

INFLUENCE OF THE MEDIA ON THE POSSIBLE SELVES OF AFRICAN
AMERICAN ADOLESCENT GIRLS

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Presented to Presented to the
Faculty of the College of Education
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by

Akilah A. Reynolds

April 2016

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“The biggest adventure you can take is to live the life of your dreams” (Oprah Winfrey). In many ways my dissertation topic is an expression of that. I chose to study African American adolescent girls’ visions of their future because as a child, I had so many visions of mine. As an adult I still do. Media is one of the many agents that inform my visions and also one of the ways in which I enact them. The girls in this study have reminded me of the vigor of youthful dreams and have inspired me to continue their pursuit. As I move forward to becoming Dr. Akilah Aisha Reynolds I feel liberated by knowing more about who I am, what I want, and continuing this adventure of living out the dreams that light this fire inside. I. Choose. Life.

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Abstract

Possible selves represent individuals' thoughts about who they can become in their future and are particularly salient during adolescence (Oyserman, 2006). These future focused selves include *hoped for* possible selves-- the desirable selves that one wishes to become and *feared* possible selves-- the selves one dreads and wishes to avoid becoming (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Literature indicates that possible selves are influenced by expectations associated with social identities, such as race and gender (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006), and that media provides images of what is possible (Marcus & Nurius, 1986). However, there is a dearth of literature that explicitly explores media and possible selves among African American adolescent girls. Given these girls are a unique population who consume significant amounts of media (The Nielsen Company, 2013) and may be influenced by Black media images (Martin, 2008), the current study explored the influence of the media on the possible selves of this population.

Participants included 176 African American adolescent girls ($M_{age} = 15.64$ years; $SD = 1.52$). Girls completed questionnaires assessing: demographics, possible selves (Oyserman & Markus, 1990; Zhu, Tse, Cheung, & Oyserman, 2014), Black-oriented television exposure (Calzo & Ward, 2009), viewing motivations (Ward & Friedman, 2006), and social networking use. In addition to exploring African American girls' media use habits, *hoped for* and *feared* possible selves, a series of twelve bivariate logistic regressions were conducted to explore Black-oriented television consumption and viewing motivations as predictors of possible selves. Almost seventy-three percent of girls in this sample watched 30 minutes to 10 hours of television, primarily

Black-oriented television (86%). Almost all (98.3%) reported daily social networking use, including Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. The most frequent *hoped for* and *feared* possible selves that were endorsed by the sample were within the educational, occupational, and lifestyle domains. Statistical analyses revealed that viewing to learn predicted participants' endorsement of *hoped for* possible selves in the occupational domain. The implications of these findings include a discussion of this sample as relatively well-adjusted, critical media users, who have positive possible selves for which they are striving to achieve.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

During adolescence, individuals begin focusing on who they are and what they might become (Oyserman, 2006). Research suggests that thoughts about one's future are linked to positive life outcomes such as academic success, wellbeing, self-esteem, and life satisfaction (Oyserman & James, 2011). *Possible selves* is one construct that may be used to conceptualize these future focused cognitions. Possible selves represent an individual's thoughts about what is possible for her future (Markus & Nurius, 1986). For example, an individual may desire to become a doctor, a mother, and/or a world traveler. These potentials become particularly important during adolescence – a period characterized by identity development (Erikson, 1987). The pattern of developing future selves may look different for African American ¹girls whose sociocultural identity contributes to what she believes is possible for her future because it is likely shaped by external dimensions such as racial and gender oppression.

Identity formation includes the integration of multiple social group memberships (Adams, Blumenfeld, Castaneda, Hackman, Peters, & Zuniga, 2010), including race and gender. The intersection of a person's social identities impacts her self-concept, experience in the world (Crenshaw, 1989), and potentially her possibilities for her future. For African American women and girls, gendered-racial identity is a construct that highlights the salience of both their identities as Black and as women (Thomas, Hacker, & Hoxha, 2011). This represents a double-oppressed status in which identity develops

¹ This study uses ethnicity to identify its participants as African American. However the literature varies in the use of race or ethnicity to describe this population. Therefore, in this study Black and African American are used interchangeably. Black is used specifically when referring to a particular study that uses this term.

within the context of both racism and sexism (Shorter-Gooden & Washington, 1996). Gender and race also intersect with other identities such as social class. Combined, African American adolescent girls' experiences and worldview based on the interaction of multiple identities impact their sense of self and future possibilities.

Ideas about one's future are gathered and reinforced by the social context, which include messages and models provided by the media. Research suggests that media is one of the least recognized yet most powerful influences on adolescent development (Strasburger, 2004). African Americans have the highest rates of television consumption compared to all other racial groups (Ward, 2010), gravitate toward Black media (O'Connor, Brooks-Gunn, & Graber, 2000), and frequently use social media (The Nielsen Company, 2012). Given these media use habits, the media's influence on the development of African American adolescent girls' possible selves can provide an in depth understanding of future selves among this population.

Possible Selves

Possible selves are cognitive representations an individual has about who they might become in the future (Markus & Nurius, 1986). They are current yet distinct parts of identity that develop from past selves and are based on current self-conceptions. These future selves are malleable and evolving identities that aid in organizing one's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Possible selves are of particular significance during adolescence because youth are able to explore various life roles, which optimally lead to a solid sense of self and provides direction for one's life (Oyserman, 2006). Given salient social identities of African American adolescent girls (e.g., race and gender) contribute to one's conceptions of her future (Lee & Oyserman, 2012), the sociocultural context in which her

development takes place influences and reinforces her ideas about her future. One of these major environmental influences for her possible selves includes messages and models provided by the media (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Oyserman, 2006).

The overwhelmingly negative and one-dimensional media representations and cultural symbols of African American women are widespread in popular television programs (Tyree, 2011). In fact, African American young women indicate an awareness of these negative images that influence their sense of self (Thomas, Hacker, & Hoxha, 2011) and who they can become. The possibilities one imagines for her future are often constrained by her social context and derived from salient representations in her social environment, inclusive of media depictions (Markus & Nurius, 1987). The media's supply of images and models with which African American girls are frequently exposed and identify with may contribute to shaping their future self-conceptions.

Media images of African American women are powerful given the media's role as a socialization agent that transmits information (Adams, Blumenfel, Castaneda, Hackman, Peters, & Zuniga, 2010) and messages about how one should be in the world (Arnett, 1995; Ward, 2004). Media may also shape the development of young women's self-concepts, thereby providing standards of behavior (Botta, 2000). As viewers may believe these depictions to be accurate representations (Martin, 2008; Strasburger, 2004) of their own social group, these images may supply them with possible selves (Martin, 2008). The types of media images available to and sought out by African American girls may dictate the type of possibilities she imagines for her future, which can further expound or limit her future self concept.

Media Theory

Adolescent development is contextualized within a modern world where media and technology are central to everyday life, which may impact the formation of youth's identity (Lloyd, 2002). Social cognitive theory asserts that the relation between media and user is bidirectional such that they influence each other. This is evident through one of the core tenets of social cognitive theory, learning through the vicarious experience of watching others. Media is informative and acts as a source of motivation and guide for individual's behaviors. However, users tend to only watch and pay attention to media models (e.g., television characters) that are similar to themselves, attractive, powerful, and receive rewards for their behavior (Bandura, 2000). As such, media users have a tendency to attend to, learn from, and imitate powerful images portrayed in the media of individuals who they can relate to and engage in behaviors that they find favorable.

Erikson postulates that the era in which one develops provide models and roles that if congruent with their needs, can be adopted by youth (Erikson, 1968). During the development of identity, media characters may serve as role models for adolescents providing information about what is possible for them to become (Oyserman, 2006). In particular, youth may develop mental representations of themselves, using these media depictions as examples by which they can chart plausible courses of action and consequences. This information can be used to make a choice about whether or not to pursue these possible selves.

Uses and gratification theory recognizes a user's agency in their media consumption and its possible influence on their development. From this perspective media users are active in their selection of media that meets their own psychosocial needs

(Ruggerio, 2000). With new technology, users can participate in the production of their own media messages and content. Taken together, social cognitive and uses and gratification theories recognize an individual's power as an active agent in her own media consumption. Given the supply of media representations, one chooses which models and messages to pay attention to based on the gratification of their own inner psychological needs. Media users may seek out television shows with media models and representations that align with their own self-image or aspired self. Notably, the Internet and social networking sites have revolutionized the ways in which youth are able to express themselves and future possibilities. Social networking sites may serve as a reinforcement whereby users may further interact with these media models online creating a playground for the enactment or trying on of possible selves (Moreno, 2012).

Gaps in the Literature

A review of recent literature on media use and possible selves among African American women and girls reveals several limitations. Though there have been a few studies with African American samples, there is particularly limited information on the possible selves of African American adolescent girls. This is important because of the unique effects of the sociocultural context on the experience of African American girls and the development of their sense of self and future possibilities. Who an African American girl believes she can become in the future is often influenced by the models she has in her environment. Furthermore, there is a gap in the literature regarding what influences the development of identity and possible selves.

While research has emphasized patterns of identity development in terms of movement and stability over time (Kroger, Martinussen, & Marcia, 2010) less attention

has focused on environmental forces (e.g., media) that may inform identity (Kroger & Green, 1996). The same is true for possible selves. Empirical studies regarding how environmental factors impact a person's conception of what is possible for her future are lacking (Oyserman & James, 2011). These limitations of the literature warrant investigation. Cooley (1902) asserts that identity formation and possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986) are both influenced by contact with significant others. Media is one type of environmental contact that African American adolescent girls have increased interactions. It is richly inclusive of images and messages that may influence these girls' self-concept and possible selves and serves as a valuable extension of current research.

Media exposure literature has been dominated by a focus on amount of consumption as measured by hours of television viewing (Ward, 2003). This however, ignores the complexity of media use, which includes the activeness and selectivity of media users. Using social cognitive theory, the bidirectional influence of the media and the user, specifically through imitation of media models is emphasized (Bandura, 2000). Furthermore, uses and gratification theory's acknowledgment of a user's agency in selectively choosing and using media to meet her own needs (Ruggeio, 2000) is critical. This is especially important given that technological advances allow for a wide variety of media to choose from and user production of media content, particularly through the use of social networking sites. Taken together, both theories emphasize the importance of measuring the user's involvement with media as a determinant of the media's potential influence on adolescent development. The growing popularity of the Internet highlights the need to look at how traditional media (television) and Internet work in tandem to mutually influence the possible selves of African American adolescent girls. Given the

media use habits outlined in this chapter amidst the dearth of literature about African American adolescent girls, additional research is needed to better understand the media's influence on their possible selves.

The Current Study

The purpose of this study was to provide information on the association between media and possible selves of African American adolescent girls. This study sought to determine the media use habits - specifically television and social networking site use, and the content of African American adolescent girls' possible selves. Furthermore, the study explicitly examined the relation among their media use habits, media involvement and possible selves. Previous samples have articulated a wide variety of possible selves, which limited this study's ability to hypothesize which possible selves this sample would endorse. For this reason, as an exploratory study there were no hypothesized relations among variables. This study did, however, attempt to identify a connection between media content and use, viewing purposes, and the content of possible selves among African American adolescent girls.

To follow, chapter two will provide an expansive review of the literature on the role of the media on the development and "trying on" of possible selves of this population. Specifically, it will expand upon possible selves, its relation to important life factors, and its significance in the lives of African American adolescent girls. Secondly, this chapter will uncover the television and social networking use habits of African American adolescent girls, prevalent media representations of African American women, and the use of social networking as a venue to try on future possibilities. It will end by charting the proposed research study, its questions, and expected findings. Chapter three

included the methods and data analyses. Chapter four presents the results of the study. Chapter five provides a discussion of the results including its limitations, future directions of research, and implications.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Adolescent Identity Development

Adolescence represents the first time an individual has the cognitive capacity (Lloyd, 2002) along with social expectations to engage in the process of identity formation (Marcia, 1980). It serves as a bridge between childhood and adulthood (Erikson, 1963) whereby individuals are tasked with the responsibility of developing a cohesive sense of self. Individuals within this developmental period have abstract thinking skills, which equip them to hypothetically imagine themselves in new ways that synthesize past, present, and future life experiences (Waterman 1988).

One of the central tasks of the psychosocial status of adolescence is identity development (Erikson, 1987). Formally known as identity versus role confusion, this developmental stage is characterized by increased curiosity whereby adolescents begin to ask questions and engage in activities to answer the question, “who am I?” Erikson (1956, 1963) postulates that for healthy resolution of the adolescent stage of development, an individual must settle between ego identity versus role confusion. Ego identity refers to a solid and cohesive sense of self whereas role confusion refers to one’s inability to develop a coherent sense of self, who she is, and where she belongs within her social context. During this process of identity construction, youth may continually seek out information about themselves from their environment (Lloyd, 2002). Incorporating information about themselves from multiple sources and time periods allows individuals to move toward the commitment necessary for identity resolution.

Marcia (1966) extended the adolescent phase of Erikson’s theory to explain the

process by which adolescents may move through the stage of identity development.

Marcia's theory is predicated on two criteria: crisis and commitment. Crisis concerns the decision making process (Orlofsky, Marcia, & Lesser, 1973) for choosing roles within relevant life domains such as occupational endeavors. Commitment refers to the level with which one has invested in or devoted themselves to a particular life role (Marcia, 1966). These two criteria form the basis of four identity statuses an adolescent may occupy, which include: identity achievement, moratorium, foreclosure, and identity diffusion (Orlofsky, Marcia, & Lesser, 1973).

The main objective of adolescence is identity achievement. This exists when an individual has explored their options and is strongly committed to life roles that are aligned with her own standards (Marcia 1966) and an internal frame of reference (Marcia, 1967). For progress in identity formation to occur, an adolescent must traverse through moratorium (Lloyd, 2002). Moratorium is the stage of acute crises where an individual is actively searching for and exploring their identity options without fully committing (Lloyd, 2002; Marcia, 1966; Orlofsky, Marcia, & Lesser, 1973). Alternatively, though identity foreclosed youth have made commitments to an identity, they have done so without exploration (Marcia, 1966). Instead of a self-chosen identity, these youth have accepted the roles that important others, such as parents, have provided them (Orlofsky, Marcia, & Lesser, 1973). To the contrary, identity diffused individuals have not committed to an identity. They may or may not have participated in exploration. Regardless, they have neither made decisions about a life role nor are they concerned with making a choice (Marcia, 1966). At any point during adolescence, one may find him or her self to occupy one of these statuses. Generally, identity exploration is an accepted

role whereby individuals may actively seek to move into identity achievement and resolution of Erikson's identity development stage. During adolescence a sizable amount of youth are in the moratorium stage but over time move into the achievement stage (Kroger, Martinussen, & Marcia, 2010).

The identity development stage does not solely concern itself with current self-conceptions. Future selves are also an important developmental task during adolescence (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). Future-focused identities are connected yet distinct parts of the self-concept, which develop from past selves and are based on current self-conceptions. Children as early as seven may begin to think about who they might become in the future, while adolescents show a more refined ability to provide reasons for the futures they choose (Oyserman & James, 2011). Overtime individuals narrow down their future possibilities based on their life experiences and feedback from others. They often must make compromises between competing aspects of their future selves, sometimes painfully letting go of wishes and desires. This understanding of the self as it develops over time, particularly future-oriented selves, is significant for individuals' wellbeing (James, 1890/1950). Notably, these future selves are also known as possible selves, which are malleable and evolving identities. Possible selves are important because they aid in organizing one's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006).

Possible Selves

Possible selves represent the ways individuals think about their future. They are cognitive based goals, aspirations, fears, and motivations about an individual's potential. Future selves are conceptions, beliefs, mental representations, and images of the selves one could become (Markus & Nurius, 1986). These possibilities may be short term such

as within a year or more distant such as the type of person a child might become as an adult (Lee & Oyserman, 2009).

There are three types of possible selves: hoped for, feared, and expected. These possibilities represent ideals that one would like to become, what one is afraid of becoming, and what one expects to become. Hoped for possible selves, the desired selves one would like to become might include the successful self, the wealthy self, or the creative self. Alternatively, feared possible selves represent the possibilities that are dreaded and to be avoided such as the anxious self, the unemployed self, or the lonely self (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Expected possible selves are the selves that are most likely to occur (Oyserman & Markus, 1990), who we “fully expect we will become” (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006, p. 4), such as the high school graduate self, the girlfriend self, or the happy self. Individuals construe these images of their future based on one’s conceptions of their environment, their own skills and abilities, and the skills that are required to become these possible selves (Cantor, Norem, Niedenthal, Langston, & Bower, 1987; Curry, Trew, Turner, & Hunter, 1994). Feared and expected possible selves are frequently compared in the literature (e.g., Oyserman, Gant & Ager, 1995; Oyserman, Terry, & Bybee, 2002). However, the use of hoped for possible selves instead of expected possible selves can extend the literature by tapping into aspirational and desirable potentials of adolescents, as measured in Zhu, Tse, Cheung, and Oyserman (2014).

Markus and Nurius (1986) describe future identities that exist across various life domains including education, occupation, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and lifestyle. This means that individuals may envision future selves within specific categories of their life. For example, youth may envision a future self as a college graduate, which would be

within the education domain, an accountant within the occupational domain, and happily married future self within the interpersonal domain. Additional possible selves might include a happy self within the intrapersonal domain and world traveler self within the lifestyle domain. As noted, possible selves vary across important domains of one's life, capturing the full essence of a person's vision of them self in the future. Possible selves are also present throughout the lifespan and their content may change based on age, level of development, and context (Oyserman & James, 2011). In fact, during the time when adolescents spend a majority of their time in school, their possible selves tend to focus on education (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006), extra-curricular activities (Oyserman & Markus, 1990), interpersonal relationships (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006), and the development of a sense of self (Lee & Oyserman, 2009).

The development of possible selves is related to positive outcomes. Youth who can articulate possible selves are more likely to achieve academic success, wellbeing, and life satisfaction (Oyserman & James, 2011). For example, the development of possible selves among ethnic minority youth is linked to academic achievements, including improved grades and reduced behavioral problems in school (Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2006). Other possible self related outcomes include benefits to health and wellness such as reduced engagement in risky sexual behavior and smoking, and positive self-esteem (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). In particular, imagining successful selves may improve wellbeing (King, 2001) and performance (Ruvolo & Markus, 1992).

Possible selves also lead to motivation and the development of strategies to attain these selves (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). Specifically, balanced possible selves among youth likely lead to better self-regulation, more strategies, and increased effort to attain

possible selves (Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2006). Balanced possible selves represent youth who have a positive expected (or hoped for) possible self and negative feared possible self in the same domain. For example, a youth who is balanced might have an expected possible self of graduating high school and a fear of failing high school. When a youth wants to achieve in school and fears failing he or she is more likely to develop strategies and engage in behaviors that will lead to the attainment of their desired outcome of achievement and away from the dreaded outcome, failure (Lee & Oyserman, 2009; Oyserman, 2006). These youth who have possible selves particularly with balance, may perceive difficulty as a sign of progress therefore continuing in their pursuit to attain their possible self instead of giving up (Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2006). While balance may increase motivation to achieve, youth who implement specific strategies to attain their goals and manage setbacks tend to be more effective in achieving their future selves (Lee & Oyserman, 2009; Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2004). It has been found that students who believe that they have a higher likelihood of attaining their hoped for possible selves were more likely to have strategies to attain these selves (Zhu, Tse, Cheung, & Oyserman, 2014). Example strategies would be youth who attend tutoring twice a week to attain a possible self of graduating high school. The strategy serves as an action plan to help ensure that one becomes this imagined self. Possible selves may thus serve as a protective factor allowing youth to envision themselves in the future potentially leading to making choices that lead to positive life outcomes.

Possible selves are a dynamic and malleable part of the self-concept, changing as a person develops and encounters various life experiences. They allow for self-growth, development, and improvements (Lee & Oyserman, 2009). Research has shown that

possible selves are even amenable to brief interventions to help youth explore possible selves and develop strategies to attain them (Oyserman, Terry, & Bybee, 2002; Oyserman, Bybee & Terry, 2006). Specifically, after participation in possible selves interventions African American youth reported higher academic performance, less depressive symptoms (Oyserman, Bybee & Terry, 2006), higher sense of connection to school and less behavioral problems (Oyserman, Terry, & Bybee, 2002) than non-intervention youth. This suggests that possible selves are sensitive to environmental influence and changes in the environment (Markus & Nurius, 1987). Possible selves are important self-images that contribute to healthy adolescent development. Though youth of various backgrounds have the ability to conceive future self-notions, social group differences exist for possible selves construction. During a developmental period when identity development is prime, African American adolescent girls in particular, navigate multiple salient identities, such as their gender and race that contribute to their interpretation of what is possible for their future.

Possible Selves of African American Adolescent Girls

Possible selves are contextually based, shaped, and developed within a social environment (Oyserman, 2002). The fundamental question of “who can I become?” is contextualized within the framework of “who are people like me?” (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). In order for possible selves to lead to behavior strategies and change, they must be congruent with a person’s important social identities. If not, possible selves may be in conflict with the rest of who one sees him or her self to be (Lee & Oyserman, 2009). When developing a sense of possibilities, African American girls must navigate what it means to be an African American girl and woman. They must contend with

whether or not their possible selves are aligned with what they perceive it means to be from this social group.

Unfortunately, African American girls must navigate numerous negative stereotypes of African American women (e.g., aggressive, sexually promiscuous, self sacrificing) that can limit one's concepts of the future (Stephens & Phillips, 2003). However, familial and cultural expectations may counter these negative images given a stronger connection to one's heritage and ethnic identity is related to higher achievement (Townsend, Thomas, Neilands, & Jackson, 2010). In fact, African American parents tend to have more educational, occupational, and communal expectations for their girls than boys (Oyserman, Gant, & Ager, 1995). Therefore achievements in these aforementioned domains may be more salient possible selves for African American girls. This may serve as a protective factor for African American girls against adopting negative stereotypes about themselves as true or as their most viable future options. If African American girls believe that being an African American woman means that one is smart she may adopt a possible self of a becoming a PhD earner. Alternatively, if she believes that her gendered racial identity indicates sexual promiscuity her possibilities may be related to such activities.

African American girls account for their unique identity when developing thoughts about their future. For example, one participant from a sample of African American adolescents indicated that her possible self was to "become a proud Black woman" (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006, p. 5). One's sociocultural identity is important to her understanding of what is possible for her future. However, the research has lagged in examining possible selves among African American adolescent girls. The dearth of

information specific to the possible selves of this population represents a gap in understanding the cross-cultural implications of this construct. The few studies that have examined possible selves among African Americans have focused on academic and school related possible selves (e.g., Anderman, Anderman, & Griesinger, 1999; Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006; Oyserman, Terry, & Bybee, 2002). This narrow focus ignores the complexity of an individual's thoughts about who they might become in the future. A notable characteristic of possible selves is that they span across various life domains such that an individual can develop a broad picture of their future. Yet, not one known study exclusively examines the broad range of possible selves of African American adolescent girls.

Research has addressed gender differences in the generation of possible selves. Specifically, girls tend to generate more interpersonal possible selves than boys (Knox, Funk, Elliot, & Bush, 2000), highlighting the importance of the social environment. In particular, significant possible selves of girls include imagining home life and balancing it with careers (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). Gender socialization may be responsible for these differences in which girls are raised to be more communal and value relationships, However, African American children tend to be raised with egalitarian gender roles (Oyserman, Gant, & Ager, 1995); a difference which may differentially impact the possible selves of African American girls as compared to their White counterparts. Notably, girls may be particularly open to social influence and assimilate the outcomes of like others into their own possible selves, making them more susceptible to the influence of the possible selves of others (e.g., media) on their on own future identities (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). Theory clearly suggests that possible selves develop within a social

context and are informed by socialization agents such as the media (Marcus & Nurius, 1986). However, no empirical studies have explored how the media informs the development of possible selves. Assessing this link is imperative, particularly among African American adolescent girls given the amount of time they spend with media over and above their non-African American counterparts. Without this information we are missing a piece of the puzzle explaining the various contributions to the development of possible selves for African American girls.

Media as a Socialization Agent

One of the primary socialization agents popular among adolescents is media. Media encompasses traditional formats including television, radio, movies and magazines. The twenty-first century shifted to digital media, which include Internet activities such as social networking sites. The Internet has transformed media increasing access and availability to consumers and even older media formats (e.g., television) are available digitally (Brown & Bobkowski, 2011). As such, both Internet activities (e.g., social networking sites) and television are popular mediums amongst African American adolescent girls, potentially contributing to their developing sense of self.

Media's impact may go under the radar "because its influence is subtle, cumulative, and occurs over a long period of time" (Stausburger, 2004, p. 54). Because of this, media is conceptualized as a "super peer" (Strasburger, 2004, p. 56), socializing audiences through its pervasive and vivid images that contribute to shaping their attitudes and beliefs (Adams, Blumenfel, Castaneda, Hackman, Peters, & Zuniga, 2010). Media, particularly television, serves as a source of information regarding appropriate social behaviors and providing behavioral scripts (Strausburger, 2004) for romantic

relationships and sexual behaviors (Ward, 2004). Television also shapes an individual's beliefs about socially acceptable behaviors and cultural norms (Strasburger, 2004).

Adolescents may be susceptible to believing television depictions are true and accurate representations of real life (Martin, 2008; Strausburger, 2004). These viewers may choose images with which they identify in order to discover new life roles to explore (Martin, 2008). By providing standards for individuals to measure their behavior, television may participate in the development of young women's self-concepts (Botta, 2000). This may be salient for African American adolescent girls given young African Americans report entertainment television as a primary source of information (Comstock & Scharrer, 1999), are more satisfied with their experiences watching television (Albarran & Umphrey, 1993), and have a more positive view of media than Whites (Graves, 1996).

Media messages, images, and representations of groups of people provide a context with which possible selves develop (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). The depictions of African American women in media become critical for understanding the possibilities represented for African American adolescent girls to which they aspire. This is particularly important given that findings suggest that instead of comparing themselves to White characters, African American women more often compare themselves to Black characters (Schooler, Ward, Merriwether, & Carithers, 2004). Media participates in shaping the social reality of its viewers whereby audiences may adopt the possibilities of what one might become based on media representations of like others. This is particularly true as media becomes more entertaining and relevant to the viewer. After which an individual may be more likely to use media as a source of

information to incorporate in their understanding of who they are (Lloyd, 2002).

Viewers are not only exposed to their favorite shows on television, but also online. The growing popularity of Internet and newer media forms such as social networking sites has increased the reach of media (Brown & Bobkowski, 2011). Together, television and social networking use highlight the extensive reach of media in the everyday lives adolescents. With such a broad, pervasive, and expanding reach among youth, media's influence on the development of possible selves for African American adolescent girls becomes an important line of inquiry to further the research on the development of possible selves among this group.

Transmission and Reinforcement of Media Images as Possible Selves

Social Cognitive Theory

Bandura's (2001) social cognitive theory (SCT) recognizes that humans are not reactive organisms controlled by environmental influence such as media. Instead we participate as both products and producers of media. Therefore, SCT rests on the assumption that the relation between media and user is bidirectional, meaning that media and the media user influence each other. Media users are active in their consumption by way of choosing which messages to process (Lloyd, 2002), the meaning they give to it, and if they will later use it for behavioral scripts. One of the core tenets of SCT is learning through the vicarious experience of watching others. Media users tend to pay attention to media models (e.g., television characters) that are similar, attractive, and powerful and receive rewards for their behavior (Bandura, 2001). African American television characters may serve as role models for African American adolescents providing information about what is possible for the future. African American girls can

develop mental representations of the future using these media images as examples by which they can chart plausible courses of action and consequences used to make a choice about whether or not to pursue these possible selves.

Media provides models and produce messages regarding what is possible, valuable, and whether the consequences of behavior are desirable. Not only do these models transmit behavioral rules, they also portray outcome expectations for engaging in behaviors (Bandura, 2001). Users may choose to reenact media models' behaviors that they find to be pleasurable and provide them with outcomes that align with their desires. Bandura (2001) asserts that even reprehensible behavior may be legitimized through media portrayals that alter social sanctions. Generally, people refrain from engaging in actions if they will suffer social embarrassment or disapproval. However, if media portrayals glamorize or minimize objectionable behaviors, individuals' moral compass or expectations for negative behavior may change. For example, if Modern Jezebel portrayals on television depict African American women gaining access to status, money, power, and romantic relationships through aggressive and sexually manipulative behavior, viewers may adopt this possible self as a plausible way to receive the same desirable benefits.

Uses and Gratifications Theory

Though media provides models for which users can adopt similar behavior (Bandura, 2001), users are selective with information processing. Media users pay attention to messages that coincide with pre-existing attitudes, beliefs, and experiences (De Fleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1975). Uses and gratifications theory recognizes this nuanced influence of media by shifting focus from typical mass media effects to a functionalist

perspective. Based on this assumption, users are recognized as proactive agents who are in control of their media use. The question moves from what does media do to users, to what do users do with media (Rubin, 1993). From this perspective users choose specific media content that is gratifying to their own psychosocial needs (Ruggerio, 2000).

Therefore, not every media message will impact viewers the same way. Instead, users attend to messages that are already aligned with their attitudes and values, and will satisfy their mental and emotional needs. This is why specific media content and not sole hours of viewing is important in understanding media effects (Bandura, 2001). Users will choose television programming based on particular expectations for watching which result in differences in viewing activities and outcomes (Rubin, 1994).

Viewer motivation is an extension of uses and gratification theory, which recognizes how the expected use of television leads to particular behavioral outcomes (Rubin, 1994). These motivations may vary from passive viewing that is ritualistic, to ease a sense of boredom, or fulfill companionship. Whereas other reasons for watching may be more instrumental or purposeful viewing for learning or entertainment (Ward & Rivadenyera, 1999). Viewers' specific use for television may result in different viewing patterns that contribute to the development and pursuit of possible selves aligned with salient media depictions and its gratification of a user's psychological needs. For example, individuals who seek media for learning purposes may presumably use media images as options for the development of their own self-conceptions and future possibilities.

The growing popularity of the Internet has expanded the reach and impact of media messages (Bandura, 2001). This interactive technology now allows for users to

select tailored communications that better suit their needs (Ruggiero, 2000). This is important given personalized communications are seen by users as more credible, relevant, memorable, and impactful than general mass media messages (Bandura, 2001). Not only do individuals choose messages to attend to online but they also become producers of media, through online activity such as postings on social networking sites. These online behaviors speak to the agency users have in the media they choose to interact with and its possible influence on their behavior and attitudes. For example, an African American adolescent girl may pay attention to a television character that may serve as a model for possible selves because the character aligns with her own pre-existing beliefs and values about Black womanhood. The young viewer may choose to continue to engage with this media model through social networking activity, behavior that resonates with fulfilling her own needs for the expression and reinforcement of her possible selves.

Moreover, the user makes choices about the type of information she provides, (e.g., posting a photo of her favorite television character) and receives social feedback from peers (e.g., liking the photo), gratifying her need for acceptance and expression, and gathering information about the viability of her possible selves (Moreno, 2012). From a social cognitive perspective, media, therefore, supplies models (Bandura, 2001) of possible selves that then uses and gratification theory would suggest viewers selectively choose to attend to the message and model behavior which gratifies their own psychosocial needs (Ruggiero, 2000). The user may then use social networking sites to try on these possible selves. This model suggests that both social networking sites and television contribute to the modeling and trying on of possible selves.

Television Consumption and Images of African American Women

African Americans have been found to report consistently higher television viewing rates compared to other racial or ethnic groups. In fact, African Americans watch 37% more television than any other racial/ethnic groups (TNC, 2013). In 2010, African American adolescents (ages 12 to 17) watched an average of 35 hours of television a week compared to the average of all youth who watched 24 hours (TNC, 2011). African Americans gravitate towards Black media (O'Connor, Brooks-Gunn, & Graber, 2000), which include shows with primarily Black casts members such as *Love and Hip Hop: Atlanta* (TNC, 2013), and multiethnic casts (Elliot, 2003) such as *Scandal* (TNC, 2013). In general, African Americans report that Black media is more relevant to them (TNC, 2012). African Americans pay more attention to Black characters (Appiah, 2002) and identify with African American artists, who are more memorable and favorable to them than White entertainers (Ward, 2010). Among a sample of African American high school students, Black media made up 29% of youth's prime time television consumption and students identified more strongly with Black characters (Ward, 2004). African American youth spend more time watching television than youth of other racial/ethnic backgrounds and may be particularly drawn to ethnic media because it is specifically relevant to their identity and experience as an African American.

Despite these high viewing rates, television portrayals of African American women are often underrepresented and misrepresented via stereotyping in television. The frequency of images of African Americans has increased over the decades from being almost nonexistent in the 1950's to a high of about 16% of prime-time television show

characters being African American at the turn of the 21st century (Ward, 2004). However, African Americans often remain segmented in comedies and tend to be casted in non-leading roles. Concern has been raised regarding a history of negative and one-dimensional depictions of African Americans on television (Martin, 2008; Ward, 2010). There was an increase in positive images (Ward, 2004) with television sitcoms such as *The Cosby Show* in the 1980's and 1990's (Martin, 2008). However, in more recent years, the popularity of reality television has perpetuated negative and stereotypical representations of African Americans (Tyree, 2011).

Stereotypes are negative and misleading beliefs that are overgeneralized to a group of people (Davis & Harris, 1998), and develop through continuous portrayals overtime (Devine, 1989). Persistent television images of African American women include historical stereotypes that date back to slavery such as the self-sacrificing Mammy who places the needs of others ahead of her own and even her family's (Abdullah, 1998). The Jezebel also dates back to slavery and stereotypes African American women as sexually promiscuous and manipulative (Mitchell & Herring, 1998; West, 1995), whereas Sapphire is dominating, aggressive, and even combative (Mitchell & Herring, 1998; West, 1995). More contemporary stereotypes include the Strong Black Woman who has blunted emotions, places the needs of others before her own, and is unable to show vulnerability (Mitchell & Herring, 1998). The Modern Jezebel is a blend between the promiscuity of Jezebel and aggressive demeanor of Sapphire, with the use of these characteristics for monetary gain (Townsend, Thomas, Neilands, & Jackson, 2010). Given the popularity of Hip-Hop culture among African American youth, Hip-Hop sexual scripts, particularly the diva (Stephens & Phillips, 2003) and video girls (Ross &

Coleman, 2010) are media images that promote the use of sexuality, image, and/or relationships with powerful men to gain status, money, and success. These stereotypes are one-dimensional representations of African American women, many of which promote negative messages and ideas about this group.

These limited media representations and cultural images are prevalent in popular television programs (Tyree, 2011) and may contribute to shaping African American women's self perception (Stephens & Phillips, 2003; Coleman, 2013), towards an identity that is aligned with dominant media messages. For example, in response to a question, "What does it mean to be an African American woman" of a sample of Black young women, 60% of the responses included historical stereotypes such as Jezebel, Sapphire, and Mammy. These women reported that they believed that the media participated in the promotion of these negative images (Thomas et al., 2011). Such images provide limited examples of what is possible for African American women to become. For African American adolescent girls who identify and are frequently exposed to these media depictions, their ideas about their future possibilities may be informed by these representations. Despite, the young women in Thomas et al. (2011) sample also reported a desire to dispel these negative stereotypes. Additionally, another sample of Black girls ages 14 to 17 used their personal webpages to try on identities. While some reproduced stereotypical representations of Black female sexuality, others used the space to resist these images (Stokes, 2007). Therefore, there may be a subset of girls who use media to gain information and seek positive role models and/or who wish to dispel stereotypes about African American women in the media. The desire to dispel such stereotypes might impact their possible selves towards empowering and less stereotypical futures.

Social Networking Sites

The landscape of media has changed in the 21st century given heavy Internet use among adolescents who use up to 10 hours of media a day (Brown & Bobkowski, 2011). In fact, most adolescents (93%) ages 12 to 17 reported going online (Pew, 2014). One of the most popular Internet activities is creating and maintaining personal profiles on social networking sites (SNS) such as Facebook, which alone has over 800 million users worldwide. These SNS profiles allow users to share personal information about their demographics, interests and hobbies, share pictures and videos, join groups with members who have shared interests, and communicate with other users via posting comments (status updates) about their thoughts and messaging others (Moreno, 2012). SNS are popular among adolescents (Moreno, 2012; Pew, 2010), especially girls (Lenhart, Araheh, Smith, & MacGirl, 2008). African Americans are 44% more likely to create social networking profiles than other groups (TNC, 2013), particularly outnumbering others as Twitter users (Madden et al., 2013). Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are all relevant social networking platforms for African Americans (TNC, 2013).

Social networking has joined television as two of the most used media outlets among adolescents. In fact, television shows with social networking components are the most popular for audiences who can now connect with their favorite fares and characters online, as well as communicate with other users about episodes while watching the show (Brown & Bobkowski, 2011). During 2013, there were 990 million tweets sent by 36 million people about television. Viewers tend to generate tweets during live shows, which can impact audience interest and television ratings (TNC, 2014). It is apparent that social

networking and television viewing often work in tandem creating a connection between the two mediums whereby viewer involvement is enhanced through use of both platforms.

Television characters supply images of possible selves that may be reinforced through social networking activity. Manago et al. (2008) found that social networking sites provide a platform for self-presentation and self-expression. Users were able to try on possible selves online without having to commit to them, through sharing photos, posting statuses, and other online behaviors that communicate their future possibilities. Importantly, users gain feedback from online friends about whether these selves will be accepted by others, information that can be used to determine whether these possibilities are viable options offline. Notably, African Americans are more likely than all other media users to own their own personal websites and are extensive users of social networking sites (TNC, 2013). Perhaps outlets for personal expression may be of particular interest for this group, rendering identity exploration, including possible selves, on SNS as a plausible use of this platform.

Despite the literature that suggests individuals use SNS to share their possible selves online, there have been limited known studies to collectively substantiate this assertion. An additional limitation of studies such as Manago and colleagues (2008) is its reliance on qualitative methods. While qualitative studies provide valuable information, additional studies are needed, particularly using quantitative methods to statistically address the media's potential influence on possible selves. Even the fast changing popularity and emergence of new social networking sites may render Manago et al. (2008) and its selected platform, MySpace, outdated. This calls for a new study

examining SNS such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, which are currently popular among adolescents (TNC, 2014). Furthermore, given that people tend to use social networking in connection with their television viewing (TNC, 2014), research should consider both mediums potential contribution to the development and enactment of possible selves. Specifically, examining these questions among a sample of African American adolescent girls will address the lack of research conducted with this population, despite their high levels and varying patterns of media use compared to other racial/ethnic groups. In sum, a study was needed to address the gaps in research using quantitative methods to examine the relation among popular television programming and social networking use to the possible selves of African American adolescent girls.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The media has been posited as a socialization agent influencing viewers' beliefs about themselves and what is possible for their future (Martin, 2008). This study sought to explore this connection between media and identity exploration by first, examining the sample's media use habits by specifically looking at consumption of Black-oriented television, viewing motives, and social networking preferences. Secondly, it identified the possible selves of African American adolescent girls to determine their content and significant life domains. This aforementioned information shed light on the connection between the content of African American adolescent possible selves and their television and social networking usage. More specifically it examined the predictive nature of these media use habits on participants' endorsement of possible selves.

Research Questions

1. What are the media use habits of African American adolescent girls?
2. What are the possible selves (hoped for and feared) that African American adolescent girls describe?
3. Do Black-oriented television consumption and viewing motivations predict the possible selves that African American adolescent girls describe?

Chapter III

Methods

Participants

Green's (1991) method, 104 participants plus 20 participants per variable, was used to determine that a minimal sample size of 164 was needed in order to have adequate statistical power. There were a total of 378 participants who initiated the study. Ten participants were excluded because they did not meet the inclusion criteria by answering "no" to one of the pre-screening questions: 1) Are you between the age of 13-18 years old? 2) Do you self-identify as African American? 3) Do you self-identify as female? One hundred eighty-two additional girls were excluded for not answering at least 70% of the survey items. Ten additional girls were identified as outliers and excluded from the study.

The final sample included 176 African American adolescent girls between the ages of 13 and 18 years old ($M_{\text{age}} = 15.64$ years; $SD = 1.52$). The median age of girls in the sample was 16. A majority of girls were in high school: 9th grade (21%), 10th grade (22.2%), 11th grade (22.7%), and 12th grade (14.8%). The remaining girls were in middle school grades 7th (2.3%) and 8th (8.5%), and 8.5% reported other grade (e.g., freshman in college). Most participants reported earning a GPA of 2.0 to 2.9 (27.8%) or a 3.0 to 3.9 (55.1%). A smaller percent reported a GPA of 1.9 and below (4.5%) or 4.0 and above (8.5%).

Participants consisted of African American adolescent girls spread geographically throughout the following regions of the United States: South (65.3%), Midwest (25.6%), East (4.0%), West (4.0%), and North (0.6%). A majority of participants lived in Texas

(42.6%), Indiana (23.9%) and Kentucky (10.2%). The remaining participants were from a small number of other states spread across the U.S. (Table 1). Most girls reported being from urban (50.6%) and suburban (34.6%) communities while the remaining 11.4% reported being from rural areas. A majority of the adolescents indicated that they lived in two parent households with both their mother and father (38.6%) or one parent and a stepparent (16.5%). Additionally, a large amount of participants lived with their mothers only (38.1%). A much smaller percent reported living with their fathers only (1.1%) or with another guardian such as a grandparent (5.1%). Most mothers (68.2%) and fathers (55.1%) in the sample had at least some college experience or above (Table 1). A small percentage (6.8%) of girls did not report their father's educational attainment and only 2.3% of girls did not report their mother's educational attainment.

The sample included high endorsement of religious affiliation including 88.1% as Christian (i.e., Baptist = 49.4%; Catholic = 6.3%, Other Christian = 32.4%), while only 2.3% reported being Muslim. The remaining 1.7% of participants reported being atheist and 5.0% other (e.g., multiple religious group affiliations). There were .6% of girls who reported "none" as their religious affiliation, while 2.3% of the sample did not provide a response. Most participants identified as heterosexual (88.1%) while the remaining participants reported being bisexual (9.1%), and lesbian (2.8%). With regard to relationship status, 23.9% of the sample reported being in a committed relationship, 70.5% were single, and 6.8% reported other (e.g., "it's complicated").

Measures

Pre-screening questionnaire (Appendix A). The pre-screening questionnaire was used to gather information about whether participants met the inclusion criteria of the

study. The questionnaire consists of the following items: Are you between the age of 13-18 years old? Do you self-identify as African American? Do you self-identify as female? Individuals who answered *yes* to all three questions met the inclusion criteria and were allowed to complete the study. Ten respondents were disqualified because they did not meet the aforementioned criteria.

Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix B). The demographic questionnaire assessed for the following items: participant age, current grade level, grade point average (GPA), religious affiliation, family composition (i.e., which parent/guardians they live with), neighborhood setting (i.e., urban, rural, suburban), parents/guardians' educational attainment, relationship status, sexual orientation, and whether they watch Black-oriented television shows. Information attained was used for descriptive information about the sample.

Possible Selves Questionnaire (PSQ; Appendix H). The possible selves questionnaire and coding instructions were adapted from published studies by Oyserman and Markus (1990) and Zhu, Tse, Cheung, and Oyserman (2014). This open-ended questionnaire was used to gather information regarding the content of each participant's possible selves. Specifically, participants were asked to complete the following sentence, "When I am in my 20's, I hope to be..." and were allowed to list up to four *hoped for* future selves. *Hoped for* possible selves the girls reported included "going to college," "athletic director," and "a wife" for example. For each possible self listed, respondents were then asked to rate how likely it was for them to achieve the possible self on a scale from *very unlikely* (1) to *very likely* (5). All of the participants (100%) provided at least one *hoped for* possible self. About half of the sample (50.5%) provided responses for all

four *hoped for* possible selves. For each of the *hoped for* possible selves that adolescents disclosed, they were able to identify whether or not they were actively engaged in activities to achieve those possible selves. If they marked “yes”, they were asked to indicate which specific strategies they were using (e.g., “studying”). This information was collected to examine the content of the *hoped for* possible selves that participants describe, and to determine the extent to which possible selves could be predicted by television use and viewing motives.

Feared possible selves was also prompted using the following question, “When I am in my 20’s, I hope to avoid...” allowing participants to write up to four negative possibilities. *Feared* possible selves from this sample included “dropping out of school,” “being shy,” and “pregnant” for example. Using the same Likert scale, participants were asked to rate how likely it is for them to become their feared self from *not very likely* (1) to *very likely* (5). A majority of participants (88.7%) reported at least one *feared* possible self. A much smaller percent (33.9%) provided all four *feared* possible selves. Participants who did not report any *feared* possible selves (11.3%) were not included in the analyses that involved *feared* possible selves. For each of the *feared* possible selves reported, participants also indicated whether or not they were actively engaging in activities to avoid these possible selves. If they marked “yes”, they were asked to indicate which specific strategies they were using (e.g., “making A’s”). For the purposes of this study, only the content of *feared* possible selves were categorized and included in analyses to determine if television consumption and viewing motives predicted domains of *feared* possible selves.

Oyserman and James (2011) discuss assessment issues with measuring possible selves (i.e., reliability and validity). Both closed and open-ended formats have been used in the literature. Strengths of open-ended formats have been noted as freely allowing respondents to describe their possible selves and reducing social desirability. Limitations of open-ended formats include not being an exhaustive list of all identities one might consider and the arduous nature of having to code possible selves before interpretation. Though close-ended formats ensure that possible selves responses are uniform, providing a predetermined list limits participants' ability to report possible selves outside of this list. Oyserman and Fryberg (2006) reported that many close-ended versions have been used with college students and academic focused possible selves have been used among teens and college students. Contrary, open-ended versions have been used with children and adolescents (e.g., Zhu, Tse, Cheung, & Oyserman, 2014). Coding instructions for open-ended possible selves have been used with Black and White adolescents (Oyserman and Markus, 1990) and additional measures have included assessing for strategies to attain possible selves among Black, White, and Hispanic adolescents (e.g., Oyserman, Gant and Ager, 1995; Oyserman, Bybee, Terry, & Hart-Johnson, 2004). Additional measurement concerns include time-referenced points. Oyserman and James (2011) suggest that if theoretically relevant, using temporal anchors increases specificity of possible selves responses, as does including both positive and negative (e.g., *hoped for*, *feared*) probes when asking about possible selves. Given this study's interest in the possible selves among African American adolescent girls across multiple domains and that it is the first of its kind, an open-ended version of possible selves using temporal and

affective anchors were used. This approach was selected in an effort to balance the desire to increase specificity of responses while also allowing for participant free response.

Possible selves coding was based on Zhu, Tse, Cheung, and Oyserman (2014). This method was adapted from Oyserman and Markus's (1990) possible selves coding instructions. The content categories for *hoped for* possible selves included: educational, occupational, interpersonal relationships, personality traits, physical/health-related, and material/lifestyle. *Feared* possible selves content categories included: educational, occupational, interpersonal relationships, personality traits, physical/health-related, material/lifestyle, and non-normative/risky behavior. The full list of possible selves content categories with examples can be found in Appendix I.

Each *hoped for* and *feared* possible self was coded into one of these content categories. For example, an adolescent who reported her *hoped for* possible self as a “graduate college” was categorized in the educational category. For this study, a team of three university researchers convened to agree on the content coding of possible selves. Prior to coding the lead investigator, a Black woman doctoral student in counseling psychology, provided training to two additional researchers, who were also Black women graduate students in psychology, to review the literature on the construct of possible selves and the coding system adapted from Oyserman and Markus (1990) and Zhu, Tse, Cheung, and Oyserman (2014). Training involved providing the aforementioned articles and the coding book (Appendix I) for the researchers to review independently. The lead investigator then met with the researchers to review the coding book, provide verbal instructions for how to code possible selves, and answer questions.

In order to analyze the data, the researchers used the coding book (Appendix I) to categorize the content of possible selves (91% rater reliability was determined by measuring the percentage of possible selves consistently coded across researchers). Coding occurred as follows: (1) the team met to code a select number of participants' possible selves as a group; (2) researchers independently categorized the remaining participants' possible selves; (3) convened to compare possible selves rating; and (4) discussed divergent possible selves categorization until an agreement was made regarding which category the possible self should be classified. Additional details regarding content coding will be identified in the possible selves procedures section at the end of this chapter.

Media Measures

Television Exposure Questionnaire (TEQ; Appendix C). This measure was adapted from a sample media measure provided by L.M. Ward, a prominent scholar publishing in the area of media use and adolescent development (L. M. Ward, personal communication, June 12, 2012). For the purposes of this study, a question to assess total hours of weekly television consumption was used. The researcher added an additional question to determine specific genres of television shows that are most popular amongst this sample. For the first question, respondents were asked, "How many hours in a week do you watch television across genres (e.g., reality, scripted, situation comedies, etc.)? Please include hours watching both live and recorded television (e.g., on demand, DVR). For example, watching 30 minutes of television would be equivalent to watching a full episode of *The Game* or half of an episode of *Love and Hip Hop: Atlanta*." Choices of responses ranged from 30 minutes – 10 hours, 11-20 hours, and 21+ hours. Higher scores

indicated more hours of television consumption. This information has been reported as descriptive data, using the three ranges to classify participants as low, moderate, or high television consumers respectively. An option for 0 hours was also available for any respondents who did not watch television. Additionally, participants were asked to indicate their favorite type of television show to watch by genre. The options included reality/unscripted (e.g., *Love and Hip Hop: Atlanta*), scripted comedy (e.g., *The Game*), scripted sitcoms (e.g., *Blackish*), scripted dramas (e.g., *Scandal*), talk shows (e.g., *The Wendy Williams Show*), and music videos. For the purposes of this study, reality shows were defined as any show that films the lives of real people (Nabi, Biely, Morgan & Stitt, 2003), as they occur in the present (Cavender & Fishman, 1998), and claim to be unscripted regardless of the veracity of this claim (Tyree, 2011). Scripted television refers to shows that are known to be scripted without claim to being of the reality genre. In this study, scripted comedies refer to comedies that have a dramatic element with more mature content than sitcoms. Sitcoms refer to family comedies that might be watched together across multiple generations (e.g., parents watch with their children). Scripted dramas refer to shows that are more serious than comedies and usually involve characters and storylines that deal with a range of emotional experiences. Examples of shows were included to help anchor participants by facilitating their understanding of what defines a genre and to think of shows that are similar when identifying their genre preferences. This information was used to describe the sample's television preferences.

Black-oriented Television Exposure Questionnaire (BORT; Appendix D).

Black-oriented television exposure is the viewership of television shows with a majority of Black characters. This measure was adapted from a study with a sample of majority

White college students ages 17 to 27 (Calzo & Ward, 2009). For the purposes of this study, a list of thirteen scripted and unscripted shows that have casts in which at least half of the members are Black and have aired during 2013-2014 was compiled. The list was based on the television show schedule of preferred networks among African American audiences, including VH1 and BET (TNC, 2013). Two Black women graduate students with prior research experience in this area agreed upon the television shows included on the final list. It was later reviewed and approved by individuals who work with African American adolescent youth in the community to ensure the shows were relevant to this population. During their respective seasons, all programs on this list aired new episodes weekly. Sample programs include *Real Housewives of Atlanta* (2008) and *The Game* (2005). Participants were instructed to indicate how often they watch new episodes of these shows. Using a 5-point likert scale, their response options included: *never/not this season* (0), *about once a month* (1), *every other week* (2), *almost every week* (3), *every week* (4). Higher scores indicated more frequent viewing of the Black-oriented television programs. For this study an acceptable level of reliability was found with a Cronbach's alpha of .86 attained. Black-oriented television consumption was used in subsequent analyses to determine if it predicted the possible selves that adolescents in this sample described. Participants were also given a write in option to report additional shows they watched that were not captured by this survey. This descriptive information was used to better explain the viewing habits of this sample.

Viewing Motivation Scale (VMS; Ward & Friedman, 2006; Appendix E). VMS measures motives for watching television. It is a multi-dimensional scale created by Ward and Friedman (2006) for a sample of mostly White high school students using

literature on viewing motives (e.g., Carverth & Alexander, 1985; Rubin, 1984). Based on Ward and Friedman (2006) the scale is comprised of 22 items that reflect three reasons for watching television: Learning Motive is a subscale that reflects the extent to which individuals watch television to learn about the world (11 items, $\alpha = .80$), e.g., “because it helps me learn about myself and others”. Viewing television solely for entertainment purposes is measured through an Entertainment Motive subscale (six items, $\alpha = .69$, e.g., “because it is entertaining and enjoyable”). Lastly, watching television as a source of companionship is captured through the Friend/Companion Motive (five items, $\alpha = .61$, e.g., “because it keeps me company”). Participants are asked to rate how much they agree with each statement on a 6-point likert scale that ranges from (1) *strongly disagree* to (6) *strongly agree*. Higher scores indicate a higher rate of viewing motives for each dimension. VMA subscales have demonstrated reliability with other samples including Latino high school students: viewing to learn $\alpha = .88$ and entertainment motive $\alpha = .78$ (Ward & Rivaeneyra, 2005). For the current study reliability for the three scales were as follows: Learning $\alpha = .90$, Entertainment $\alpha = .75$, and Friend/Companion $\alpha = .75$. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with frequent reasons people cite for watching television. An example statement was “because it’s something fun to do with my friends.” Given indication of multicollinearity between the entertainment and companionship subscales ($r(170) = .81, p < .01$), both scales were combined (Combined). A Cronbach alpha of .86 was found for this combined scale. Therefore, only two subscales were used in the remainder of the analyses viewing for learning and combined (entertainment and companionship).

Social Networking Sites Questionnaire (SNS; Appendix F). Questions on this scale were included by the primary investigator to gather information regarding participant's Internet and social networking preferences. This information was used to provide descriptive information regarding the sample's frequent Internet uses/activities, social networking platforms used, and social networking activities. Participants were asked to indicate their Internet activities including: blogging, social networking sites, visiting television show websites, visiting celebrity fan pages and websites, gossip sites, and an option to include additional reasons not provided. Social networking use was specifically gathered by asking participants if they have personal accounts on the following social networking sites: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and an "Other" option if they used a social media platform that was not on the list. Participants were asked to indicate the number of hours they spend each day using the Internet and specifically, social networking sites. Choices of responses ranged from 30 minutes – 1.5 hours, 1.5 - 2.5 hours, 2.5 – 5 hours, and 5+ hours. Higher scores indicated more hours of Internet usage. An option for 0 hours was also available for any respondents who did not use Internet or social networking sites. Lastly, respondents were asked a series of yes or no questions to gather descriptive data on their level of engagement with their favorite television shows and characters on social networking sites. Participants were asked to indicate whether they: follow or friend their favorite television shows, follow or friend their favorite television show characters, post or share stories, statues, or photos of their favorite television show, and post or share stories, statues, or photos of their favorite television show characters.

Procedure

Before the recruitment of participants, the principal investigator received approval from the institutional review board (IRB) at the University of Houston. Participants were recruited via two methods, electronically and through onsite recruitment with churches, non-profit organizations, and schools that serve African American adolescent girls across multiple states. Electronic recruitment entailed posting advertisements about the study via social networking site Facebook including a link to a website where an electronic version of the questionnaire was hosted. Onsite data recruitment was coordinated through sending e-mails to professional and personal contacts of the researcher. These contacts included three principals of schools in Texas and Indiana, three youth pastors from churches in Texas, and two directors of nonprofit organizations in Texas and Kentucky; all of which serve African American adolescent girls. These efforts were implemented in order to gather a diverse sample of African American adolescent girls. As a result the sample included African American adolescent girls from the aforementioned recruitment methods: schools (44.9%), electronically via social media (40.3%), churches (9.1%), and non-profit organizations (5.7%).

The following procedures were used for electronic recruitment and data collection: The principal investigator posted information about the study on the researcher's personal social networking site (i.e., Facebook; Appendix J). The posting included a flyer (Appendix O), the investigator's email address, and a link to the study where the electronic version of the questionnaires could be accessed. Interested parents and daughters were able to click the link to the study where the questionnaires were hosted online. Parents were also encouraged to send the recruitment advertisements and

study link to others who were interested in participating on their social networking sites (i.e., Facebook). This furthered recruitment via snowball method and word of mouth. Individuals who clicked the link for the study were redirected to the first page of the questionnaires, which contained two options: “I am the parent of a 13 to 17 year old adolescent” or “I am an 18-year old adolescent.”

Individuals who clicked the first option (i.e., parent of a 13 to 17 year old adolescent) were directed to another page where a parent permission form (Appendix L) was hosted. The parental permission form introduced the researchers, the purpose of the study, and potential benefits and harm of participation in the study. They were informed that their daughters’ responses would be confidential and that they could withdraw from the study at anytime without penalty. Below this information, parents were asked to indicate whether they provided permission for their daughter to participate in the study by clicking either “I give my child permission to participate” or “I do not give my child permission to participate.” Parents who gave permission for their child to participate were directed to another page where it thanked them for their permission and provided instructions for parents to allow their daughter to complete the remainder of the study alone and in a quiet place. On that same page a child assent form (Appendix M) was found. This form provided age appropriate language that introduced the researchers, purpose of the study, and potential benefits and risks. Participants were informed that participation in the study was voluntary and they could withdraw from the study at anytime. Given this set of data was collected online the researcher was unable to control environmental factors such as the presence of parents while adolescent girls completed the study. Though this is a limitation of the online recruitment, adolescents were asked to

provide their assent to participate in the study and then were directed to the study questionnaires (i.e., demographics, television consumption, social networking use, television viewing motivations, possible selves). Measures were counterbalanced to avoid order effect that may influence participants' response.

Adolescent participants who clicked the second option (i.e., 18 years old) were sent to a page (Appendix K) where an informed consent form was available that introduced the researchers, the purpose of the study, and potential benefits and harms of their participation. They were informed of the voluntary nature of the study and their right to discontinue participation at anytime. Once they provided their consent they were directed to the study questionnaires. The measures included participants' demographics, media consumption, social networking use, viewing motivations, and possible selves. Measures were also counterbalanced.

The following recruitment procedures were used for on-site recruitment and data collection: As previously described, the researcher e-mailed three principals, three pastors, and two non profit directors that were personal and professional contacts (Appendix N). Information about the study was provided and a request for their participation in an on-site group administration of the surveys was made. Once the principals, pastors, and nonprofit directors expressed interest, an agreed upon data collection day was chosen. A day prior to this, adolescent girls were provided a recruitment packet for their parents. Adolescents who were 18-years old were provided a recruitment packet with a flyer (Appendix O) that outlined the study and an informed consent form to indicate their consent to participate in the study. Adolescents who were 17 years and younger were provided a recruitment package with a study flyer and parent

permission form. Adolescents aged 13 to 17 years old who obtained parent permission via the signed form and 18 years olds who provided their informed consent via the signed form were allowed to participate in the group administration. This data collection method was conducted in person at their respective site (i.e., churches, schools, or non-profit organization building). Only the principal investigator and adolescent participants were present for data collection. Adolescents who were younger than 17 years old were provided the assent form that included information about the study, its purpose, and potential benefits and harms. They were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could discontinue participation at anytime without penalty. These participants were asked to indicate their assent to participate in the study by signing the form. The same set of study measures were provided in paper and pencil format to these participants including demographics, television consumption, social networking use, viewing motivations, and possible selves.

Participation in the study lasted approximately 30 minutes. Upon completion of the study participants were allowed to provide their e-mail address if they chose to participate in the \$25 Target gift card raffle. For the paper and pencil version, this was located on the last page of the study questionnaire and was detached from the rest of the surveys to ensure confidentiality. For participants who completed the online version of the study, the last item included an option for interested participants to type in their e-mail addresses to be contacted by the investigator if they won. Eight raffle winners were selected from participants in both the electronic and on-site data collection methods. In addition to the raffle, as another incentive, recruitment sites were offered the option for

the researcher to provide a Media Literacy workshop to their adolescent girls. Data was stored and protected in accordance to the University of Houston IRB rules.

Procedures for Coding Possible Selves

The principal investigator trained two additional researchers to code participants' possible selves based on the coding book (Appendix I) as described in the possible selves measures section. To initiate coding, the first 25 participants' possible selves were coded together as a team in order to establish coding that was consistent with the coding book and across researchers. The initial coding session included a review of each category of possible selves (e.g., educational, occupational, interpersonal) along with examples (e.g., college, teacher, married). The principal investigator then read aloud the first 25 participants' possible selves responses and the researchers discussed and categorized them aloud. After this initial session each researcher categorized the remaining participants' possible selves independently. After, the researchers convened to review the coding of possible selves. A 91% rater agreement was established by calculating the percentage of possible selves consistency coded among researchers. Responses that were coded differently among researchers were identified (e.g., "hanging out with the wrong people"). Researchers discussed their reasons for identifying the possible selves within a certain category until an agreement was made regarding the final content category a possible self would be coded (e.g., categorizing "hanging out with the wrong people" as a *feared* possible self in the interpersonal domain).

Chapter IV

Results

Statistical Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 23 was used to analyze data. Before proceeding with statistical analyses, first, data was screened for missing data, outliers, and skewedness. Missing data was visually inspected for patterns. The function “exclude cases pairwise” was used to manage missing data such that participants’ responses were excluded only if they had missing data for that particular analysis (Pallant, 2013). For example, if a participant had missing data from the learning motivations subscale they would be excluded from only the analyses that used this scale. Their responses were included in analyses for all other scales with which they reported values. Outliers were screened by visual examination and inspection of histograms and boxplots. Ten outliers were removed to protect the data set from distortion leaving the final sample size as 176 participants. Next, descriptive information including means, standard deviations, and frequencies were computed for the demographics and all variables of interest. Finally, a preliminary analysis was conducted to determine bivariate correlations among the variables in the study.

In order to answer the first question, “What are the media use habits of African American adolescent girls,” descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations, and ranges of scores were computed based on the media use measures (i.e., Television Exposure Questionnaire, Black-oriented Television Exposure Questionnaire, Social Networking Sites Questionnaire). Specifically, the amount of hours per week of total television among participants was determined. Second, the percent of the sample’s

television consumption that was reality versus scripted was calculated. Third, regular consumption of popular Black-oriented television shows was determined using the Black-oriented television questionnaire to report the average amount of weekly television viewing of these shows. To determine Internet and social networking use, the frequency of Internet activities including blogging, social networking sites, visiting television show websites, visiting celebrity fan pages and websites, and gossip sites were computed. Social networking preferences were calculated to determine the percentage of the sample that utilizes Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Additionally, the total number of hours participants spent using social networking per week was reported. Lastly, information was gathered to provide descriptive information regarding participants' social networking activities and involvement with their favorite television shows and characters online. This was derived using the percent of participants who like/follow their favorite television shows and characters and who post status updates and photos about their favorite television shows and characters was calculated.

To answer the second question, "What are the possible selves (*hoped for* and *feared*) that African American adolescent girls describe," both *hoped for* and *feared* possible selves were coded in accordance to the coding strategy outlined in the Methods section. Participants were allowed to write up to four *hoped for* and four *feared* possible selves. Descriptive statistics were conducted to gather information regarding the percent of *hoped for* and *feared* possible selves that participants reported from each of the eight content categories. The percentage of participants who reported engaging in a strategy to attain *hoped for* possible selves and prevent becoming their *feared* possible selves was also attained.

To answer the third research question, “Do Black-oriented television consumption and viewing motivations predict the possible selves that African American adolescent girls describe,” bivariate logistic regression was used. Prior to this, each *hoped for* possible self was grouped into one of the eight following categories and dummy coded into SPSS: 1= educational (e.g., “going to college”), 2 = occupational (e.g., “firefighter”), 3 = interpersonal (e.g., “getting married”), 4 = personality characteristics (e.g., “responsible”), 5 = physical/health (e.g., “eating healthy”), 6 = lifestyle, (e.g., “successful”) 7 = negatively worded possible selves (e.g., “not like my mom”), 8 = other (e.g., “praise”). *Feared* possible selves were also grouped into one of eight categories and dummy coded: 1= educational (e.g., “dropping out of school”), 2 = occupational (e.g., “not finding a job”), 3 = interpersonal (e.g., “not being a good parent”), 4 = personality characteristics (e.g., “shy”), 5 = physical/health (e.g., “dying”), 6 = lifestyle, (e.g., “being homeless”) 7 = risky/non normative (e.g., “going to jail”), 8 = other (e.g., “drama”).

Following, a series of 12 bivariate logistic regressions were run to determine whether Black-oriented television consumption and viewing motivations (i.e., viewing for learning and viewing for combined) predicted the likelihood that participants would endorse various categories of possible selves. Three continuous independent variables entered in each regression model were Black-oriented television consumption, viewing for learning, and viewing for combined. Each regression model had a different outcome variable that included one of twelve possible selves categories: 1) *hoped for* education 2) *hoped for* occupation 3) *hoped for* interpersonal 4) *hoped for* personality characteristics 5) *hoped for* physical/health 6) *hoped for* lifestyle 7) *feared* education 8) *feared* occupation 9) *feared* interpersonal 10) *feared* personality characteristics 11) *feared*

physical/health 12) *feared* lifestyle. Prior to running the analysis, the dependent variables of interest (i.e., possible selves) had binary responses of yes/no, which were recoded as 1/0, based on whether a participant reported a possible self within that category. Next multiple logistic regressions were run to determine if the independent variables, Black-oriented television, viewing for learning, and viewing for combined predicted possible selves outcome variables.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive data, including means, standard deviations, and frequencies were computed for all variables. This information can be found in Table 1. The following information was gathered to broadly explore the media use habits of African American adolescent girls. For this study, media use was operationalized as television consumption, particularly Black oriented television shows, and Internet/social networking use.

Television and Social Networking Use

A majority of participants (72.7%) reported watching 30 minutes to 10 hours of television per week. A smaller amount of girls watched 11 to 20 hours per week (15.9%) and an even smaller amount (8.5%) reported watching 21 or more hours. Only 2.8% of the sample reported watching zero hours of television per week. 86% of the girls in the study reported watching Black-oriented television shows. The average consumption of new weekly episodes of Black-oriented television was at least every other week ($M = 2.5$, $SD = .94$). The researchers were interested in determining the most popular genres of television amongst this sample. Examples of shows for each genre were included as a reference. Participants' favorite genre of television included reality/unscripted shows (e.g., *Love and Hip Hop: Atlanta*, 41.5%), scripted dramas (e.g., *Scandal*, 26.1%), and

scripted comedy (e.g., *The Game*, 11.9%). Fewer girls preferred watching Hip Hop music videos (7.4%), scripted sitcoms (e.g., *Blackish*, 6.8%), and talk shows (e.g., *The Wendy Williams Show*, 2.3%).

In terms of Internet and social networking use, 93.9% reported using the Internet for social networking. Most participants reported using social networking daily with only 1.7% reported not using social networking each day. In terms of social networking, 32.4% of the sample engaged in this activity for 5+ hours per day, 26.1% for 2.5 to 5 hours and both 30min to 1.5 hours and 1.5 to 2.5 hours of social networking each was done by 19.9% of the sample. Of the social networking sites, most participants used Instagram (85.8%), Facebook (58.5%), and Twitter (49.4%). A large amount of participants (48.9%) reported using other social networking platforms such as Snapchat, Tumblr, and Kik. This was derived by calculating the percent of participants who indicated “other” when asked about which social networking sites they used. Girls also reported engaging with their favorite television shows and characters via their social networking platforms including the following activities: follow or friend TV shows (58%), follow or friend TV show characters (65.9%), post or share stories, statuses, or photos of favorite TV show, (47.2%), and post or share stories, statuses, or photos of favorite TV show characters (47.2%). Other Internet use included: celebrity gossip sites (e.g., Media Takeout, 22%), visiting TV show websites (19.4%), visiting celebrity fan pages/websites (16.1%), and blogging (9.7%).

Viewing Motivations

Descriptive information for viewing motivations was also derived. Viewing for entertainment ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 1.06$) and companionship/friendship was relatively high

($M = 4.03$, $SD = 1.16$). Participants' viewing for learning ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 1.23$) was lower than the other two motivations for watching television.

Possible Selves

Descriptive information was derived to answer the second research question:

What are the *hoped for* and *feared* possible selves that African American adolescent girls describe? A greater amount of *hoped for* possible selves ($n = 551$) were reported than *feared* possible selves ($n = 445$). One hundred percent of the sample provided at least one *hoped for* possible self, compared to 94% of the sample that provided at least one *feared* possible self. Most *hoped for* possible selves were reported in the occupational (e.g., “nurse”, $n = 166$), educational (e.g., “finish college”, $n = 132$), and material/lifestyle (e.g., “my own home”, $n = 100$) domains. Similar is true for *feared* possible selves where material/lifestyle (e.g., “homeless”, $n = 114$) and educational (e.g., “failing college”, $n = 66$) possible selves were the most reported. Additionally, *feared* interpersonal (e.g., “loosing my best friend”, $n = 68$) and personality characteristics (e.g., “shy”, $n = 59$) possible selves were frequently reported. Notably, a large number of risky/non normative *feared* possible selves ($n = 63$) were also provided such as early pregnancy, drug use, and going to jail. Table 2 provides the full list of *hoped for* and *feared* possible selves categories that participants endorsed. More participants reported engaging in strategies to attain *hoped for* possible selves ($n = 416$) than strategies to prevent becoming their *feared* possible selves ($n = 354$). Information regarding possible selves strategies can also be found in Table 2.

Preliminary Analysis

Pearson's product moment correlations were computed to assess the presence of significant associations among the continuous variables. Viewing for learning was positively correlated to viewing for entertainment, $r(176) = .46, p < .01$ and viewing for friendship/companionship, $r(176) = .48, p < .01$. Viewing for entertainment was highly positively related to viewing for friendship/companionship, $r(176) = .81, p < .01$. Due to multicollinearity between viewing for entertainment and viewing for friendship/companionship, meaning these two viewing motives may be measuring the same construct, the two subscales were combined for the main analysis (viewing for combined). There was a significant and positive relation found between Black-oriented reality television and all the viewing motivations subscales: viewing for entertainment, $r(176) = .28, p < .01$, viewing for learning, $r(176) = .21, p < .01$, and viewing for friendship/companionship $r(176) = .33, p < .01$. Table 3 displays the results of this analysis. Watching more Black-oriented television was related to greater endorsements of viewing motivations to learn, be entertained, and for companionship. Notably, there was a significant and positive relationship between GPA and number of *hoped for* possible selves, $r(176) = .23, p < .01$ indicating that reporting a higher GPA was related to articulating a greater number of *hoped for* possible selves.

Independent sample t-tests were conducted to compare the continuous variables' scores for adolescents by age and recruitment site. Girls were grouped into two age groups, younger adolescents (13 – 15 years) and older adolescents (16 – 18 years) to determine if there were any significant differences on variables between each group. No significant differences were found for Black-oriented television consumption, $t(160) = -$

.85, $p = .40$, viewing to learn $t(171) = .94$, $p = .53$, and viewing for combined entertainment/companionship, $t(169) = -.08$, $p = .94$. A t-test was performed to determine if there were any significant differences for adolescents by recruitment method (i.e., online vs. in person). No significant differences were found for Black-oriented television consumption, $t(158) = -.05$, $p = .96$, viewing to learn $t(169) = -.13$, $p = .90$, and viewing for combined entertainment/companionship, $t(167) = .22$ $p = .82$.

Recruitment for participation took place in person and online. Chi square tests were conducted to assess whether there were statistical differences among outcome variables (i.e., educational, occupational, interpersonal, personality, physical/health, lifestyle hoped for and feared possible selves) based on recruitment method. The analyses revealed no statistical differences based on recruitment method (i.e., in person vs. online administration) as illustrated in Table 4.

Primary Analysis

The final research question, “Does Black-oriented television consumption and viewing motivations predict the possible selves that African American adolescent girls’ describe?” was answered by conducting multiple logistic regression. Given there are six *hoped for* possible selves categories that coincide with the same six *feared* possible selves categories (i.e., educational, occupational, interpersonal, personality characteristic, physical/health, interpersonal) a total of twelve possible selves categories were selected to run twelve bivariate logistic regressions. These twelve bivariate logistic regression analyses were run to determine the effects of Black-oriented television consumption and viewing motivations on the likelihood that participants would report possible selves. For all bivariate logistic regression models, three independent variables were entered as

Black-oriented television consumption (BOTV), viewing for learning (learning), and viewing for combined (combined). The dependent variables were each *hoped for* and *feared* possible selves category (i.e., educational, occupational, interpersonal, personality characteristics, physical/health, and lifestyle).

The researcher considered the risk of type 1 error given the possible introduction of error in running this large number of separate bivariate analyses. However, the research regarding whether Black-oriented television and viewing motivations predict possible selves among African American adolescent girls is understudied. Additionally, using bivariate logistic regression is an appropriate analysis given that possible selves are measured as categorical variables and the independent variables are continuous variables. Given the aforementioned, the risk of type 1 was deemed not as disadvantageous as the risk of not finding something that actually is there (i.e., type 2 error). Therefore, the researcher proceeded with using bivariate logistic regression while mindful of the type 1 error risk.

Hoped For Possible Selves

A bivariate logistic regression was performed to determine the effect of multiple factors on the likelihood that girls' would report occupational *hoped for* possible selves. The model contained three independent variables (i.e., Black-oriented television consumption, viewing for learning, and viewing for combined). The outcome variable was occupational *hoped for* possible selves. The model was statistically significant, $X^2(3) = 8.048$, $p < .05$ (Table 7). The model explained 7% (Nagelkerke R^2) of the variance in *hoped for* occupational possible selves and correctly classified 66% of cases. Of the three predictor variables one was statistically significant: viewing for learning (as shown in

Table 7). For every unit increase in viewing television for learning purposes there was a 1.5 times greater likelihood that girls reported a *hoped for* possible self in the occupational domain.

Additional Hoped For and Feared Possible Selves

Eleven additional bivariate logistic regressions were performed to determine the effect of multiple factors on the likelihood that girls' would report the remaining possible selves categories. All of the models contained three independent variables (i.e., Black-oriented television consumption, viewing for learning, and viewing for combined). Each model included a different possible selves category as the outcome variable. Tables 5, 6, and 8-16 illustrate that none of the remaining models were statistically significant. BOTV, viewing for learning, and viewing for combined did not significantly predict the likelihood that girls reported possible selves in any other domain.

Chapter V

Discussion

“What people experience day-to-day effectuates how they view and vision the possibility of their lives” (Milner, 2006, p.9). Social informants (e.g., role models in the media) and significant social identity factors (e.g., race, gender, age) shape an individual’s thoughts about their future. People tend to look at culturally similar others within their own social environment to develop ideas about what is possible for them to become (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). Though the role of social context is recognized as significantly contributing to the development of future aspirations, there is limited literature that explores these variables among specific segments of the population, for example, African American girls. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the influence of media on African American adolescent girls’ possible selves. To that end, this study examined 1) television and Internet/social networking use, 2) *hoped for* and *feared* possible selves and 3) the role of Black-oriented television consumption and television viewing motivations in the articulation of *hoped for* and *feared* possible selves among this population. This chapter will offer commentary on these variables by first discussing the results of the research questions, describing the limitations and future direction of research, and concluding with a discussion of the implications of the findings.

Adolescents’ Media Consumption

The study’s first research question was aimed at gathering information regarding African American adolescent girls’ media consumption including television and social networking use. Most girls in this study reported low to medium levels of television

consumption. A majority watched 30 minutes to 10 hours of television per week with a smaller amount watching 11 to 20 hours. Compared to other African American adolescent girls, who watched 35 hours of television per week (TNC, 2011), this sample reported lower television consumption rates than expected. Given technological advances generating a plethora of media platforms, time spent watching television may be split with other activities such as social networking use. Additionally, more than half of the sample reported GPA's of 3.0 and above. It is presumable that higher achieving students may potentially spend less time watching television and more time engaging in school related activities such as studying and doing homework.

Consistent with other samples (Ward, 2004), girls in this study reported high amounts of Black-oriented television consumption. African Americans tend to gravitate toward diverse media with Black characters because they demonstrate similar culture and lifestyles (TNC, 2013). The same appears true for this sample. Over 86% of girls watched Black-oriented television and reported regular exposure to popular Black-oriented shows such as *Love and Hip Hop: Atlanta* (2013) and *Scandal* (2013). In fact, they reported watching these shows almost weekly. This supports the idea that African Americans demonstrate a preference for Black media which they find more relevant to them (TNC, 2012) and potentially pay more attention to Black characters (Appiah, 2002). Participants' favorite genres were reality/unscripted shows (e.g., *Love and Hip Hop: Atlanta*, 41.5%), scripted dramas (e.g., *Scandal*, 26.1%), and scripted comedies for mature audiences that include elements of drama (e.g., *The Game*, 11.9%). Preference for these shows is similar to other studies that reported a trend towards reality television (Tyree, 2011) and found that shows such as *Scandal* (2013), *Love and Hip Hop: Atlanta*

(2013), and *The Game* (2006) were all popular among African Americans (TNC, 2012; TNC, 2013).

Similar to other findings (Brown & Bobkowski, 2011) a majority of this study's participants are using the Internet, and the top Internet activity is social networking sites. In fact, 98.3% of participants in this sample reported using social networking sites daily. More than half of which reported using it for more than 2.5 hours per day. Consistent with previous samples (TNC, 2013; TNC, 2012), Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter are the most frequently used social networking sites by girls in this study. Social networking sites are constantly changing and being developed given the technological age we live. Accordingly, about half the girls in this sample also reported frequent use of additional social networking sites such as Snapchat, Tumblr, and Kik. It is evident that African American adolescent girls in this study are socially connected online. Importantly, participants in this sample also report engaging with television online by following, friending, and posting statuses, pictures, and posts about their favorite television shows and characters. Their behavior is aligned with previous reports that television shows with social networking components are popular among users who embrace the opportunity to connect with shows online (Brown & Bobkowski, 2011) and tweet about them during live performances (TNC, 2014). In such cases the social networking component may bolster the popularity of these television shows.

As anticipated, television, particularly with Black casts, and social networking sites are commonly used media platforms for African American adolescent girls in this study. Given their relatively low levels of television consumption, social networking use may actually mitigate the use of television. These girls may be choosing to spend their

time on social networking platforms as opposed to watching as much television as previous samples of African Americans have reported. Their social networking use may provide an avenue for social engagement with television shows (Brown & Bobkowski, 2011) and peers, and access to information (Moreno, 2012) that was not available in previous decades. In fact Moreno (2012) suggests that social networking sites may have surpassed the influence of mass media through the interpersonal connections users have with one another. Additionally, social networking provides an opportunity for self-expression (Livingstone, 2008) by allowing youth to produce their own media content, which may be particularly appealing to those coming of age. In sum, given the salience of their race, African American adolescent girls in this sample appear to seek out Black-oriented television shows that they may find more relevant to them. Though they watch less television than previous samples, the Internet provides a platform for them to engage with media by producing content and their favorite television shows in novel ways. Media is a mainstay in youth's lives and with technological advances it continues to transform. Its salience is highlighted as it appears that social networking may have joined television as a media "super peer" (p. 61) by providing norms and expectations for behaviors among adolescents and a platform for current and future self expression (Moreno, 2012).

Viewing Motivations

Compared to other samples that disagreed with viewing television for entertainment ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 1.06$), companionship ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 1.16$) and learning ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 1.23$; Ward & Friedman, 2006), this sample of girls reported watching television for entertainment ($M=4.24$) and companionship/friendship ($M=4.03$). They

slightly disagreed that they viewed for learning ($M=3.25$). Notably, girls' in this study reported their highest motivation for viewing television was for entertainment purposes. Generally, these girls did not report using television as a source of learning information about the world. Rather they viewed television more as source of enjoyment and fun (i.e., entertainment and companionship).

Hoped For and Feared Possible Selves

The second research question sought to determine both the *hoped for* and *feared* possible selves that African American adolescent girls describe. Overall, respondents reported 106 more *hoped for* possible selves than *feared* possible selves. From the earliest stages of studying this concept of future selves, a positive response bias has been noticed, such that respondents tend to generate, think about, and perceive that it is more probable to attain positive possible selves than negative ones (Markus, & Nurius, 1986). Despite, a majority of the sample (94%) was still able to provide at least one *feared* possible self. This is important given research suggests that being able to think about both positive and negative possible selves creates balance. This balance serves as a motivator to strive toward reaching a positive goal while simultaneously avoiding negative outcomes (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). Balance may also increase individual's engagement in strategies to achieve possible selves (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006; Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2006). In the current sample, 76% of the respondents reported engaging in strategies to attain *hoped for* possible selves (e.g., "studying real hard"), while 80% reported engaging in strategies to avoid *feared* possible selves (e.g., "not having sex"). This suggests that girls in this study generally have both desirable future selves that they are working towards achieving while engaging in activities that help them avoid negative

future selves. To illustrate, for a girl with a *hoped for* possible self of attending college, “studying real hard” will help her achieve that goal. Simultaneously, if her strategy of “not having sex” helps her avoid her *feared* possible self of early pregnancy, she may be more likely to reach her hope of college. In this way balance provides motivation to become one’s *hoped for* possible self by avoiding one’s *feared* possible self; strategies are the mechanisms that make this possible. Given the sample is high achieving (as indicated by their self-reported high GPAs), they may be well-versed in setting and achieving goals, which might facilitate their ability to think of and initiate activities that lead them to attaining *hoped for* possible selves and avoiding *feared* possible selves.

Most of the *hoped for* and/or *feared* possible selves endorsed by girls in the sample were in the occupational (e.g., nurse), educational (e.g., finish college), and material/lifestyle (e.g., my own home) domains. Adolescence is the stage where individuals are tasked with developing a sense of self (Erikson, 1987) that involves choosing roles that one seeks to fulfill (Orlofsky, Macia, & Lesser, 1973) across important life domains such as occupations (Marcia, 1966). Given possible selves are amenable to social context and developmental level it makes sense that adolescents also generate large amounts of educational possible selves since they spend a majority of their time in school (Lee & Oyserman, 2009). Girls may recognize education as “a means to an end,” a means to achieve their other goals, especially occupational and lifestyle. Therefore, adolescents, particularly higher achieving students such as girls in this study, may have more future-oriented thoughts related to educational and occupational endeavors. They may use material/lifestyle possible selves (e.g., “my own home”) as markers of their success and rewards for the attainment of their goals.

Other demographics of this sample are important to consider, particularly regarding the sample's large endorsement of educational, occupational, and lifestyle possible selves. Half of the girls in this sample reported living in two parent homes (i.e., with either both biological parent or one biological parent and a step parent) and another thirty eight percent reported living only with their biological mothers. A majority of the girls' parents self reported educational levels included some form of college attendance. This is critical given their parents, especially their mothers, may serve as positive role models that provide daily examples of possible selves that include educational, occupational, and lifestyle goals similar to those identified by the girls (e.g., "going to college"). Media is just one of multiple socialization agents (e.g., parents). Parental influence is also a major factor in socializing children for future possibilities (Zhu, Tse, Cheung, & Oyserman, 2014). It may be that for this sample of girls, living with college-educated parents, particularly their mothers, may expose them to examples of possibilities that have a stronger influence on possible selves than media models.

Additionally, past success and/or high performance may help facilitate a person's ability to think of positive possible selves. For example, compared to low achieving students, high achieving students may have an easier time imaging positive academic possible selves because they have past experiences to call upon (Leondari, Syngollitous, & Kiosseglou, 1998 from Oyserman & Fryber, 2006). If one has been successful academically in the past they may have confidence in their ability that builds expectations to have educational and occupational successes in the future. This may explain why the number of *hoped for* possible selves that girls' in this sample articulated increased as GPA did. Higher GPA can be seen as academic success, which may increase one's ability

to think of success and desirable possible selves. Notably, girls in this sample reported a sizeable amount of risky/non-normative *feared* possible selves such as early pregnancy, drug use, and going to jail. These types of possible selves tend to involve risky behaviors that lead to negative outcomes, which adolescents are often warned to avoid. This suggests that girls in this sample are aware of these highly aversive possibilities and may be working toward avoiding them while simultaneously working toward attaining desirable outcomes.

Influence of Media on Possible Selves

The final research question was whether Black-oriented television, viewing motivations to learn, and viewing motivations for entertainment/companionship (combined) predicted *hoped for* and *feared* possible selves in each domain (i.e., educational, occupational, interpersonal, personality, physical/health, lifestyle, risky/non-normative). While Black-oriented television consumption and viewing for entertainment/companionship did not predict any possible selves, viewing motivations for learning did predict *hoped for* occupational possible selves. This study has shown that these girls are in fact thinking about occupational *hoped for* selves. If a girl is viewing television to learn she may seek out information about occupations since it is one of the most salient possible selves on her mind. Uses and gratification theory asserts that users selectively process information (De Felur & Ball-Rokeach, 1975), choosing out media that gratifies their own psychosocial needs (Ruggerio, 2000), and paying attention to messages that are consistent with their beliefs (De Felur & Ball-Rokeach, 1975). Accordingly, for girls who are viewing to learn, it appears that this may be a factor in predicting occupational selves such that increases in the endorsement of viewing

motivations to learn also increases the likelihood of girls endorsing occupational *hoped for* possible selves. However, the model involving viewing to learn accounted for a small percentage of the variance, so it can be surmised that there are other more salient predictors of occupational *hoped for* possible selves yet to be explored.

Alternatively, television consumption and viewing motivations did not predict *hoped for* or *feared* possible selves in the other domains. Despite concern regarding the negative televised images of African Americans and its potential to supply limited possible selves (Martin, 2008) it appears that for this sample of girls, Black-oriented television consumption is not a hindering factor in predicting their endorsement of possible selves. Perhaps girls in this sample use strategies to deflect stereotypes from limiting their self-concept and future possibilities. Literature suggests that despite concern, African Americans are critical of media portrayals of Black characters (Allen, 2001) and may in fact be motivated to dispel negative stereotypes (Thomas et al., 2011). Given African American adolescent girls may actually be aware of the negative stereotypes and critical of media messages about who they are, they may not be as susceptible to its influence.

It is also plausible that characteristics of this sample contributed to the lack of findings that may otherwise be discovered in other samples of African American adolescent girls. First, this sample has relatively low levels of weekly television consumption. Perhaps girls who watch more hours of television may be more susceptible to its influence by accepting similar beliefs and values of the media messages (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorelli, Shanahan, 2002). Second, respondents reported higher levels of viewing motivations for entertainment/companionship than viewing to learn. This

may serve as a protective factor in that individuals may be watching television for entertainment purposes and may be seeking out other sources for information regarding their future possibilities. If girls are not watching television to learn as much as they are watching it for something to do and as a form of entertainment, they may not be swayed by its messages about what is possible for their futures. Lastly, this sample reported relatively high GPA's and a majority of girls were identifying from a Christian spiritual background, both of which may serve as a buffer for negative television effects. High achieving girls may be well versed in using critical thinking skills that they may too apply while watching television. They may also have other social informants as models (e.g., parents) for possible selves. It is also possible that girls who identify with and are involved in faith communities may have additional social support within this network (e.g., church family) that provides additional sources of information and models for what is possible for one to become.

Limitations

There are limitations of the study that warrant consideration. While the examiner sought to gather information from a diverse group of African American adolescent girls, the study's sample may not be generalizable in terms of four key factors. An overwhelming number of girls in the study were high achieving, Christian, living in Southern states (primarily Texas), and reported relatively low rates of television consumption. These may be important factors that shape girls' possible selves and motivations for watching television, which may differ from girls who are not as high achieving, non-Christian, live in other parts of the United States, and have high levels of television consumption.

Other limitations of the study include its methodology. For participants who took the study online, the impact of the environment with which they completed the study and their understanding of the material cannot be ascertained. Self reported data depends on the recall, attention, and honesty of the participants who are taking the study.

Additionally, girls were allowed to provide up to four *hoped for* and four *feared* possible selves. However, given the use of bivariate logistic regression they were coded yes/no on whether they reported possible selves in six *hoped for* and six *feared* possible selves domains. Given they were only allowed to write up to four *hoped for* and *feared* possible selves respectively it is worthy to note that they were not given a chance to indicate possible selves in each of the domains they were scored in. It is plausible that participants were marked as missing a category of possible selves that they might have actually endorsed had they been given the opportunity. Future studies can attend to this by allowing participants the possibility of writing as many possible selves as they will be coded for.

Finally, the statistical procedures of the study are also worthy of discussion. Two bivariate logistic regression models that examined whether Black-oriented television and viewing motivations predicted *hoped for* personality and *feared* physical/health possible selves were not significant. However, within the model Black-oriented television as a predictor of each respective possible self was significant. This could be due to random error, or it might denote an issue with not having enough power to detect a finding. This might be addressed by increasing the total number of participants in future samples.

Future Research

The current study was the first of its kind known to the researcher to explore the connection between television and social networking use and possible selves of African American adolescent girls. Therefore, research should continue to parcel out and explore these connections among this population. First, additional studies should explore how adolescents may use and reject media images as models for their possible selves using qualitative approaches such as interviews and focus groups. Exploring potential strategies that adolescents may use to counter negative stereotypes from impacting their possible selves is warranted given the data suggests Black-oriented television did not predict possible selves. Notably, qualitative methods provide an opportunity to gather rich and in depth data using adolescents' own words to articulate their understanding of the ways in which media informs their future thoughts.

Second, this study explored television's ability to predict content categories of possible selves (e.g., educational, occupational, interpersonal). Future research might look deeper into specific domains. Since this study suggests that viewing for learning does predict the endorsement of *hoped for* occupational selves, further exploration of this particular domain may be warranted. For example, it would be interesting to explore television's ability to predict specific fields of occupational selves (e.g., entertainment, medical/healthcare) or even specific jobs (e.g., writer, actor, doctor).

Given media is just one of multiple socialization agents that inform girls' thoughts about their future, exploring the contribution of media and other socialization agents (e.g., parents) on possible selves may be fruitful. Lastly, given the high use of social networking sites, future studies might explore how these media platforms may be used to

try on possible selves and receive feedback from important others (e.g., peers). These types of studies could provide more in depth information on how media and other socialization agents (e.g., parents) work to influence thoughts about and behaviors related to one's future. This could in turn impact how to best work with girls to articulate and engage in strategies that help them become their possible selves.

Implications

Despite an abundance of concern in popular culture and research regarding the wellbeing of African American adolescent girls, this sample appears to be relatively psychologically healthy and well-achieving. The fear of potentially negative media effects on African American adolescent girls' thoughts about themselves and their future was not substantiated in this study. African American adolescent girls in this sample were high academic achievers, reported numerous educational, occupational, and lifestyle possible selves, and indicated that they viewed television for entertainment and companionship purposes. There must be other socialization agents that provide information about their future possibilities (e.g., parents) that may have a much stronger effect than media. In fact, when girls did report viewing television to learn they were actually more likely to report hoped for possible selves in the occupational domain. This suggests that if girls do turn to media as a source of information they may be doing so in a positive manner to collect information about future occupations.

These findings propagate an important shift away from a narrative of pathology that suggest African American adolescent girls are a monolithic demographic of girls who are unhealthy, non-adaptive, and in dire need of intervention. This study is a unique sample of African American adolescent girls who are healthy, well, and positively

thinking about their futures. The implications offer an opportunity to change the discourse by focusing on promoting and supporting the continued wellness of the girls in this sample and others who are similar. It urges researchers and professionals to consider unique differences in wellness among African American adolescent girls and provide tailored interventions. For girls similar to this sample, who are high achieving, critical of media images, and able to articulate and pursue possible selves, prevention strategies that support their continued wellness would be most meaningful.

Among girls who are not as high achieving, less critical of media, and unable to articulate and pursue possible selves, interventions that harness the strengths of this sample may be warranted. In particular, bolstering the articulation of both *hoped for* and *feared* possible selves within the same domains would help adolescent girls develop balance that supports the achievement of their possible selves. Importantly, helping youth see the importance of engaging in strategies that both lead them toward attaining their desirable selves and help them avoid their undesirable selves is key. Given the popularity of Black-oriented television, helping youth critically think about and deconstruct media messages may be fruitful in developing strategies to counter negative stereotypes. Notably, Internet and social networking sites offer an opportunity to harness youth's ability to be producers of media. Possible selves interventions might include a component of media production whereby individuals can try on possible selves. Furthermore, the inclusion of parents and/or other adult role models might bolster its impact. The goal for these programs would be to combine media literacy and production with possible selves in order to help youth both attend to the media's influence and use the media to articulate, plan, and achieve possible selves.

Table 1.

Participant Demographics

Age	N	%
13	17	9.7
14	25	14.2
15	44	25.0
16	32	18.2
17	34	19.3
18	24	13.6
Sexual Orientation		
Heterosexual	155	88.1
Lesbian	5	2.8
Bisexual	16	9.1
Grade		
7 th	4	2.3
8 th	15	8.5
9 th	37	21.0
10 th	39	22.2
11 th	40	22.7
12 th	26	14.8
Other	15	8.5
GPA		
1.9 and below	8	4.5
2.0-2.9	49	27.8
3.0-3.9	97	55.1
4.0 and above	15	8.5
Relationship Status		
Single	124	70.5
In a committed relationship	40	22.8
Other	12	6.8
Region		
East	7	4.0

Midwest	45	25.6
North	1	0.6
South	115	65.3
West	7	4.0

State Residence

Alabama	1	0.6
California	7	4.0
Florida	4	2.3
Georgia	2	1.1
Illinois	2	1.1
Indiana	42	23.9
Iowa	1	0.6
Kentucky	18	10.2
Louisiana	15	8.5
Maryland	1	0.6
New York	5	2.8
Pennsylvania	1	0.6
Texas	75	42.6
Virginia	1	0.6

Community Residence

Urban	89	50.6
Suburban	64	34.6
Rural	20	11.4

Recruitment

Electronic (social media)	71	40.3
Schools	79	44.9
Church	16	9.1
Non-profit organization	10	5.7

Family Composition

Both mother and father	68	38.6
Mother only	67	38.1
Father only	2	1.1
One parent and step-parent	29	16.5
Other guardian	9	5.1

Mother Education

Did not complete high school	18	10.2
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High school diploma/GED	34	19.3
2-year degree	20	11.4
Some college	37	21.0
Bachelors	29	16.5
Some graduate school	3	1.7
Masters degree	28	15.9
Doctoral or professional degree	3	1.7

Father Education

Did not complete high school	17	9.7
High school diploma/GED	50	28.4
2-year degree	18	10.2
Some college	29	16.5
Bachelors	35	19.9
Masters degree	12	6.8
Doctoral or professional degree	3	1.7

Religious/Spiritual Affiliation

Atheist	3	1.7
Christianity Catholic	11	6.3
Christianity Baptist	87	49.4
Christianity Other	57	32.4
Islam	4	2.3
Other	9	5.0
None	1	0.6
Missing	4	2.3

Consumption of Media

Black-oriented television	153	86.9
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Television Consumption

0 minutes/hours	5	2.8
30 minutes-10 hours	128	72.7
11-20 hours	28	15.9
21+ hours	15	8.5

Favorite Media

Reality/unscripted	73	41.5
Scripted comedy	21	11.9
Scripted sitcoms	12	6.8
Scripted dramas	46	26.1

Talk shows	4	2.3
Hip Hop Music Videos	13	7.4

Daily Internet Use

0 minutes/hours	3	1.7
30 minutes-1.5 hours	35	19.9
1.5 hours to 2.5 hours	35	19.9
2.5 to 5 hours	46	26.1
5+ hours	57	32.4

Social Networking Use

Use Internet for social networking	164	93.2
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Social Networking Platforms

Facebook	103	58.5
Instagram	151	85.8
Twitter	87	49.4
Other	86	48.9

Engagement with Television

Follow or friend TV shows	102	58
Follow of friend TV show characters	116	65.9
Post/share favorite about TV show	83	47.2
Post/share favorite about TV show character	83	47.2

Other Internet Activities

Blogging	16	9.1
Visiting TV show websites	35	19.5
Visiting celebrity fan pages/websites	30	17
Visiting celebrity gossip sites	39	22.2

Table 2.
Possible Selves Categories

Hoped For Possible Selves (HFPS)

	HFPS1	HFPS2	HFPS3	HFPS4	Total
	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i>
Educational	81 (43.5)	31 (16.7)	9 (4.8)	11 (5.9)	132
Occupational	66 (35.5)	57 (30.6)	28 (15.1)	15 (8.1)	166
Interpersonal	5 (2.7)	20 (10.8)	28 (15.1)	14 (7.5)	67
Personality	13 (7)	18 (9.7)	12 (6.5)	19 (10.2)	62
Health	2 (1.1)	4 (2.2)	8 (4.3)	5 (2.7)	19
Lifestyle	18 (9.7)	29 (15.6)	24 (12.9)	29 (15.6)	100
Other/Negative	1 (.5)	2 (1.1)	1 (.5)	1 (.5)	5
Total					551

Feared Possible Selves (FPS)

	FPS1	FPS2	FPS3	FPS4	Total
	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i>
Educational	30 (16.1)	21 (11.3)	9 (4.8)	6 (3.2)	66
Occupational	7 (3.8)	10 (5.4)	4 (2.2)	5 (2.7)	26
Interpersonal	27 (14.5)	18 (9.7)	12 (6.5)	11 (5.9)	68
Personality	16 (8.6)	18 (9.7)	14 (7.5)	11 (5.9)	59
Health	11 (5.9)	8 (4.3)	8 (4.3)	5 (2.7)	32
Lifestyle	36 (19.4)	41 (22)	22 (11.8)	14 (7.5)	114
Risky	28 (15.1)	16 (8.6)	11 (5.9)	8 (4.3)	63
Other	10 (5.4)	3 (1.6)	1 (.5)	3 (1.6)	17
Total					445

Strategies to attain Hoped For Possible Selves (HFPS)

	HFPS1	HFPS2	HFPS3	HFPS4	Total
	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i>
Strategies	153 (86.9)	124 (70.5)	77 (43.8)	62 (35.2)	416

Strategies to attain Feared Possible Selves (FPS)

	FPS1	FPS2	FPS3	FPS4	Total
	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i>
Strategies	129 (73.3)	112 (63.6)	61 (34.7)	52 (29.5)	354

Table 3.
Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations for Study Variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. BOTV	4.69	.96	--			
2. LVM	3.25	1.23	.21**	--		
3. EVM	4.24	1.06	.28**	.46**	--	
4. CVM	4.03	1.16	.33**	.48**	.81**	--

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level * Significant at the 0.05 level
 BOTV= Black-oriented television consumption; LVM = Learning viewing motivations;
 EVM = Entertainment viewing motivations; CVM = Companionship viewing
 Motivations

Table 4.
Pearson's Chi Square Crosstabulation of Recruitment Method and Possible Selves

Possible Selves	Recruitment Method		χ^2	<i>p</i>
	In person	Online		
Hoped For				
Educational	62	46	.59	.44
Occupational	64	44	.27	.61
Interpersonal	37	18	1.93	.12
Personality	29	12	2.72	.10
Physical/Health	8	10	1.23	1.7
Lifestyle	32	42	.45	.50
Feared				
Educational	30	23	.29	.56
Occupational	16	10	.05	.83
Interpersonal	31	23	.16	.69
Personality	21	19	1.1	.29
Physical/Health	18	13	.04	.84
Lifestyle	46	34	.28	.59

Table 5.

Logistic Regression Predicting Likelihood of Hoped For Educational Possible Selves Based on Black-oriented Television Consumption, Viewing for Learning, and Viewing for Entertainment/Companionship

Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	p	Odds Ratio	99% CI for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
BOTV	.14	-.188	.57	1	.45	1.15	.80	1.67
Learning	-.065	.17	.14	1	.71	.94	.67	1.32
Combined	.30	.24	1.64	1	.20	1.36	.85	2.16
Constant	-2.32	1.02	5.15	1	.02	.10		

Table 6.

Logistic Regression Predicting Likelihood of Feared Educational Possible Selves Based on Black-oriented Television Consumption, Viewing for Learning, and Viewing for Entertainment/Companionship

Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	p	Odds Ratio	99% CI for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
BOTV	.01	.18	.00	1	.97	1.0	.71	1.44
Learning	-.17	.17	1.04	1	.31	.84	.61	1.17
Combined	.30	.22	1.91	1	.17	1.4	.88	2.09
Constant	-.28	.92	.09	1	.76	.76		

Table 7.

Logistic Regression Predicting Likelihood of Hoped for Occupational Possible Selves Based on Black-oriented Television Consumption, Viewing for Learning, and Viewing for Entertainment/Companionship

Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	p	Odds Ratio	99% CI for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
BOTV	-.05	.18	.08	1	.78	.95	.67	1.36
Learning	.42	.17	6.70	1	.01	1.56	1.11	2.18
Combined	-.09	.22	.16	1	.69	.92	.59	1.14
Constant	-.47	.94	.25	1	.61	.62		

Table 8.

Logistic Regression Predicting Likelihood of Feared Occupational Possible Selves Based on Black-oriented Television Consumption, Viewing for Learning, and Viewing for Entertainment/Companionship

Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	p	Odds Ratio	99% CI for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
BOTV	.19	.25	.61	1	.44	1.2	.75	1.97
Learning	.00	.23	.00	1	.99	1.0	6.33	1.59
Combined	.33	.32	1.02	1	.31	1.39	.74	2.62
Constant	-3.81	1.43	7.09	1	.01	.02		

Table 9.

Logistic Regression Predicting Likelihood of Hoped for Interpersonal Possible Selves Based on Black-oriented Television Consumption, Viewing for Learning, and Viewing for Entertainment/Companionship

Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	p	Odds Ratio	99% CI for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
BOTV	-.09	.19	.21	1	.65	.92	.64	1.32
Learning	-.23	.17	1.91	1	.17	.79	.57	1.10
Combined	.23	.23	.99	1	.32	1.25	.80	1.96
Constant	-.71	.96	.55	1	.46	.49		

Table 10.

Logistic Regression Predicting Likelihood of Feared Interpersonal Possible Selves Based on Black-oriented Television Consumption, Viewing for Learning, and Viewing for Entertainment/Companionship

Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	p	Odds Ratio	99% CI for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
BOTV	-.29	.19	2.19	1	.14	.75	.51	1.01
Learning	-.20	.17	1.39	1	.24	.82	.58	1.14

Combined	.13	.23	.29	1	.59	1.13	.72	1.79
Constant	-.02	.98	.00	1	.98	.98		

Table 11.

Logistic Regression Predicting Likelihood of Hoped for Personality Possible Selves Based on Black-oriented Television Consumption, Viewing for Learning, and Viewing for Entertainment/Companionship

Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	p	Odds Ratio	99% CI for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
BOTV	-.43	.22	3.89	1	.05	.65	.43	.99
Learning	.05	.18	.08	1	.78	1.05	.74	1.51
Combined	-.10	.26	.17	1	.68	.90	.56	1.46
Constant	.18	1.03	.03	1	.86	1.20		

Table 12.

Logistic Regression Predicting Likelihood of Feared Personality Possible Selves Based on Black-oriented Television Consumption, Viewing for Learning, and Viewing for Entertainment/Companionship

Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	p	Odds Ratio	99% CI for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
BOTV	-.24	.22	1.25	1	.26	.79	.51	1.2
Learning	-.12	.19	.39	1	.53	.89	.61	1.29
Combined	.44	.27	2.69	1	.10	1.55	.92	2.61
Constant	-2.24	1.14	3.88	1	.05	.11		

Table 13.

Logistic Regression Predicting Likelihood of Hoped for Physical/Health Possible Selves Based on Black-oriented Television Consumption, Viewing for Learning, and Viewing for Entertainment/Companionship

Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	p	Odds Ratio	99% CI for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper

BOTV	-.02	.29	.01	1	.94	.98	.55	1.74
Learning	.09	.27	.12	1	.73	1.10	.65	1.86
Combined	-.01	.36	.00	1	.97	.98	.49	1.98
Constant	-2.43	1.51	2.58	1	.11	.09		

Table 14.

Logistic Regression Predicting Likelihood of Feared Physical/Health Possible Selves Based on Black-oriented Television Consumption, Viewing for Learning, and Viewing for Entertainment/Companionship

Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	p	Odds Ratio	99% CI for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
BOTV	-.56	.25	5.03	1	.03	.57	.35	.93
Learning	-.15	.20	.58	1	.45	.86	.58	1.27
Combined	.27	.28	.99	1	.32	1.32	.77	2.26
Constant	-.88	1.16	.58	1	.45	.42		

Table 15.

Logistic Regression Predicting Likelihood of Hoped for Lifestyle Possible Selves Based on Black-oriented Television Consumption, Viewing for Learning, and Viewing for Entertainment/Companionship

Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	p	Odds Ratio	99% CI for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
BOTV	.23	.18	1.68	1	.19	1.23	.89	1.78
Learning	-.24	.16	2.18	1	.14	.79	.57	1.08
Combined	.10	.22	.21	1	.65	1.10	.72	1.69
Constant	-.50	.91	.30	1	.58	.61		

Table 16.

*Logistic Regression Predicting Likelihood of Feared Lifestyle Possible Selves
Based on Black-oriented Television Consumption, Viewing for Learning, and Viewing for
Entertainment/Companionship*

Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	p	Odds Ratio	99% CI for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
BOTV	.16	.18	.80	1	.37	1.17	.83	1.65
Learning	-.00	.15	.00	1	.98	.99	.73	1.36
Combined	-.19	.21	.82	1	.37	.83	.54	1.25
Constant	.35	.90	.15	1	.70	1.42		

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Appendix A

PRE SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: Please circle one answer choice for each question.

1. How old are you?

13 years old 14 years old 15 years old 16 years old 17 years old

18 years old

2. Do you identify as African American?

Yes No

3. Do you identify as female?

Yes No

Appendix B

DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1) What grade are you in?
 - a) 6th
 - b) 7th
 - c) 8th
 - d) 9th
 - e) 10th
 - f) 11th
 - g) 12th
 - h) Other
 - i) Please specify _____

- 2) What is your GPA?
 - a) 1.9 and below
 - b) 2.0 – 2.9
 - c) 3.0 – 3.9
 - d) 4.0 and above

- 3) What is your relationship status?
 - a) Single
 - b) In a committed relationship
 - c) Other (Specify _____)

- 5) How would you describe the community in which you currently live?
 - a. Urban
 - b. Suburban
 - c. Rural

- 6) Who do you live with?
 - d. Both mother and father
 - e. Mother only
 - f. Father only
 - g. One parent and step-parent
 - h. Other parent or guardian
 - i. Please specify _____ (e.g., Grandparent)

- 7) What is the highest level of educational attainment of your mother?
 - a. Did not complete high school
 - b. High school diploma/GED
 - c. 2-year degree (Associates/Technical Program)
 - d. Some college
 - e. 4-year degree (Bachelors)

- f. Some graduate school
- g. Masters degree
- h. Doctoral or professional degree

8) What is the highest level of educational attainment of your father?

- a. Did not complete high school
- b. High school diploma/GED
- c. 2-year degree (Associates/Technical Program)
- d. Some college
- e. 4-year degree (Bachelors)
- f. Some graduate school
- g. Masters degree
- h. Doctoral or professional degree

9) How many siblings do you have? _____

10) What is your birth order?

- i. Oldest child
- j. Middle child
- k. Youngest child
- l. Only child

11) Which category best describes your religious/spiritual affiliation? (Circle all that apply)

- m. Agnostic
- n. Atheist
- o. Buddhism
- p. Christianity
 - i. Catholic
 - ii. Baptist
 - iii. Other _____
- q. Hinduism
- r. Islam
- s. Judaism
- t. Spiritual
- u. Other
 - i. Please specify _____

12) Do you watch television with Black-oriented casts (e.g., Real Housewives of Atlanta, R&B Divas, The Game, and Being Mary Jane)?

Yes No

Appendix C

TELEVISION EXPOSURE QUESTIONNAIRE

How many hours in a week do you watch television across genres (e.g., reality, scripted, music videos etc.)? Please include hours watching both live and recorded television (e.g., on demand, DVR). For example, watching 30 minutes of television would be equivalent to watching a full episode of The Game or half of an episode of Love and Hip Hop: Atlanta.

0 30 minutes – 10 hours 11- 20 hours 21+ hours

Which is your favorite type of television show to watch by genre. Choose one.

Reality/unscripted (e.g., Love and Hip Hop: Atlanta)

Scripted comedy (e.g., The Game)

Scripted sitcoms (e.g., Blackish)

Scripted dramas (e.g., Scandal)

Talk shows (e.g., The Wendy Williams Show)

Hip Hop Music videos

Appendix D

BLACK ORIENTED TELEVISION EXPOSURE QUESTIONNAIRE

What TV Programs do you watch?

Please circle how often you watched the following Reality/Scripted TV programs during the 2014- 2015 television season. These are programs that usually show new episodes every week. Indicate how often you watched new episodes of these shows.

Name of show	never/not this season	about once a month	every other week	almost every week	every week
Bad Girls Club Chicago	0	1	2	3	4
Basketball Wives, Los Angeles	0	1	2	3	4
Blackish	0	1	2	3	4
Being Mary Jane	0	1	2	3	4
Bring It	0	1	2	3	4
Empire	0	1	2	3	4
Hit the Floor	0	1	2	3	4
Love and Hip Hop: Atlanta	0	1	2	3	4
Love and Hip Hop, Hollywood	0	1	2	3	4
Love and Hip Hop, New York	0	1	2	3	4
Real Housewives of Atlanta	0	1	2	3	4
Scandal	0	1	2	3	4
The Game	0	1	2	3	4

On the lines below, please report additional shows that you watch. Using the same scale from above indicate how often you watch these shows per week.

Name of show	never/not this season	about once a month	every other week	almost every week	every week
1. _____	0	1	2	3	4
2. _____	0	1	2	3	4

Appendix E

VIEWING MOTIVATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

Listed below are a number of reasons that have frequently been given for watching television. Using the scale provided, rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each reason.

1	2	3	4	5	6
strongly disagree	disagree	disagree a little	agree a little	agree	strongly agree

I LIKE TO WATCH TV:

- _____ 1. because it's something fun to do with my friends.
- _____ 2. because it helps me learn about myself and others.
- _____ 3. so I can learn about what might happen to me in the future.
- _____ 4. to help me understand the world.
- _____ 5. because it is convenient.
- _____ 6. because it is entertaining and enjoyable.
- _____ 7. because it is less expensive than other activities.
- _____ 8. so I can learn how to do things I haven't done before.
- _____ 9. to find out ways to act with others and see how others solve problems.
- _____ 10. because it gives me factual information.
- _____ 11. because it keeps me company.
- _____ 12. because it helps me to relax and unwind.
- _____ 13. because it helps me to pass the time of day.
- _____ 14. to learn about world events.
- _____ 15. to learn about people from ethnic and cultural backgrounds different from my own.
- _____ 16. so I can get different perspectives on life, lifestyles, or occupations.
- _____ 17. it's like a habit -- just one of those things you do.
- _____ 18. because it is exciting to watch.
- _____ 19. because it teaches me things not learned in school.
- _____ 20. to find out what happens to people.
- _____ 21. because it helps me forget about my problems.
- _____ 22. because it provides topics for conversation with others.

Appendix F

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES QUESTIONNAIRE

What types of Internet activities do you typically engage in for entertainment purposes?
Check all that apply.

- 1. Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
 - 2. Blogging
 - 3. Visiting television show websites
 - 4. Visiting celebrity fan pages and websites
 - 5. Celebrity gossip sites (e.g., Media Takeout)
 - 6. Other
- Please specify _____

Which social networking sites do you have accounts with? Check all that apply

- 1. Facebook
 - 2. Instagram
 - 3. Twitter
 - 4. Other
- Please specify _____

How often do you use the Internet?

How many hours in a day do you use the Internet?

0 30 minutes – 1.5 hours 1.5 -2.5 hours 2.5 – 5 hours 5+ hours

How often do you specifically use the Internet for social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)?

How many hours in a day do you use social networking sites?

0 30 minutes – 1.5 hours 1.5 -2.5 hours 2.5 – 5 hours 5+ hours

Please circle yes or no to indicate if you engage in the following activities on your personal social networking accounts.

Follow or friend your favorite television shows

Yes No

Follow or friend your favorite television show characters

Yes No

Post or share stories, statues, or photos of your favorite television show

Yes No

Post or share stories, statues, or photos of your favorite television show characters

Yes No

Appendix G

HOPED-FOR POSSIBLE SELVES QUESTIONNAIRE

Who will you be in the next few years? Each of us has some image or picture of what we will be like and what we want to avoid being like in the future. These thoughts about our future are also known as *Possible Selves* – the selves we might possibly become.

Some of these Possible Selves may be images of our aspirations and what we would like to be in the future. They are known as Hoped-for Possible Selves. Some may be quite likely while others may be vague thoughts or dreams for the future.

Example Hoped-For Possible selves might include: “attending college,” “getting married,” “being creative,” “traveling the world,” and “eating healthy.”

Think about your coming future years -- imagine what you hope to be like and write down four hoped-for possible selves below.

When I’m in my 20’s, I hope to be...

1. Hoped-For Possible Self _____

How likely is this possible self for you? (Circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
very unlikely	unlikely	neither likely or unlikely	likely	very likely

Am I am doing something to be that way? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what I am doing now to be that way in my twenties?

2. Hoped-For Possible Self _____

How likely is this possible self for you? (Circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
very unlikely	unlikely	neither likely or unlikely	likely	very likely

Am I am doing something to be that way? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what I am doing now to be that way in my twenties?

3. Hoped-For Possible Self _____

How likely is this possible self for you? (Circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
very	unlikely	neither likely	likely	very
unlikely		or unlikely		likely

Am I am doing something to be that way? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what I am doing now to be that way in my twenties?

4. Hoped-For Possible Self _____

How likely is this possible self for you? (Circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
very	unlikely	neither likely	likely	very
unlikely		or unlikely		likely

Am I am doing something to be that way? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what I am doing now to be that way in my twenties?

Appendix H

FEARED POSSIBLE SELVES QUESTIONNAIRE

In addition to having Hoped-for Possible Selves, we may also have images of ourselves in the future that we dread and do not want to become. These selves we want to avoid becoming are known as Feared Possible Selves. Some of the Feared Possible Selves may seem likely while others may seem unlikely.

Examples Feared Possible Selves might include: “failing high school,” “being alone,” “being shy,” “not being able to travel,” or “overeating.”

Think about your coming future years -- imagine what you would like to avoid becoming and write down four feared possible selves below.

When I'm in my 20's, I want to avoid...

1. Feared Possible Self _____

How likely is this possible self for you? (Circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
very unlikely	unlikely	neither likely or unlikely	likely	very likely

Am I am doing something to avoid this? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what I am doing now to avoid being that way in my twenties?

2. Feared Possible Self _____

How likely is this possible self for you? (Circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
very unlikely	unlikely	neither likely or unlikely	likely	very likely

Am I am doing something to avoid this? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what I am doing now to avoid being that way in my twenties?

3. Feared Possible Self _____

How likely is this possible self for you? (Circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
very	unlikely	neither likely	likely	very
unlikely		or unlikely		likely

Am I am doing something to avoid this? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what I am doing now to avoid being that way in my twenties?

4. Feared Possible Self _____

How likely is this possible self for you? (Circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
very	unlikely	neither likely	likely	very
unlikely		or unlikely		likely

Am I am doing something to avoid this? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what I am doing now to avoid being that way in my twenties?

Appendix I

Coding Instructions for Hoped For and Feared Possible Selves

A. CATEGORY LABELS

There are six main categories of Hoped For Possible Selves:

1. **Educational-** relates to learning, attaining knowledge, school and school interactions with teachers, success in school, achievement-related activities
2. **Occupational** – relates to a type of job, work, occupation, career, business ownership. Also included responses related to meeting career goals or gaining recognition for a career.
3. **Interpersonal Relationships-** involves family, friends, relationships, and social interactions except with teachers
4. **Personality Traits-** relates to personality characteristics, self-descriptions of traits
5. **Physical/Health-Related-** relates to physical health, weight, height
6. **Material/Lifestyles-** relates to material possessions and living situation, including moving
7. **Negative-** includes all negatively worded responses
8. **Other** – relates to any aspect that does not fall under the above categories

There are seven main categories of Feared Possible Selves.

1. **Educational-** relates to learning, attaining knowledge, school and school interactions with teachers, success in school, achievement-related activities
2. **Occupational** – relates to a type of job, , work, occupation, career, business ownership. Also included responses related to meeting career goals or gaining recognition for a career.
3. **Interpersonal Relationships-** involves family, friends, relationships, and social interactions except with teachers
4. **Personality Traits-** relates to personality characteristics, self-descriptions of traits
5. **Physical/Health-Related-** relates to physical health, weight, height
6. **Material/Lifestyles-** relates to material possessions and living situation, including moving
7. **Non-normative /Risky Behaviors-** includes negative and illegal behaviors such as smoking, drinking, involved in fights, gangs, etc.
8. **Other** – relates to any aspect that does not fall under the above categories

B. EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE SELVES

Educational

Hoped For Possible Selves

Activities in school- cheer team, basketball team at school, playing instrument, school band, extra-curricular activities, playing sports, on a team, a better basketball player, getting a driver's license

School/ Higher Education - doing good in school, trying to do good in school, smart, getting good grades, going to the next grade, keep my grades up, not tardy or absent from school, more helpful in classroom, going to college, getting an advanced degree (masters, PhD, MD, JD etc.)

Teachers- good relationship with teachers, getting along with teachers, respectful to teachers

Activities Not in School- basketball in neighborhood, guitar, deer hunting, reading a lot of books, boxing, (Note: Generally, if there is any doubt about activities put in school activities except for things not offered in school)

Feared Selves

Activities in school- not on team, not making cheerleading or the football team

School/ Higher Education - academic/school failure, not meeting educational goals, not graduating, not getting accepted into college, failing out of college, not paying for college

Teachers- poor relationship with teachers

Occupational

Hoped For Possible Selves

Job- working for extra money, finding summer job, working, help mom save for school, babysitting, having a job, part-time job

Career/Occupations – becoming a doctor, lawyer, teacher etc.

Business/Enterprise – owning own business/entrepreneur, becoming a CEO by

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Trades/Vocations/Crafts (that might be considered either hobbies or occupations) – writer, poet

Feared Selves

Job-losing my job, without work, getting fired or laid off work, not getting a promotion

Career/Occupations – not reaching career goals

Business/Enterprise – not reaching business/entrepreneur goals, working for someone else (not being able to own a business when s/he wants to), not advancing in career

Trades/Vocations/Crafts (that might be considered either hobbies or occupations) – not being able to write or be a poet for occupation

Interpersonal Relationships

Hoped For Possible Selves

Family- having children, getting along with parents/spouse/relatives, helping around house, better person towards mother, see relatives, doing things with family, closer to family, being a good/ better son/daughter

Peers- having a steady boyfriend/girlfriend, getting married, getting along better with people, having lots of friends/same friends, making new friends, having lots of friends, hang with friends more, being a better friend

Feared Possible Selves

Family- not getting married, having anything negative happen family, getting into arguments with parent/spouse/relative, without someone to turn to

Peers- not having a boyfriend/girlfriend (being single), enemies with other people, being a follower, being disliked by friends, not making friends, lying to people, boring, breaking up with girl/boyfriend, bad to my friends, without friends because of rumors,

Personality Traits

Hoped For Possible Selves

General- nice, respectful, better listener, funny, confident, happy

Independence or Maturity- more mature, more responsible, more grown-up, helping her without complaining, A little more organized, Able to concentrate

Attitude- more serious person, being more open-minded, positive thoughts, positive attitude, to be a good person

Feared Possible Selves

General- lonely, mean person, rude, stuck up, unhappy

Independence or Maturity- lazy, irresponsible, not trusted

Attitude- a bad attitude, silly, greedy, weak mentally, emotional mess, caring about nothing

Physical/Health-Related

Hoped For Possible Selves

General Body Descriptive- Hair looking different, taller, growing a few inches, Handsome, good-looking,

Physical Health- healthy

Feared Possible Selves

General Body Descriptive- Short, I won't grow, not attractive

Physical Health- Sick a lot, so sick I can't attend school, on medication, weaker than I am, overweight, death

Material/ Lifestyle

Hoped For Possible Selves

Lifestyle- moving out of parent house, living in the dorms, owning own home, moving to Canada, living somewhere, going places I have never been,

Material- own a car, living in better new house

Feared Selves

Lifestyle- Still living at home with parents, homeless

Material- unable to own material possessions they want

Non-Normative/Risky Behaviors

Hoped for Self – Not applicable

Feared Selves - smoking, drinking too much, using illegal drugs, going to jail, early/teen/unwanted/unplanned pregnancy

Examples of Strategies

Educational

Doing all my schoolwork

Paying more attention in class

Looking up colleges

Occupational

Looking for a job

Talking to career/counselor

Researching jobs

Interpersonal Relationships

Doing what others tell me to do

Working with parents

Asking for help

Personality Traits

Controlling my attitude/actions

Trying new things

Disciplining myself

Physical

Lifting weights

Exercising

Eating healthy foods

Material/ Lifestyle

Working to save my money

Talking with parents about moving