$), df. 1, 76, $p < .022$) and if marriage and children were the most important things ($F = 7.650$, df. 1, 76, $p < .007$). Examining the descriptives (Table 3) of these specific questions show that Generation X respondents have a significant mean for each of the three questions.

TABLE 1

Family Definitions Between Generational Groups

		df	F	Mean Square	P
My extended family is too far away for me to be close with	Between Groups	1	4.783	3.851	.032
	Within Groups	76		.805	
	Total	77			

There is no specific number criteria for the number of people considered to be a part of your family	Between Groups	1	5.506	6.105	.022
	Within Groups	75		1.109	
	Total	76			
Marriage and children are the most important things to me	Between Groups	1	7.650	12.293	.007
	Within Groups	75		1.607	
	Total	76			

Note. All non-significant questions were omitted.

Of the portion of the survey specifically dedicated to television sitcom choice and its relation to the theory of uses and gratification, significance was not determined. Only one question, Question 9 ("I like to watch sitcoms because it gives me something interesting to talk about") had a level of significance of .006 (Table 4) with Welch's level of significance at .005 (Table 5).

To look at specific television shows and generation preference (RQ3), as in questions "If I had to choose a TV family to live with..." and "If I had to choose a show to live in…," a Chi Square test was performed on each individual program. Several of the programs had significant conventional levels between .01 and .05 (Table 7). While this does not show significance, it gives reason for further examination into which of the generational group was more interested in this type of program. The programs were given a dichotomous value based on "family" or "friends." Programs that had significant levels were *The Cosby Show, Family Ties, Home Improvement, Roseanne, The Office* and

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Modern Family. Of the programs that had significant values, Generation X members were more likely to choose *The Cosby Show, Roseanne, The Office* and *Modern Family* than Boomers.

VI. Discussion

There are several important conclusions to be drawn from these results. The chief conclusion is that there is no significant difference between how the two generations, the Boomer generation and Generation X, define family. Both generations, as based on this research define family similarly. While this research was looking to find correlations between family definition amongst generations and how it related to television viewing, once no significant difference in family definition was found, it would be impossible to find any correlations between the two measures. An ANOVA was performed as a first measure, but proved to be the only one necessary.

The question "I consider my extended family to be too far away to be close with them" did have a significant difference between generations. This question is based on the role classification for family definition. The results found that more Generation X members would agree with this question, suggesting more role-based attributes. Additionally, the question "There is no specific criteria for the number of people that you can consider to be your family" is also rooted in the role definition for family. This question also had significant differences within group and found more Generation X members agreeing with the statement. The third question that had significant differences in generational behavior asked if "Marriage and children are the most important things to

me." This question is an example of an identity-based definition and found that more Boomers agreed with this statement.

While these results are very small and would need much more exploration, there is a suggestion that the Boomer generation may define family as more identity-based, meaning the people related to you. In line with much of the literature discussed in this study, Generation X may find friends and work relations just as important as blood ties. Another plausible reason for the difference of opinion may very well be that more Boomers are married with children, even grandchildren, so to respond in this manner is expected. In line with this thinking, it would be understandable that more of the Generation X members who answered this survey do not have families as of yet.

The second part of this study looked at how generations watch situational comedies and if their choices are rooted in uses and gratification theory (RQ2). There was no significant difference in how each generation uses situational comedies, as based on this research, with the exception of one question that looked at the affiliation between groups and television choice. This question found that a higher number of Generation X members agreed with the statement that they enjoy watching sitcoms as it gives them something interesting to talk about. If this specific use for situational comedies had significance in multiple questions, it may be suggested that Generation X's affiliation with such programs is correlated with viewing choices; however, this does not appear to be so.

The last portion of the research specifically looked at inter-generation's choice in viewing traditional family or work/friend family programs (RQ3). A Pearson's Chi

Square was performed on each of the individual programs. Of the programs that had significance, *The Cosby Show, Family Ties, Roseanne, Home Improvement* and *Modern Family*, all fall into the traditional family model, leaving only *The Office* as a model of work/friends family. Of these programs *Family Ties* and *Home Improvement* were consistent with the idea that Boomer members would prefer these programs because of their desire for traditional family models as a higher number of Boomers chose these shows than Generation X members. More Generation X members were chose *The Office* as a program they enjoy watching. This was also consistent with the idea that Generation X members associate with work and their friends more than a traditional model. However, more Generation X members also said they enjoyed watching *The Cosby Show, Roseanne* and *Modern Family*, all programs about traditional families. The choice of these situational comedy families may have more to do with popular culture than any affiliation to family. *Roseanne* and *The Cosby Show* were very popular programs during their time on television and may be regarded highly amongst this generation as a nostalgic time in their lives. *Modern Family* is one of the few family-focused, situational comedies currently on television and has a contemporary focus (a homosexual couple), which may be the reason Generation X members preferred it to their Boomer counterparts. This study did not account for which generation watches more situational comedies, just television viewing overall.

Limitations

Domestic comedies are currently limited in scope, which will influence preferences because of the very fact that family comedies are not as prevalent on television. Thus currently preferring a "traditional family" situational comedy is not an

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easy task. This may lend to a higher interest in work/friends families with Generation X members who are thinking about the current television landscape when making their choices. In contrast, Boomer generation may have more prevalent memories of situational comedies from their own childhood, wherein work/friends families were not as popular or nonexistent.

People choose their media for a variety of reasons and this study cannot make claims to ever prove what those reasons may be. Uses and gratification may not come into play when people are choosing situational comedies.

Lastly, the number of respondents to this survey is too small to make any significant assessments and the manner in which they were collected was through a convenience sample of my own personal acquaintances and their outer-circles. This sample is very limiting in scope and can no way account for the differences of two generations. It can, however, give insight.

Assumptions

People have very personal feelings about their own family. This survey is asking respondents to attempt to define this broad concept, which may be a difficult undertaking for some. This examination is assuming that respondents will be honest about their feelings for their families, which, for some, may be impossible, consciously.

This study is assuming that family definition has significance to situational comedy preference. This is very speculative, as there are many factors that go in to what medium one chooses to watch. Educational background, demographics, socio-economic status as well as a host of other factors influence a person's media consumption.

This study assumes survey respondents are sincere about their television viewing habits. Participants could be dishonest in reporting their own TV usage or are not sure of their television viewing habits. Situational comedies are not considered "high-brow" programming and it is possible that respondents will not want to admit to high viewing of such programming.

A final assumption necessary for this examination is that participants are honest about their age.

Analysis

This study aimed to examine, first, if there was a difference in generational definitions of the concept of family. Three questions surfaced, lending to the idea that Boomer generation may define family as marriage, children and extended relations, where Generation X members may see family as more of a support group, not tied by blood. As this study has intended to show, the trajectory of the modern family has extended far beyond blood. Good friends are called aunt and uncle, work families are now seen just as important as any other support system because of the amount of time being spent at a place of employment. It has even been suggested that people prefer to be at work than with their immediate family as the goals of a job are more achievable than a "happy family." These preferences are directly related to Generation X, who currently makes up a majority of the workforce. It has also been examined through the literature review that Boomer members saw a return to family togetherness in the mid-parts of their lives. The assumptions as to why this happened are multifaceted; economics and societal changes may have all influenced a return to traditional values.

In examining the data, which was mostly inconclusive, Generation X was just as concerned with traditional family values as their Boomer counterparts. This may have more to do with age than anything else. As a person grows older, they naturally change their values. While work and friends may still be big part of Generation X's lives, if they are married and have children, these aspects will begin to take precedent. Therefore defining family on an entire generational level might be more difficult than trying to define it amongst smaller age groups.

This research has found that Generation X went through a very different family life than their Boomer parents. The rise in divorce, mothers' entrance in the workforce and the television as babysitter, were all factors that may give reason to a lack of family importance. However, this may prove the opposite. The one significant survey question on the importance of extended family was indeed answered negatively by Generation X. While this may relate to a lack of cohesiveness in upbringing, it does not mean that their own immediate family is not a priority.

In the relation to the concept that people use situational comedies to validate their perception of family, this study came up short. There are many outside factors that may have affected the responses to these specific questions, or potentially situational comedies are not used in the same manner as other media. Situational comedies tend to be lighter in theme than dramas, thus making them better for apathy or entertainment needs as opposed to affiliation or identification uses. While one can assume that a person watches a situational comedy to relate to his or her own life, or to see characters in situations similar to their own, they may not be able to verbalize this concept to have answered the survey questions as such.

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Of the greatest interest was that there was little difference in what each generation watch on television. All of the other concepts of this study aside, there has been an undeniable movement away from traditional families in situational comedies over the past decade. There will always be a question of whether the viewer influences the media or the other way around. At some point in television history, such friends/work family comedies became more popular amongst all television viewers. What this study found was that this fact does not necessarily relate to a family perception. This may be more relative to the cultural landscape. Generation X members definitely impacted this landscape and these friends/work families may have been more reflective of the culture, but not reflective of family togetherness. As a person moves through life, certain people and places take precedence. As Generation X became larger consumers of television than Boomers, they were younger; work and friends may have been more important because of where they were/are in their lives.

Conclusion and Future Research

Despite the fact that little was proven in this study, it cannot be considered a failure as the reverse of what was set out to be examined surfaced. A multitude of studies on generational behavior have been done, but very few have broached this subject. It is undeniable that there are no differences in the way these two generations consume media. The manner in which they were raised guarantees that some aspects of their cultural existences are dissimilar. Future research may focus less on situational comedies or even fictional television as a whole and examine how generations use news and current affairs programs. News media affects on a generational level may prove helpful in a political landscape.

A better understanding is needed for why situational comedies have changed over the years. As mentioned, it is an undeniable fact that the traditional family has given way to a work/friend family. However, since the beginning of this study, more traditional families have surfaced on network television, such as *Raising Hope* and *Up All Night*, while programs such as *The Office* and *Community* are losing ground. Is the situational comedy family, then, cyclical? If it is said to reflect the cultural landscape, does that mean the importance of the real family is cyclical as well? There is a lot of research that still needs to be done in these areas.

Finally, more research can be done on generational differences in the home. In doing this research I found a plethora of articles on Generation X and Boomers in the workplace, but very little specifically looking at each generation's perception of family. A longitudinal study on this subject would need to be done to assess changes over time. Do generations change their values, as we have seen with Boomers, based solely on their age as opposed to their generational attributes? This study was limited to Generation X and Boomers for time and research restraints; further studies should examine the Millennial generation as well to give a broader perspective.

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TABLE 1

Family Definitions with Generation

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
gender	Between Groups	.006	1	.006	.025	.875
	Within Groups	17.328	76	.228		
	Total	17.333	77			
status	Between Groups	2.104	1	2.104	3.007	.087
	Within Groups	53.191	76	.700		
	Total	55.295	77			
children	Between Groups	5.382	1	5.382	31.271	.000
	Within Groups	13.080	76	.172		
	Total	18.462	77			
familymarriage	Between Groups	4.650	1	4.650	2.826	.097
	Within Groups	123.428	75	1.646		
	Total	128.078	76			
familymom	Between Groups	1.519	1	1.519	.823	.367
	Within Groups	140.276	76	1.846		
	Total	141.795	77			

Friendunderstand	Between Groups	1.796	1	1.796	1.193	.278
	Within Groups	114.422	76	1.506		
	Total	116.218	77			
familynoblood	Between Groups	.302	1	.302	.173	.679
	Within Groups	132.583	76	1.745		
	Total	132.885	77			
extendedfamily	Between Groups	3.851	1	3.851	4.783	.032
	Within Groups	61.188	76	.805		
	Total	65.038	77			
familycare	Between Groups	.457	1	.457	.683	.411
	Within Groups	50.244	75	.670		
	Total	50.701	76			
husbandwife	Between Groups	4.189	1	4.189	2.565	.113
	Within Groups	122.512	75	1.633		
	Total	126.701	76			
workfamily	Between Groups	2.606	1	2.606	1.832	.180
	Within Groups	103.874	73	1.423		
	Total	106.480	74			
number	Between Groups	6.105	1	6.105	5.506	.022

	Within Groups	83.167	75	1.109		
	Total	89.273	76			
common	Between Groups	.378	1	.378	.322	.572
	Within Groups	86.820	74	1.173		
	Total	87.197	75			
familylove	Between Groups	3.285	1	3.285	3.214	.077
	Within Groups	76.663	75	1.022		
	Total	79.948	76			
friendsfamily	Between Groups	3.672	1	3.672	2.213	.141
	Within Groups	124.458	75	1.659		
	Total	128.130	76			
closefamily	Between Groups	.595	1	.595	.783	.379
	Within Groups	56.938	75	.759		
	Total	57.532	76			
Marriagechildren	Between Groups	12.293	1	12.293	7.650	.007
	Within Groups	120.512	75	1.607		
	Total	132.805	76			
preferwork	Between Groups	3.780	1	3.780	3.097	.083
	Within Groups	89.100	73	1.221		
	Total	92.880	74			

TABLE 2

Welch and Brown-Forsythe Family Definition within Generations

		Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
gender	Welch	.025	1	75.355	.875
	Brown-Forsythe	.025	1	75.355	.875
status	Welch	3.061	1	75.649	.084
	Brown-Forsythe	3.061	1	75.649	.084
children	Welch	32.638	1	69.100	.000
	Brown-Forsythe	32.638	1	69.100	.000
familymarriage	Welch	2.786	1	70.938	.100
	Brown-Forsythe	2.786	1	70.938	.100
familymom	Welch	.816	1	73.425	.369
	Brown-Forsythe	.816	1	73.425	.369
friendunderstand	Welch	1.188	1	74.516	.279
	Brown-Forsythe	1.188	1	74.516	.279
familynoblood	Welch	.171	1	73.178	.680
	Brown-Forsythe	.171	1	73.178	.680
extendedfamily	Welch	4.555	1	57.753	.037

	Brown-Forsythe	4.555	1	57.753	.037
familycare	Welch	.667	1	68.451	.417
	Brown-Forsythe	.667	1	68.451	.417
husbandwife	Welch	2.511	1	69.205	.118
	Brown-Forsythe	2.511	1	69.205	.118
workfamily	Welch	1.824	1	69.847	.181
	Brown-Forsythe	1.824	1	69.847	.181
number	Welch	5.143	1	53.643	.027
	Brown-Forsythe	5.143	1	53.643	.027
common	Welch	.322	1	72.289	.572
	Brown-Forsythe	.322	1	72.289	.572
familylove	Welch	2.988	1	52.072	.090
	Brown-Forsythe	2.988	1	52.072	.090
friendsfamily	Welch	2.103	1	59.679	.152
	Brown-Forsythe	2.103	1	59.679	.152
closefamily	Welch	.782	1	73.496	.379
	Brown-Forsythe	.782	1	73.496	.379
marriagechildren	Welch	7.879	1	74.330	.006

	Brown-Forsythe	7.879	1	74.330	.006
preferwork	Welch	2.918	1	55.490	.093
	Brown-Forsythe	2.918	1	55.490	.093

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

TABLE 3

Inter-Generation Differences in Family Definition

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
gender	baby boomer	37	1.68	.475	.078	1.52	1.83	1	2
	generation x	41	1.66	.480	.075	1.51	1.81	1	2
	Total	78	1.67	.474	.054	1.56	1.77	1	2
status	baby boomer	37	1.38	.758	.125	1.13	1.63	1	3
	generation x	41	1.71	.901	.141	1.42	1.99	1	4
	Total	78	1.55	.847	.096	1.36	1.74	1	4
children	baby boomer	37	1.11	.315	.052	1.00	1.21	1	2
	generation x	41	1.63	.488	.076	1.48	1.79	1	2

		N	Mean	Std. Dev	Std. Error	Lower	Upper	Min	Max
	Total	78	1.38	.490	.055	1.27	1.50	1	2
familymarriage	baby boomer	36	3.64	1.355	.226	3.18	4.10	1	5
	generation x	41	3.15	1.216	.190	2.76	3.53	1	5
	Total	77	3.38	1.298	.148	3.08	3.67	1	5
Familymom	baby boomer	37	2.86	1.417	.233	2.39	3.34	1	5
	generation x	41	2.59	1.303	.204	2.17	3.00	1	5
	Total	78	2.72	1.357	.154	2.41	3.02	1	5
friendunderstand	baby boomer	37	2.86	1.251	.206	2.45	3.28	1	5
	generation x	41	2.56	1.205	.188	2.18	2.94	1	5
	Total	78	2.71	1.229	.139	2.43	2.98	1	5
familynoblood	baby boomer	37	2.97	1.384	.228	2.51	3.43	1	5
	generation x	41	3.10	1.261	.197	2.70	3.50	1	5
	Total	78	3.04	1.314	.149	2.74	3.33	1	5
extendedfamily	baby boomer	37	1.81	1.101	.181	1.44	2.18	1	5
	generation x	41	1.37	.662	.103	1.16	1.57	1	4
	Total	78	1.58	.919	.104	1.37	1.78	1	5
familycare	baby boomer	36	1.67	.894	.149	1.36	1.97	1	5

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
	generation x	41	1.51	.746	.116	1.28	1.75	1	4
	Total	77	1.58	.817	.093	1.40	1.77	1	5
Husbandwife	baby boomer	36	2.83	1.384	.231	2.37	3.30	1	5
	generation x	41	2.37	1.178	.184	1.99	2.74	1	5
	Total	77	2.58	1.291	.147	2.29	2.88	1	5
Workfamily	baby boomer	34	3.24	1.208	.207	2.81	3.66	1	5
	generation x	41	3.61	1.181	.184	3.24	3.98	2	5
	Total	75	3.44	1.200	.139	3.16	3.72	1	5
number	baby boomer	36	2.03	1.320	.220	1.58	2.47	1	5
	generation x	41	1.46	.745	.116	1.23	1.70	1	4
	Total	77	1.73	1.084	.124	1.48	1.97	1	5
common	baby boomer	35	3.80	1.079	.182	3.43	4.17	1	5
	generation x	41	3.66	1.087	.170	3.32	4.00	1	5
	Total	76	3.72	1.078	.124	3.48	3.97	1	5
familylove	baby boomer	36	2.19	1.283	.214	1.76	2.63	1	5
	generation x	41	1.78	.690	.108	1.56	2.00	1	4
	Total	77	1.97	1.026	.117	1.74	2.21	1	5

Friendsfamily	baby boomer	36	2.39	1.536	.256	1.87	2.91	1	5
	generation x	41	1.95	1.024	.160	1.63	2.27	1	4
	Total	77	2.16	1.298	.148	1.86	2.45	1	5
Closefamily	baby boomer	36	4.44	.877	.146	4.15	4.74	2	5
	generation x	41	4.27	.867	.135	3.99	4.54	1	5
	Total	77	4.35	.870	.099	4.15	4.55	1	5
marriagechildren	baby boomer	36	4.17	1.108	.185	3.79	4.54	1	5
	generation x	41	3.37	1.392	.217	2.93	3.81	1	5
	Total	77	3.74	1.322	.151	3.44	4.04	1	5
preferwork	baby boomer	35	3.80	1.346	.228	3.34	4.26	1	5
	generation x	40	4.25	.840	.133	3.98	4.52	2	5
	Total	75	4.04	1.120	.129	3.78	4.30	1	5

TABLE 4

Uses and Gratification within Generations

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
tvweekday	Between Groups	2.369	1	2.369	1.763	.188

	Within Groups	96.726	72	1.343		
	Total	99.095	73			
tvweekend	Between Groups	.213	1	.213	.203	.653
	Within Groups	75.409	72	1.047		
	Total	75.622	73			
tvregular	Between Groups	4.922	1	4.922	2.487	.119
	Within Groups	142.483	72	1.979		
	Total	147.405	73			
characters	Between Groups	.412	1	.412	.453	.503
	Within Groups	65.440	72	.909		
	Total	65.851	73			
identify	Between Groups	.261	1	.261	.305	.583
	Within Groups	60.753	71	.856		
	Total	61.014	72			
talkabout	Between Groups	6.717	1	6.717	7.872	.006
	Within Groups	59.728	70	.853		
	Total	66.444	71			
viewpoints	Between Groups	1.003	1	1.003	.992	.323
	Within Groups	70.775	70	1.011		
	Total	71.778	71			

stories	Between Groups	.346	1	.346	.307	.581
	Within Groups	78.932	70	1.128		
	Total	79.278	71			
fathers	Between Groups	.381	1	.381	.640	.426
	Within Groups	42.249	71	.595		
	Total	42.630	72			
mothers	Between Groups	.783	1	.783	1.025	.315
	Within Groups	55.001	72	.764		
	Total	55.784	73			
siblings	Between Groups	2.132	1	2.132	2.884	.094
	Within Groups	53.220	72	.739		
	Total	55.351	73			
bigbang	Between Groups	.294	1	.294	.266	.608
	Within Groups	77.484	70	1.107		
	Total	77.778	71			
closefriends	Between Groups	1.405	1	1.405	1.327	.253
	Within Groups	76.231	72	1.059		
	Total	77.635	73			

TABLE 5A

Welch and Brown-Forsythe Uses and Gratification with Generations

		Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
tvweekday	Welch	1.848	1	72.000	.178
	Brown-Forsythe	1.848	1	72.000	.178
tvweekend	Welch	.206	1	70.383	.651
	Brown-Forsythe	.206	1	70.383	.651
tvregular	Welch	2.446	1	66.212	.123
	Brown-Forsythe	2.446	1	66.212	.123
characters	Welch	.476	1	71.989	.492
	Brown-Forsythe	.476	1	71.989	.492
identify	Welch	.306	1	67.423	.582
	Brown-Forsythe	.306	1	67.423	.582
talkabout	Welch	8.364	1	69.709	.005
	Brown-Forsythe	8.364	1	69.709	.005
viewpoints	Welch	.958	1	61.211	.332
	Brown-Forsythe	.958	1	61.211	.332
stories	Welch	.295	1	59.403	.589

	Brown-Forsythe	.295	1	59.403	.589
fathers	Welch	.648	1	68.142	.424
	Brown-Forsythe	.648	1	68.142	.424
mothers	Welch	1.047	1	70.898	.310
	Brown-Forsythe	1.047	1	70.898	.310
siblings	Welch	2.876	1	68.272	.094
	Brown-Forsythe	2.876	1	68.272	.094
bigbang	Welch	.282	1	69.651	.597
	Brown-Forsythe	.282	1	69.651	.597
closefriends	Welch	1.252	1	58.640	.268
	Brown-Forsythe	1.252	1	58.640	.268

TABLE 6A

Inter-generation uses and gratification overview

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
tvweekday	baby boomer	33	2.97	1.015	.177	2.61	3.33	1	5

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
	generation x	41	2.61	1.262	.197	2.21	3.01	1	5
	Total	74	2.77	1.165	.135	2.50	3.04	1	5
tvweekend	baby boomer	33	2.30	.984	.171	1.95	2.65	1	5
	generation x	41	2.20	1.054	.165	1.86	2.53	1	5
	Total	74	2.24	1.018	.118	2.01	2.48	1	5
tvregular	baby boomer	33	3.09	1.466	.255	2.57	3.61	1	5
	generation x	41	3.61	1.358	.212	3.18	4.04	1	5
	Total	74	3.38	1.421	.165	3.05	3.71	1	5
characters	baby boomer	33	2.61	.827	.144	2.31	2.90	1	4
	generation x	41	2.76	1.044	.163	2.43	3.09	1	5
	Total	74	2.69	.950	.110	2.47	2.91	1	5
identify	baby boomer	32	2.56	.914	.162	2.23	2.89	1	4
	generation x	41	2.68	.934	.146	2.39	2.98	1	4
	Total	73	2.63	.921	.108	2.42	2.84	1	4
talkabout	baby boomer	31	1.87	.806	.145	1.58	2.17	1	3
	generation x	41	2.49	1.003	.157	2.17	2.80	1	4
	Total	72	2.22	.967	.114	1.99	2.45	1	4

viewpoints	baby boomer	32	2.31	1.091	.193	1.92	2.71	1	4
	generation x	40	2.55	.932	.147	2.25	2.85	1	4
	Total	72	2.44	1.005	.118	2.21	2.68	1	4
stories	baby boomer	31	3.77	1.146	.206	3.35	4.19	1	5
	generation x	41	3.63	.994	.155	3.32	3.95	2	5
	Total	72	3.69	1.057	.125	3.45	3.94	1	5
fathers	baby boomer	32	1.78	.751	.133	1.51	2.05	1	3
	generation x	41	1.93	.787	.123	1.68	2.18	1	4
	Total	73	1.86	.769	.090	1.68	2.04	1	4
mothers	baby boomer	33	1.94	.827	.144	1.65	2.23	1	4
	generation x	41	2.15	.910	.142	1.86	2.43	1	4
	Total	74	2.05	.874	.102	1.85	2.26	1	4
siblings	baby boomer	33	2.00	.866	.151	1.69	2.31	1	4
	generation x	41	2.34	.855	.133	2.07	2.61	1	4
	Total	74	2.19	.871	.101	1.99	2.39	1	4
bigbang	baby boomer	31	2.87	.922	.166	2.53	3.21	1	5

	generation x	41	3.00	1.140	.178	2.64	3.36	1	5
	Total	72	2.94	1.047	.123	2.70	3.19	1	5
Closefriends	baby boomer	33	2.45	1.175	.205	2.04	2.87	1	5
	generation x	41	2.73	.895	.140	2.45	3.01	1	4
	Total	74	2.61	1.031	.120	2.37	2.85	1	5

TABLE 7A

Situational Comedy Choices

				Cosby		Total
					family	
generation	baby boomer	Count		31	6	37
		Expected Count		27.0	10.0	37.0
	generation x	Count		26	15	41
		Expected Count		30.0	11.0	41.0
Total		Count		57	21	78
		Expected Count		57.0	21.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.101[a]	1	.043		
Continuity Correction[b]	3.131	1	.077		
Likelihood Ratio	4.219	1	.040		
Fisher's Exact Test				.072	.037
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.96.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

			allen		Total
				family	
generation	baby boomer	Count	30	7	37
		Expected Count	32.7	4.3	37.0
	generation x	Count	39	2	41
		Expected Count	36.3	4.7	41.0
Total		Count	69	9	78
		Expected Count	69.0	9.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)

Pearson Chi-Square	3.756[a]	1	.053		
Continuity Correction[b]	2.507	1	.113		
Likelihood Ratio	3.914	1	.048		
Fisher's Exact Test				.077	.056
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.27.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

			family ties		
				family	Total
generation	baby boomer	Count	28	9	37
		Expected Count	29.4	7.6	37.0
	generation x	Count	34	7	41
		Expected Count	32.6	8.4	41.0
Total		Count	62	16	78
		Expected Count	62.0	16.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.627[a]	1	.428		
Continuity Correction[b]	.261	1	.609		
Likelihood Ratio	.627	1	.428		
Fisher's Exact Test				.576	.304
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.59.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

			frasier		Total
				friends	
generation	baby boomer	Count	33	4	37
		Expected Count	33.7	3.3	37.0
	generation x	Count	38	3	41
		Expected Count	37.3	3.7	41.0
Total		Count	71	7	78
		Expected Count	71.0	7.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.291[a]	1	.590		
Continuity Correction[b]	.020	1	.887		
Likelihood Ratio	.291	1	.590		
Fisher's Exact Test				.702	.442
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.32.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

			roseanne		Total
				family	
generation	baby boomer	Count	37	0	37
		Expected Count	34.2	2.8	37.0
	generation x	Count	35	6	41
		Expected Count	37.8	3.2	41.0
Total		Count	72	6	78
		Expected Count	72.0	6.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.866[a]	1	.015		
Continuity Correction[b]	3.986	1	.046		
Likelihood Ratio	8.168	1	.004		
Fisher's Exact Test				.027	.018
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.85.

			will and grace		Total
				friends	
generation	baby boomer	Count	35	2	37
		Expected Count	32.7	4.3	37.0
	generation x	Count	34	7	41
		Expected Count	36.3	4.7	41.0
Total		Count	69	9	78
		Expected Count	69.0	9.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.594[a]	1	.107		
Continuity Correction[b]	1.577	1	.209		
Likelihood Ratio	2.751	1	.097		
Fisher's Exact Test				.159	.103
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.27.

			two and a half men		
				family	Total
generation	baby boomer	Count	36	1	37
		Expected Count	35.6	1.4	37.0
	generation x	Count	39	2	41
		Expected Count	39.4	1.6	41.0
Total		Count	75	3	78
		Expected Count	75.0	3.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.249[a]	1	.618		
Continuity Correction[b]	.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	.255	1	.614		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.539
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.42.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

			seventies show	friends	Total
generation	baby boomer	Count	35	2	37
		Expected Count	33.2	3.8	37.0
	generation x	Count	35	6	41
		Expected Count	36.8	4.2	41.0
Total		Count	70	8	78
		Expected Count	70.0	8.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.800[a]	1	.180		
Continuity Correction[b]	.937	1	.333		
Likelihood Ratio	1.888	1	.169		
Fisher's Exact Test				.268	.167
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.79.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

			third rock		Total
				friends	
generation	baby boomer	Count	36	1	37
		Expected Count	35.6	1.4	37.0
	generation x	Count	39	2	41
		Expected Count	39.4	1.6	41.0
Total		Count	75	3	78
		Expected Count	75.0	3.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.249[a]	1	.618		
Continuity Correction[b]	.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	.255	1	.614		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.539
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.42.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

			golden girls	Total
generation	baby boomer	Count	37	37
		Expected Count	37.0	37.0
	generation x	Count	41	41
		Expected Count	41.0	41.0
Total		Count	78	78
		Expected Count	78.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value
Pearson Chi-Square	.[a]
N of Valid Cases	78

a. No statistics are computed because golden girls is a constant.

			prince		
				family	Total
generation	baby boomer	Count	37	0	37
		Expected Count	35.1	1.9	37.0
	generation x	Count	37	4	41
		Expected Count	38.9	2.1	41.0
Total		Count	74	4	78
		Expected Count	74.0	4.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.805[a]	1	.051		

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Continuity Correction[b]	2.064	1	.151		
Likelihood Ratio	5.340	1	.021		
Fisher's Exact Test				.117	.071
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.90.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

			malcolm		Total
				family	
generation	baby boomer	Count	35	2	37
		Expected Count	35.1	1.9	37.0
	generation x	Count	39	2	41
		Expected Count	38.9	2.1	41.0
Total		Count	74	4	78
		Expected Count	74.0	4.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.011[a]	1	.916		

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Continuity Correction[b]	.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	.011	1	.916		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.652
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.90.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

			growing pains		Total
				family	
generation	baby boomer	Count	35	2	37
		Expected Count	34.2	2.8	37.0
	generation x	Count	37	4	41
		Expected Count	37.8	3.2	41.0
Total		Count	72	6	78
		Expected Count	72.0	6.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.518[a]	1	.472		

Continuity Correction[b]	.087	1	.768		
Likelihood Ratio	.530	1	.467		
Fisher's Exact Test				.678	.388
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.85.

			raymond		Total
				family	
generation	baby boomer	Count	35	2	37
		Expected Count	36.1	.9	37.0
	generation x	Count	41	0	41
		Expected Count	39.9	1.1	41.0
Total		Count	76	2	78
		Expected Count	76.0	2.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.275[a]	1	.132		
Continuity Correction[b]	.625	1	.429		

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Likelihood Ratio	3.042	1	.081		
Fisher's Exact Test				.222	.222
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .95.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

			office		Total
				6	
generation	baby boomer	Count	37	0	37
		Expected Count	34.6	2.4	37.0
	generation x	Count	36	5	41
		Expected Count	38.4	2.6	41.0
Total		Count	73	5	78
		Expected Count	73.0	5.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.821[a]	1	.028		
Continuity Correction[b]	3.003	1	.083		
Likelihood Ratio	6.740	1	.009		
Fisher's Exact Test				.056	.035

			N of Valid Cases	78			

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.37.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

			scrubs		Total
				friends	
generation	baby boomer	Count	36	1	37
		Expected Count	36.5	.5	37.0
	generation x	Count	41	0	41
		Expected Count	40.5	.5	41.0
Total		Count	77	1	78
		Expected Count	77.0	1.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.122[a]	1	.289		
Continuity Correction[b]	.003	1	.959		
Likelihood Ratio	1.506	1	.220		
Fisher's Exact Test				.474	.474

			N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .47.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

			modern		Total
				friends	
generation baby boomer		Count	37	0	37
		Expected Count	35.1	1.9	37.0
	generation x	Count	37	4	41
		Expected Count	38.9	2.1	41.0
Total		Count	74	4	78
		Expected Count	74.0	4.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.805[a]	1	.051		
Continuity Correction[b]	2.064	1	.151		
Likelihood Ratio	5.340	1	.021		
Fisher's Exact Test				.117	.071

		night court	
			Total
generation baby boomer	Count	37	37
	Expected Count	37.0	37.0
generation x	Count	41	41
	Expected Count	41.0	41.0
Total	Count	78	78
	Expected Count	78.0	78.0

N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.90.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Chi-Square Tests

	Value
Pearson Chi-Square	.[a]
N of Valid Cases	78

a. No statistics are computed because night court is a constant.

			boss		Total
				friends	
generation	baby boomer	Count	34	3	37
		Expected Count	33.7	3.3	37.0
	generation x	Count	37	4	41
		Expected Count	37.3	3.7	41.0
Total		Count	71	7	78
		Expected Count	71.0	7.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.065[a]	1	.799		
Continuity Correction[b]	.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	.065	1	.799		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.558
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.32.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

			kate		Total
				family	
generation	baby boomer	Count	37	0	37
		Expected Count	36.5	.5	37.0
	generation x	Count	40	1	41
		Expected Count	40.5	.5	41.0
Total		Count	77	1	78
		Expected Count	77.0	1.0	78.0

			friends		Total
				friends	
Generation	baby boomer	Count	35	2	37
		Expected Count	35.6	1.4	37.0
	generation x	Count	40	1	41
		Expected Count	39.4	1.6	41.0
Total		Count	75	3	78
		Expected Count	75.0	3.0	78.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.914[a]	1	.339		
Continuity Correction[b]	.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	1.298	1	.255		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.526
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .47.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.463[a]	1	.496		
Continuity Correction[b]	.008	1	.928		
Likelihood Ratio	.468	1	.494		
Fisher's Exact Test				.601	.461
N of Valid Cases	78				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.42.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

TABLE 9

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.782	.792	9

		N	%
Cases	Valid	69	88.5
	Excluded[a]	9	11.5
	Total	78	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

TABLE 10

Situational Comedies 1980 - Present

Title	Year start	Year end	Years on air	Classification
Webster	1983	1987	4	family
227	1985	1990	5	family
George Lopez Show	2002	2007	5	family
Moesha	1996	2001	5	family
Mr. Belvidere	1985	1990	5	family
Sister, Sister	1994	1999	5	family
The Bernie Mac show	2001	2006	5	family
The Hogan Family	1986	1991	5	family

The Nanny	1993	1998	5	family
The Wonder Years	1988	1993	5	family
3rd Rock from the sun	1996	2001	5	friends
Amen	1986	1991	5	friends
Grace Under Fire	1993	1998	5	friends
Head of the Class	1986	1991	5	friends
Kate and Alley	1984	1989	5	friends
Living Single	1993	1998	5	friends
Darma And Greg	1997	2002	5	friends
Charles in Charge	1984	1990	6	family
Fresh Prince of Bel Aire	1990	1996	6	family
Malcolm in the Middle	2000	2006	6	family
Reba	2001	2007	6	family
Too Close For Comfort	1980	1986	6	family
Yes Dear	2000	2006	6	family
Just Shoot Me	1997	2003	6	friends
A Different World	1987	1993	6	friends
Benson	1979	1986	7	family
Family Ties	1982	1989	7	family
Growing Pains	1985	1992	7	family
Mad About You	1992	1999	7	family
Empty Nest	1988	1995	7	family
Perfect Strangers	1986	1993	7	family
Boy Meets World	1993	2000	7	friends
Designing women	1986	1993	7	friends
Golden Girls	1985	1992	7	friends
Wings	1990	1997	7	friends
Full House	1987	1995	8	family

Home Improvement	1991	1999	8	family
Step by Step	1991	1999	8	family
The Cosby Show	1984	1992	8	family
Who's the Boss	1984	1992	8	family
Coach	1989	1997	8	friends
Newhart	1982	1990	8	friends
Night Court	1984	1992	8	friends
That 70s show	1998	2006	8	friends
Will and Grace	1998	2006	8	friends
Everybody Loves Raymond	1996	2005	9	family
Family Matters	1989	1998	9	family
King of Queens	1998	2007	9	family
Roseanne	1988	1997	9	family
Facts of Life	1979	1988	9	friends
Scrubs	2001	2010	9	friends
Seinfeld	1989	1998	9	friends
Drew Carrey Show	1995	2004	9	friends
Married with Children	1987	1997	10	family
Friends	1994	2004	10	friends
Murphy Brown	1988	1998	10	friends
Frasier	1993	2004	11	family
Cheers	1982	1993	11	friends
Big Bang Theory	2006	Present	N/A	friends
Modern Family	2007	Present	N/A	family
Cougar Town	2009	present	N/A	family
Two and a Half Men	2003	Present	N/A	family
30 Rock	2006	present	N/A	friends
How I met Your Mother	2005	present	N/A	friends

Community	2009	present	N/A	friends
Outsourced	2009	present	N/A	friends
Parks and Recreation	2009	present	N/A	friends
The Office	2005	present	N/A	friends
The Middle	2009	present	N/A	family

SURVEY 1

Q1. What year were you born?

Answer Options	Response Count
	115
answered question	115
Skipped question	0

Q2. Gender

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Male	39.5%	45
Female	60.5%	69
	answered question	114
	skipped question	1

Q3. Relationship status

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Married	60.5%	69
Single	26.3%	30
Divorced/Separated	9.6%	11

Engaged to be married	3.5%	4
Widowed	0.0%	0
	answered question	114
	skipped question	1

Q4. Do you have children?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	56.1%	64
No	43.9%	50
	answered question	114
	skipped question	1

Q5. A family is defined as a unit of people related either by marriage ties or blood ties.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Disagree Strongly	10.6%	12
Somewhat Disagree	17.7%	20
Neutral	6.2%	7
Somewhat Agree	42.5%	48
Strongly Agree	23.0%	26
	answered question	113
	skipped question	2

Q6. A family is defined as mother, father and children who make up the family.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Disagree Strongly	22.8%	26

Somewhat Disagree	28.9%	33
Neutral	8.8%	10
Somewhat Agree	28.1%	32
Strongly Agree	11.4%	13
	answered question	114
	skipped question	1

Q7. My friends understand me better than my family does

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Disagree Strongly	9.6%	11
Somewhat Disagree	25.4%	29
Neutral	19.3%	22
Somewhat Agree	32.5%	37
Strongly Agree	13.2%	15
	answered question	114
	skipped question	1

Q8. Family to me means immediate family and some close relatives.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Disagree Strongly	13.2%	15
Somewhat Disagree	28.9%	33
Neutral	8.8%	10
Somewhat Agree	35.1%	40
Strongly Agree	14.0%	16
	answered question	114

Q9. Your family does not necessarily have to be blood related.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Disagree Strongly	1.8%	2
Somewhat Disagree	6.2%	7
Neutral	3.5%	4
Somewhat Agree	34.5%	39
Strongly Agree	54.0%	61
	answered question	113
	skipped question	2

Q10. I consider my extended family to be too far away to be close to them.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Disagree Strongly	27.2%	31
Somewhat Disagree	30.7%	35
Neutral	12.3%	14
Somewhat Agree	25.4%	29
Strongly Agree	4.4%	5
	answered question	114
	skipped question	1

Q11. Family is defined as a group of people who care about and love each other.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Disagree Strongly	2.7%	3
Somewhat Disagree	7.1%	8

Neutral	4.4%	5
Somewhat Agree	34.5%	39
Strongly Agree	51.3%	58
	answered question	113
	skipped question	2

Q12. A person with a wife/husband has a more fulfilled life than one without.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Disagree Strongly	29.2%	33
Somewhat Disagree	24.8%	28
Neutral	13.3%	15
Somewhat Agree	24.8%	28
Strongly Agree	8.0%	9
	answered question	113
	skipped question	2

Q13. The people I work with are a part of my family.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Disagree Strongly	26.1%	29
Somewhat Disagree	27.9%	31
Neutral	16.2%	18
Somewhat Agree	27.0%	30
Strongly Agree	2.7%	3
	answered question	111
	skipped	4

Q14. There is no specific criteria for the number of people that you can consider to be your family

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Disagree Strongly	3.5%	4
Somewhat Disagree	8.0%	9
Neutral	4.4%	5
Somewhat Agree	31.0%	35
Strongly Agree	53.1%	60
	answered question	113
	skipped question	2

Q15. I have more in common with the people I work with than my immediate family.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Disagree Strongly	26.4%	29
Somewhat Disagree	39.1%	43
Neutral	18.2%	20
Somewhat Agree	14.5%	16
Strongly Agree	1.8%	2
	answered question	110
	skipped question	5

Q16. Your family are the people that love you the most.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Disagree Strongly	3.5%		4
Somewhat Disagree	11.5%		13
Neutral	8.8%		10
Somewhat Agree	42.5%		48
Strongly Agree	33.6%		38
	answered question		113
	skipped question		2

Q17. I consider my friends to be my family.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Disagree Strongly	10.7%		12
Somewhat Disagree	11.6%		13
Neutral	8.9%		10
Somewhat Agree	35.7%		40
Strongly Agree	33.0%		37
	answered question		112
	skipped question		3

Q18. I am very close to my immediate family.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Disagree Strongly	2.7%		3
Somewhat Disagree	3.5%		4
Neutral	9.7%		11

Somewhat Agree	29.2%	33
Strongly Agree	54.9%	62
	answered question	113
	skipped question	2

Q19. Marriage and/or children is/are the most important thing(s) to me.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Disagree Strongly	12.4%	14
Somewhat Disagree	9.7%	11
Neutral	17.7%	20
Somewhat Agree	24.8%	28
Strongly Agree	35.4%	40
	answered question	113
	skipped question	2

Q20. I prefer being at work than being at home.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Disagree Strongly	40.5%	45
Somewhat Disagree	37.8%	42
Neutral	18.9%	21
Somewhat Agree	2.7%	3
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
	answered question	111
	skipped question	4

Q21. I live 4 hours or more from the majority of my blood relatives.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Yes	51.8%		58
No	48.2%		54
	answered question		112
	skipped question		3

Q22. Please define in one sentence what the word amily" means to you."

Answer Options	Response Count
	105
answered question	105
skipped question	10

Q23. How much television do you watch on an average week day?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
More than 4 hours	15.7%		17
2 to 4 hours	19.4%		21
1 to 2 hours	34.3%		37
Less than 1 hour	22.2%		24
I don't watch television	8.3%		9
	answered question		108
	skipped question		7

Q24. How much television do you watch on an average weekend?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
More than 4 hours	24.1%		26

2 to 4 hours	40.7%	44
1 to 2 hours	20.4%	22
Less than 1 hour	8.3%	9
I don't watch television	6.5%	7
	answered question	108
	skipped question	7

Q25. I have favorite television sitcoms that I watch regularly.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly disagree	19.6%	21
Disagree	15.9%	17
Neither agree nor disagree	6.5%	7
Agree	40.2%	43
Strongly agree	17.8%	19
	answered question	107
	skipped question	8

Q26. I get upset if I miss my favorite shows.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly disagree	30.2%	32
Disagree	29.2%	31
Neither agree nor disagree	17.9%	19
Agree	20.8%	22
Strongly agree	1.9%	2
	answered question	106

Q27. I have fond memories of watching TV sitcoms from my youth.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly disagree	4.6%	5
Disagree	2.8%	3
Neither agree nor disagree	9.3%	10
Agree	51.9%	56
Strongly agree	31.5%	34
	answered question	108
	skipped question	7

Q28. I watch TV sitcoms because the characters are people I know.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly disagree	16.8%	18
Disagree	31.8%	34
Neither agree nor disagree	35.5%	38
Agree	15.0%	16
Strongly agree	0.9%	1
	answered question	107
	skipped question	8

Q29. I like to watch sitcoms to see people in similar situations to those I experience.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly disagree	12.4%	13
Disagree	29.5%	31

Neither agree nor disagree	41.9%	44
Agree	20.0%	21
Strongly agree	0.0%	0
	answered question	105
	skipped question	10

Q30. I watch sitcoms to see people who I identify with.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly disagree	14.2%	15
Disagree	26.4%	28
Neither agree nor disagree	44.3%	47
Agree	15.1%	16
Strongly agree	0.0%	0
	answered question	106
	skipped question	9

Q31. I like to watch sitcoms because it gives me something interesting to talk about.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly disagree	27.6%	29
Disagree	33.3%	35
Neither agree nor disagree	28.6%	30
Agree	11.4%	12
Strongly agree	0.0%	0
	answered question	105
	skipped question	10

Q32. I like to watch sitcoms because they are similar to my own viewpoints

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Strongly disagree	22.6%		24
Disagree	26.4%		28
Neither agree nor disagree	36.8%		39
Agree	14.2%		15
Strongly agree	0.0%		0
	answered question		106
	skipped question		9

Q33. I like to watch sitcoms so I can pass the stories on to other people I know.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Strongly disagree	26.9%		28
Disagree	39.4%		41
Neither agree nor disagree	21.2%		22
Agree	12.5%		13
Strongly agree	0.0%		0
	answered question		104
	skipped question		11

Q34. I find that the fathers in sitcoms are similar to my own.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Strongly disagree	39.0%		41
Disagree	41.0%		43
Neither agree nor	19.0%		20

disagree

Agree	1.0%	1
Strongly agree	0.0%	0
	answered question	105
	skipped question	10

Q35. I find that the mothers in sitcoms are similar to my own.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly disagree	34.0%	36
Disagree	38.7%	41
Neither agree nor disagree	21.7%	23
Agree	5.7%	6
Strongly agree	0.0%	0
	answered question	106
	skipped question	9

Q36. I find the siblings in sitcoms similar to my own.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly disagree	29.0%	31
Disagree	35.5%	38
Neither agree nor disagree	28.0%	30
Agree	7.5%	8
Strongly agree	0.0%	0
	answered question	107
	skipped question	8

Q37. If I had to choose a TV family to live with, I would choose:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
The Huxtables (The Cosby Show)	34.3%		36
The Allens (Home Improvement)	16.2%		17
The Keatings (Family Ties)	20.0%		21
Fraiser's family (Fraiser)	10.5%		11
The Conners (Roseanne)	10.5%		11
At Will & Grace's apartment (Will & Grace)	12.4%		13
Charlie & Allan Harper (Two and a Half Men)	4.8%		5
The Forman's (That 70s Show)	12.4%		13
The Solomons (3rd Rock from the Sun)	4.8%		5
The ladies of Golden Girls	10.5%		11
I don't know any of these families	7.6%		8
	answered question		105
	skipped question		10

Q38. If I had to choose a television show to live in, I would choose:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
The Cosby Show	21.7%		23

Fresh Prince of Bel Air	7.5%	8
Malcolm in the Middle	4.7%	5
Growing Pains	5.7%	6
Everybody Loves Raymond	1.9%	2
The Office	10.4%	11
King of Queens	2.8%	3
Scrubs	9.4%	10
Modern Family	27.4%	29
Night Court	12.3%	13
Who's the Boss	2.8%	3
Kate and Allie	3.8%	4
Friends	25.5%	27
I don't know any of these shows	4.7%	5
	answered question	106
	skipped question	9

Q39. I made my choice to the above question based on:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
The characters seem like fun	73.8%	76
The family reminds me of my own	10.7%	11
The characters remind me of people I know	10.7%	11
The characters have a lot of	4.9%	5

money

I enjoy being with people I can relate to	20.4%	21
It is a life I wish I could have	8.7%	9
	answered question	103
	skipped question	12

Q40. I would rather watch:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Two and a Half Men	6.6%	7
30 Rock	33.0%	35
Modern Family	34.0%	36
Community	9.4%	10
Yes Dear reruns	2.8%	3
Will and Grace reruns	12.3%	13
That 70s Show reruns	8.5%	9
The Middle	5.7%	6
I don't know any of these shows	13.2%	14
	answered question	106
	skipped question	9

Q41. I would rather spend time with the characters on The Big Bang Theory than the characters in Family Ties.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count

Strongly disagree	9.7%	10
Disagree	14.6%	15
Neither agree nor disagree	50.5%	52
Agree	20.4%	21
Strongly agree	4.9%	5
	answered question	103
	skipped question	12

Q42. My close friends and I remind me of a television sitcom.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly disagree	21.5%	23
Disagree	31.8%	34
Neither agree nor disagree	28.0%	30
Agree	16.8%	18
Strongly agree	1.9%	2
	answered question	107
	skipped question	8

Q43. I relate more to TV sitcoms about:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A group of friends	33.7%	34
Families with children	21.8%	22
Divorced/remarried families	2.0%	2
People in a work environment	15.8%	16
Empty Nesters	0.0%	0

College life/High school life	3.0%	3
Middle class families	14.9%	15
Working class families	8.9%	9
	answered question	101
	skipped question	14