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As the *Eagle's Eye* soars high above the landscape of post-9/11 America, it is mystified by the rapid and dramatic changes in the culture. Many of these changes are especially seen in popular music, television, and medical practice and technology. To appreciate these cultural shifts, look closely at the following four essays. In "City Country: The Paradox of Country Music in Urban America," Molly Fay explores the roots of country music and explains its rapid growth in the fertile soil of urban life. She underscores how country music captures the core values of authenticity and believability and how it spoke directly to the nation in the wake 9/11. Her research merited the award for the Best Undergraduate Essay given by the Eastern American Studies Association on March 29, 2014, at its annual conference. Anne Areias, in "The Bachelor Embraces the American Fairytale," discusses how the success of the television show, "The Bachelor," is based largely on two American narratives that have endured in the American consciousness, the myth of equal opportunity and the myth of male hegemony. Also focusing on television, Kristin MacKenzie questions if reality TV depicts real life. She also analyzes how shows like *Laguna Beach* and *The Hills* influence the lifeplans and belief systems of many Americans, especially adolescents. In "Physicians' Tools: Past and Present," Moira McEntee traces the evolution of medicine since the Civil War, emphasizing refinements in surgical instruments and medical technology. Her research looks closely at the effects of Germ Theory on surgical practice and advances in computer technology that have led to "medical apps."

I would like to thank the contributors for their outstanding essays as well as Lauren DeAngelis, the American Studies administrative assistant, who assisted in editing and preparing the manuscripts.

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City Country: The Paradox of Country Music in Urban America
By Molly Fay

An unforeseen consequence of country music's reaction to September 11 was the over-politicization of the genre. Though the songs released by Jackson and Keith saw great success, they laid a foundation for a revival of protest music in country music. No group displayed this trend more than the Dixie Chicks.

The Dixie Chicks released their album *Home* in 2002, that included two successful singles in "Long Time Gone" and "Landslide," and another steadily climbed the charts with "Travelin' Soldier."¹ That success slipped away after March 10, 2003, forever rocketing the Dixie Chicks into controversy. At a concert in London, Dixie Chicks singer Natalie Maines famously said, "Just so you know, we're ashamed the President of the United States is from Texas."² A firestorm followed, especially from traditional conservatives making up a significant portion of country music's fan base. The media attention on the country music group was significant, as it pushed the genre deeper into America's mainstream culture.

Soon after the controversial comments and the subsequent response, the Dixie Chicks were regular features in American media. Perhaps most famous was their eyebrow raising cover on *Entertainment Weekly*, when all three members of the country group appeared naked while covered in "brands" of responses.³ The words included "Dixie Sluts," "Proud Americans," "Free Speech," and "Traitors." Between 2003 and 2006 the Dixie Chicks—the biggest selling "girl group" of all time in any genre—all but disappeared from country radio. Their comeback single, "Not Ready to Make Nice"

⁵ Chris Willman, *Rednecks & Bluenecks* (New York: The New Press, 2005), 23.

⁶ *Ibid*, 24-25.

⁷ *Ibid*, xviii.

(2006), simply reignited the controversy and landed at a weak number 36 on the Billboard country chart.⁴ For better or worse, country music became a central outlet of political opinions after the Dixie Chicks.

As an election loomed in 2004, country music stars filled American news networks with interviews or recent displays of political opinion. Sara Evans was one such star thrust into the political realm when she was invited to CNBC to comment on the recent "Vote for Change (Support John Kerry)" music tour in which the Dixie Chicks participated.⁵ Seemingly an accident, Evans pointed out that most of her fans were Republicans and received a backlash of her own for aligning herself with one party. As more politically-infused controversies occurred, the genre became more and more mainstream, pushing stars and country music's hometown of Nashville toward increased fame.

When Americans began to take more of an interest in country music, they encountered the force of Nashville, country music's epicenter. The moment of conception for Nashville's country music scene occurred in 1925 when the WSM Barn Dance radio show was established.⁶ Soon after, the overwhelmingly popular show was renamed the Grand Ole Opry. As the show broadcasted from Nashville, country music acts from the region travelled into the city to appear on the show. Soon, a network of publishers and recording studios set up shop in the city. By the 1950s, Nashville was America's center for country music.⁷

⁸ Andrew Boulton, "The Popular Geopolitical Wor(l)ds of Post-9/11 Country Music," *Popular Music and Society*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (2008), 375.

⁹ Willman, 7.

¹⁰ Crawford, 373.

¹¹ Fabian Holt, *Genre in Popular Music*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 63.

The romantic notion of Nashville presents an interesting paradox: an urban center grounded in an industry of rural music; a city based on selling the country to consumers. The huge success of radio broadcasting across the rural South created a specific type of music that Nashville producers and recording studios wanted to cash in on, regardless of the development of their artists. Tension between artists and the stereotypical “Nashville” sound heightened at the end of the 20th century and at the advent of the 2000s. Technology blurred the lines between rural and urban as artists rose in popularity for both segments.

In 2002, the *New York Times* reported a backlash against Faith Hill for straying from the traditional Nashville sound with her album *Cry*.⁸ Logically, Hill pointed out that she had fans all over the world, not just in the rural South, so she thought her music should appeal to a wider market. The backlash for the rock-country album was a little hypocritical considering the roots of Nashville as a hub of rock and roll as well as country music.⁹

Contemporary country artist Jason Aldean released a hit song in 2010 describing Nashville. In “Crazy Town,” Aldean called the city: “*Hollywood with a touch of twang.*” This urban description shows how Nashville’s music industry has been shaped, in part, by executives from New York or other major market cities.¹⁰ The urban style leaks into the songs created in Nashville because it is a *city*, despite what some traditionalists want the music to represent. Country music that comes from Nashville will always be touched by other genres that live in the urban environment. Both Hill and

¹² James Hunter, “MUSIC; Redrawing Country’s Borders,” *The New York Times*, (2002).

¹³ Holt, 64.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Aldean represent a new breed of Nashville artists. They are adapters: They recognize that their fan base has changed and have tailored their music accordingly.

Now in 2013, the world has taken notice of the city of Nashville. The popularity of country music, economic success, and a hit television show also named *Nashville* have all contributed to the city's latest boom.¹¹ *GQ Magazine*, a widely circulated mainstream publication, regards the city as "Nowville."¹² These urban conditions cannot help but overflow into the music created in this city. The latest country hits have strong pop or rock influences, as the description of Taylor Swift's latest album can attest: "The banjo pluck of the title track and acoustic ballad 'All Too Well' will resonate with country fans, but glossy singles like 'We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together' and 'I Knew You Were Trouble' seem destined for a broader audience—one that is just as vivid as the title (Red) suggests."¹³ Big Machine Records, headquartered in Nashville, released this album.¹⁴ The editor drafting this description for iTunes may have been unknowingly describing Nashville's music scene in addition to describing Taylor Swift.

Media has played the largest role in urbanizing country music. Through radio, cinema, and television, the genre has exploded in cities across the United States. Of the three, radio stands as the oldest and most reliable force in bolstering country music's popularity.

In post-9/11 America, country music flowed over the airways of 2,028 radio stations, while the next closest competitor, talk radio, held only 1,318 stations.¹⁵ Based

¹⁵ Kim Severson, "Nashville's Latest Big Hit Could Be the City Itself," *The New York Times* (2013).

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ *iTunes Music Store*, "Editor's Notes: Taylor Swift, *Red*" (2012)

¹⁸ "Big Machine Records About," Big Machine Records, accessed May 2, 2013, http://www.bigmachinelabelgroup.com/label/Big_Machine_Records.

¹⁹ CMA (Country Music Association). "MRI Country Listener Analysis," (Nashville: CMA, 2003).

on those figures, the listenership of country music was at approximately 45,500,000 adults per week, with 35% living in the 25 top markets when compiled.¹⁶ Though these statistics are from 2003, they have only seemed to grow in the United States. By 2011, MRI research indicated that a whopping 42% of the population is country music fans.¹⁷

In January 2013, the urban epicenter of American culture, New York City, joined the country radio craze with *Nash FM*, the first country music station in the city after seventeen years.¹⁸ The previous station had switched from country music to pop music in the mid-1990s. The opening of this radio station marks an important milestone for the urbanization of country music in the United States. As *New York Times* columnist Ben Sisario pointed out:

New York may be the ultimate symbol of American urbanism, but it is a large market for country music. Last year...more country albums were sold in the New York metropolitan area than anywhere in the United States — although as a proportion of all music sales in the region, New York ranks far below less populous areas in the South and Midwest.¹⁹

New York is not alone in the success of country music in a major urban market. Other major cities have encountered consistent success with their country radio stations:

‘If you look at the other major markets that have a successful country station — Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Detroit — those stations planted a stake in the ground and stayed with it, and now those stations are practically iconic,’ said Mr. Borchetta, of Big Machine.

²⁰ ¹⁹ CMA (Country Music Association). “MRI Country Listener Analysis,”

²¹ Vernell Hackett, “New Statistics About Country Music Fans Revealed at *Billboard* Country Summit,” *Billboard* (2011).

²² Ben Sisario, “Country Returns to City Radio: After 17 Years, a Home in New York,” *The New York Times*, (2013).

²³ *Ibid.*

'The country radio audience doesn't spike. It grows in a beautiful, slow arc.'²⁰

As an executive with Big Machine Records, Borchetta's comments reinforce the notion that country music can be and is successful in urban areas. This success indicates that country music has become relevant to city listeners as much as the stereotypical rural fan. The presence of country music in cinema in 1980 and 2010 shows this important shift in the identity of country as an urban genre holding to rural roots.

Country music and popular American cinema share an interesting history with one another. For a long period of time, country music was used in scores for "Westerns," a film genre depicting cowboys, Native Americans, and the American West. This relationship changed in 1980 with *Urban Cowboy*, starring John Travolta.²¹

Urban Cowboy depicts a young man from rural Texas, moving into the city for employment. Travolta's character Bud, finds himself joining the local "honkytonk" scene where he meets his wife, Sissy. Through the duration of the film, country music remains a constant theme reflecting popular images of the genre itself—the archetype American cowboy needing to find work and leaving the country behind. Though he is in the city, the music at the honkytonk reminisces of his rural life. The film follows a simplistic storyline: Hero, villain, damsel in distress, and a happy ending. Despite the film's setting in the American city, the problems faced by the characters lack typical complexities associated with urban life.

Urban Cowboy represents the beginning of the relocation of country music. After the film's release, the impact was substantial for country music. The film reached

²⁴ Ben Sisario, "Country Returns to City Radio."

²⁵ "Urban Cowboy," Internet Movie Database, accessed May 3, 2013
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0081696/>

completely new audiences, as it was targeted to urbanites, made clear in the title. In the years that followed, notably “un-country” areas of the United States started opening country themed nightclubs and dancehalls, such as Whiskey Café in Lyndhurst, New Jersey, established in 1992.²² With these new audiences, country musicians inherently needed to urbanize to maintain popularity.

Thirty years after *Urban Cowboy*, Hollywood released another country music themed blockbuster with *Country Strong*.²³ This film, a near opposite of *Urban Cowboy*, marks the vast changes in country music. Main character Kelly Canter, a former superstar trying to rejuvenate her career after an arrest and stint in rehab, is the *new* country star. Made clear by this film, country music no longer resides in highway bars and honkytonks. In a conversation between Kelly’s manager-husband, James Canter, and show opener, Beau Hutton, the shift is made clear when Canter says, “Why don’t you come out on the road with us? Get out of these honkytonks and step into the big leagues.”²⁴ The “big leagues” refers to the national tour of Kelly Canter to all the major American cities.

In comparison of *Urban Cowboy* to *Country Strong*, the urbanization of country music is clearly defined. In 1980 when *Urban Cowboy* came out, popular stereotypes of country music fans and musicians included small town transplants coming to the big city, and local musicians playing for their groceries. In 2010, country music was incredibly popular, glamorous, and mired by urban issues such as substance abuse, adultery, suicide, and constant tabloid attention. The conclusion of *Country Strong* defines the shift best

²⁶ Marc Ferris, “Country Music, Above the Mason-Dixon,” *The New York Times*, (2001).

²⁷ “Country Strong,” Internet Movie Database, accessed May 2, 2013, http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1555064/?ref=fn_al_tt_1

²⁸ *Country Strong*, directed by Shana Feste (2010; Culver City, CA: Screen Gems Productions), DVD.

when Beau Hutton (Gerrett Hedlund) abandons the “big-time” national tour to bounce from honkytonk to honkytonk playing authentic country music.

These depictions of country as an urban style of music reinforce the presence of country music on city radio stations. The genre is being shown on the silver screen as mainstream American music and has the radio presence to back that up. Yet, the media outlet with the most visible and consistent presence of country music in mainstream popular culture is television.

In 2005, CBS broadcasted both the Grammy Awards and the Country Music Association Awards. The former achieved 18.8 million viewers, while the latter contended with 18.4 million.²⁵ Statistically, the difference between the two is nearly insignificant, suggesting that country music was just as important to the American people as the multi-genre music award show during 2005. Not surprisingly, this particular instance came hand-in-hand with the unprecedented success of *American Idol*.

From the 2003-04 television season through 2010-11 season, *American Idol* has been the most-watch prime-time program in the nation.²⁶ The show, styled to mirror Britain's highly successful *Pop Idol*, auditions people in major cities across the country, passing along potential talent to future shows. As the season progresses, the pool becomes smaller as contestants are judged weekly. In the finale, a winner is crowned “American Idol” and receives a recording contract and numerous financial royalties.²⁷

Country music has reaped the benefits of *Idol*'s success with two winners, Carrie Underwood and Scotty McCreary. In addition to the winners, other singers have found

²⁹ Willman, 6.

³⁰ Douglas Rowe, “Full 2010-11 Ratings: CBS Tops Viewership, Fox is No.1 in Demo and *Idol* Remains Most-Watched,” *TV Guide* (2011)

³¹ Edward Wyatt, “‘Idol’ Winners: Not Just Fame but Big Bucks,” *The New York Times*, (2010).

success in country music from the show's overwhelmingly popularity. Bucky Covington, Josh Gracin and Kellie Pickler all enjoyed Top 10 country hits in the subsequent years following their appearances on *Idol*.²⁸

In the second decade of the 21st century, *American Idol* has declined while other television shows have stepped forward to replace it. In April of 2013, NBC's *The Voice*, starring enigmatic country star Blake Shelton, and ABC's *Dancing with the Stars*, with current competitor and country star Kellie Pickler, have pushed *Idol* down to third in "competition" show category of television ratings.²⁹ The high popularity of these three shows constantly maintains country music's presence in mainstream American culture.

Television network ABC has cashed in on the urban popularity of country music with the show *Nashville*. The plot revolves around the glamorous lifestyles of two country music superstars living in Nashville. It is a much brighter depiction of city life than what was shown in *Country Strong*. Holding a primetime slot, *Nashville* is another highlight of the popularity of country music in America right now.

The strong television presence of country music solidifies the genre's status as a mainstream fixture in America. To reach that coveted place, country music has undoubtedly urbanized to appeal to the broad audiences of American television. The stars and Nashville, a city depicted as being run by the music industry, are highlighted constantly to make strong connections with urban markets.

The future of country music appears even more urbanized. As early as 2004, country stars began teaming up with hip-hop artists to reach higher levels of popularity in urban areas. Tim McGraw and Nelly achieved success with their fast-rising Top 40 hit

³² Craig Shelburne, "Ten *American Idol* Singers With Country Success," *CMT News*, (2011).

³³ David Bauder, "'American Idol' is now 3rd-rated Competition Show," *US News*, (2013).

“Over and Over.”³⁰ In an interview, hip-hop artist Nelly described why he and McGraw partnered to make the song:

...Everybody knows hip-hop was born within the inner city and the urban community and it's become one of the most popular forms of music on the planet. And country's the same way—they both come from those kind of poverty-stricken communities and expand out. So putting those together, it's gonna work—it just has to be done right.³¹

Unfortunately, some artists encounter immense opposition when attempting to combine country music and hip-hop.

In April of 2013, country singer Brad Paisley and hip-hop artist LL Cool J joined forces with their song, “Accidental Racist.” The media’s negative response came swiftly within hours of the song’s release. *Rolling Stone*, *Gawker*, and even *CMT.com* spoke out against the song using phrases such as “questionable,” “horrible,” and “clumsily written.”³² The outcry from the collaboration reached the highly popular *Saturday Night Live* in a spoof during the show’s weekly segment of “The Weekend Update with Seth Myers.”³³

Within the song, Paisley explores the mistrust between a white southern man wearing a rebel flag shirt and the African-American barista at Starbucks. Regardless of the lyrics, the subject of the song shows the new clash between country music and hip-hop in urban culture. Though hip-hop has become mainstream and expanded beyond its roots in African-American inner-city neighborhoods, the genre is still associated with

³⁴ Willman, 181.

³⁵ Ibid,182.

³⁶ Leonard Pitts Jr., “Brad Paisley’s ‘Accidental Racist’ Not Honest,” *The Miami Herald*, (2013).

³⁷ “Brad Paisley’s ‘Accidental Racist’ Gets ‘Saturday Night Live’ Spoof Treatment,” Yahoo Music, accessed May 4, 2013, <http://music.yahoo.com/blogs/our-country/brad-paisley-accidental-racist-gets-saturday-night-live-160106262.html>.

African-Americans. Country music, on the other hand, has historically been a “white” genre. As recent as 2008, CMA released a study of consumer segmentation citing the “Core Country Music user” as likely to be Caucasian and more affluent than the average American citizen.³⁴ As country music progresses in urbanization, the genre now faces similar racial tensions to those plaguing American cities.

The intense popularity of country music in the 21st century is undeniable. A stereotyped style of music that was once considered overwhelmingly rural has infiltrated mainstream American culture and become nearly as popular in large cities as it is in small towns. An “urbanization” of country music has occurred to achieve this monumental shift. No single factor catapulted country music into popular culture. Instead, a combination of national events, politics, and media formed country music into the urban musical genre it is today. Following September 11th, country musicians reached out to the American people, connecting emotional lyrics to the national mood. Soon after, these same musicians were faced with the polarizing effects of politicization when stars became prominent features on national news conglomerates. Further urbanization came into country music as the genre ties with the city of Nashville became more prominent. No force was stronger in de-ruralizing country music than mainstream media. The radio presence of country music increased in cities across the United States, causing musicians to adjust their sound to appeal to the new audiences. Hollywood produced successful films about country music, depicting it as dully glamorous and plagued by typically urban plights. American television solidified the genre’s place in the mainstream with the overwhelming popularity of *American Idol*, *The Voice*, and *Nashville*. Currently, the

³⁸ Wendy Pearl, “CMA Releases Major Consumer Research Segmentation Study,” *American Chronicle*, (2009).

success of contemporary country has caused new territory to be sought. Musicians are now attempting to cross between country and hip-hop to reach new levels of urban popularity. The future may have the emergence of a new urban musical genre.

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The Bachelor Embraces the American Fairy Tale
By Anne Arcias

Although gender equality is now the norm in American society has gender stereotypes are still very much alive and in some sense even embraced. The reality television show, *The Bachelor*, is the best example of such stereotyping with many women still preferring the fairytale ending of being saved by Prince Charming. On the show, “women agree beforehand to claim [the bachelor], sight unseen, as their ideal spouse.”¹ The bachelor has the absolute power in determining the outcome of the women’s future. Even in the spin-off series *The Bachelorette*, when the roles are reversed and the woman holds the power, weak audience ratings make it clear that society is not as accepting of a “Princess” Charming.

These are representative of the attitudes prevalent in reality dating shows and their views on the role of women. Additionally, “dating shows might suggest an appalling gallery of female stereotypes and a patriarchal, fairy-tale ethos.”² The success of *The Bachelor* provides ratings that women vie for the approval of a male and long for the male’s gaze, something women have tried to overcome for centuries, but perhaps the appeal of being the chosen one remains too engrained in society for women to completely reject it. Women are still objectified by men, but the objectification of men is not as readily accepted.

One possible explanation for society’s engrained idea that men should be the one in charge is a concept known as the “separation of spheres,” a concept made popular by Alexis de Toqueville, a Frenchmen who toured America in the 1830s. De Toqueville

¹ Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette, , *Reality TV Remaking Television Culture*, ed. Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette (New York, New York: New York University Press).

²Ibid

observed that the duties of men were different from those of women. The woman's place was inside the home taking care of the children and doing the housework, while the man worked outside the home. Her job was to make sure her husband was happy and cared for since he was the provider for the home.³ Many television shows of the 1950's embraced this concept and portrayed women in this fashion.

At the beginning of the nation, Abigail Adams wrote, "If particular care and attention is not paid to the Ladies we are determined to foment a Rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by an Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation."⁴ Her words would prove prophetic. The Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote in 1919. The twentieth century saw women gradually became part of the workforce when men went off to war in World War II and later moved slowly to being accepted to higher education. In 1972 The Title IX made it illegal to discriminate in schools based on gender. Women have come a long way to earn the right to hold the same jobs, receive the same pay, and achieve the same level of education that men have. Yet, despite legal advances, one place women struggled to be portrayed as equals is on television.

One of the first reality television shows that featured women was *Queen for a Day*, which began on the radio in 1945 and moved to television and ran until 1964. In this show, contestants told their heart-wrenching problems on air to compete for a prize and the title of "Queen." Because the audience voted for the "queen" using an "applause meter", the woman with the saddest story usually was the winner. The show came out of

³ "Democracy In America Alexis De Tocqueville." Marxists Internet Archive.
<http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/de-tocqueville/democracy-america/ch35.htm>
(accessed February 21, 2013).

⁴ "American President: Abigail Adams." Miller Center.
<http://millercenter.org/president/adams/essays/firstlady/abigail> (accessed February 21, 2013).

World War II and people began to become very materialistic.⁵ “At the time, *Queen for a Day* served as a modern day rags-to-riches reality show.”⁶ These women were shown as desperate and pathetic. “The winner was crowned ‘Queen for a Day.’ The selected queen was dramatically adorned with a crown, robe, and roses.”⁷ The concept of helping the winning woman be crowned “Queen for a day”, feeds into the idea that there was no show called “King for a Day,” because of the hegemony within the culture. The women are the ones who deserve only a day.

The next major show to emphasize stereotypical women on television was the sitcom *I Love Lucy*. This show also reflected separation of spheres. Lucy and Ethel try desperately to make something of themselves, but always end up in trouble when they try to do jobs outside the home. On one specific episode, Lucy and Ethel try to get jobs in a chocolate factory but the conveyor belt carrying the chocolates moves too fast and the women end up stuffing chocolate anywhere they can in order for it to not pass by them. In another episode, Lucy appears in a television commercial for a new medicine, but the medicine makes her intoxicated and she can't do the commercial properly after practicing it too many times.⁸ These two examples show the viewers that women are not meant to work outside the home. The women's place is in the home and the men's place is in the workforce.

While Lucille Ball played a character that always managed to get in trouble and relied greatly on her husband, it was Ball who was the producer and star of *I Love Lucy*.

⁵ "About Queen for a Day: One of the most popular TV shows ever!." Queen for a Day: The original reality competition format is back!. <http://queenforaday.com/about.php> (accessed February 21, 2013).

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

“In an era when women were expected to play traditionally roles as housewives and mothers, Ball created a female character who constantly tried to become more independent and add some excitement to her life.”⁹ The question remains why would Lucille Ball portray herself as a character to be mocked when she had the say in how the show played out. Perhaps it is because the view of women at the time was that the man was the head of the house hold and in order for her show to be a success, the show had to follow the stereotypes. “Although Lucy Ricardo’s struggles always had humorous results, Lucille Ball’s career as an actress, producer, and president of a major television studio stood as a real-life example for American women.”¹⁰ The show gained great success, and it followed the separation of spheres. Lucille Ball really represented the “American Dream”, culminating in her becoming a successful woman in Hollywood.

The myth of the “American Dream” parallels Horatio Alger’s myth of equal opportunity and meritocracy. Each person is judged on merit and has a fair opportunity to develop these merits. All that is needed is hard work and common sense.¹¹ This is the type of dream that many children in America grow up with. Their parents tell them that they can be anything they want to be if they work hard. Horatio Alger’s myth is not the only myth children learn about. They are read and told about fairy tales.

American children, as well as children around the world, are raised on fairy tales with a “happily ever after” ending in mind. Since children are very impressionable, these stories have a large impact on them. “Millions of women must surely have formed their psycho-sexual self-concepts and their ideas of what they could or could not accomplish,

⁹ “Ball, Lucille.” *Television in American Society Reference Library*. Ed. Laurie Collier Hillstrom and Allison McNeill. Vol. 2: Biographies. Detroit: UXL, 2007. 17023. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*. Web. 27 Jan. 2013.

¹⁰ Ibid.

what sort of behavior would be rewarded, and of the nature of reward itself, in part from their favorite fairy tales.”¹² The natural way of these children fairy tales is for the prince to rescue the princess. *The Bachelor* is shown in a positive light while all the women trying to impress him are shown as emotional. He is the prince waiting to rescue his princess. This is a normal order of dating and the way relationships should come about.

These stories portray women as ‘weak, submissive, dependent, and self-sacrificing while men are powerful, active, and dominant.’ Fairy tales define women as beautiful objects, powerless to alter the events in their lives, while fairy tale men are powerful agents of their own destiny.¹³

The Bachelor is an extreme example of the gender roles accepted by society and the roles that are so ingrained in society that it is difficult for men and women to be true equals. In an article written by Leslee Kuykendal and Brian Sturm, they state, “The cultural norms represented in fairy tales play a large part in the socialization processes of the child who read about them.”¹⁴ The women on *The Bachelor* and the woman on *The Bachelorette* often refer to the events and the show as a fairy tale and the search for Prince Charming. “Researchers concluded that repeated exposure to the stereotyped images of gender was likely to have detrimental effect on the development of a child’s self-esteem as well as his perceptions of his own and others’ abilities and potential.”¹⁵ With this in mind, it is understandable that women cannot get past this idea of the search for Prince Charming that will rescue her and give her a better life. These two reality television shows reinforce this view because *The Bachelor* has such high ratings and great success while *The Bachelorette* struggles for viewers.

¹² Kuykendal, Leslee, and Brian Sturm. "We Said Feminist Fairy Tales, Not Fractured Fairy Tales." *The Journal of the Association for Library Service to Children* Winter (2007): 38-40.

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Ibid

The television shows themselves are full of imagery that embodies the elements of a fairy tale. The season starts off with the women arriving in a limousine in which they pull up to a mansion to be greeted by the handsome “prince.” He is dressed in a suit and the girls are dressed in evening gowns. One by one they get out of the limousine and meet the bachelor for the first time, hoping to make a good impression. He greets them with a hug and occasionally quite literally sweeps the girls off their feet. The women who are able to remain are one step closer to acquiring their Prince Charming. Once all the women have met the bachelor, he comes into the mansion and has mini-dates with the women. The dates are unstructured and other women often step in when another is trying to make an impression. At this point, it is all about which woman can out do the others and make the best first impression. On the first episode of multiple seasons, the girls constantly cut in on one another when they are trying to have their time with the new bachelor and make the best impression.¹⁶ Then they move on to the rose ceremony.¹⁷

Both *The Bachelor* and *The Bachelorette* rely greatly on the rose ceremony, which is a direct connection to fairy tales. “*The Bachelor* climaxes with the ‘rose ceremony,’ in which the bachelor selects his top picks by offering them roses.”¹⁸ In the first episode of each season, there is the first impression rose that all the contestants are vying for. “The ceremony gives the women very little power, reducing them to waiting on their man, and to being given identity via the bachelor’s gaze.”¹⁹ At the end of every episode, contestants are eliminated as a possible perfect match. “A dialogic reading of the seemingly patriarchal rose ceremony, therefore, would observe that the tension and

¹⁶ Rick Rowell, *The Bachelor*. January 3, 2011. Philadelphia: ABC. TV

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette, , *Reality TV Remaking Television Culture*, ed. Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette (New York, New York: New York University Press).164

¹⁹ Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette, , *Reality TV Remaking Television Culture*.

discomfort of a public dumping ceremony may dominate many viewers' experience of this set-piece."²⁰ Those that are able to stay on the show are called down one by one to receive a rose. The rose symbolizes more than just moving on, it has a deeper meaning attached to all red roses. Dean Tersigni states, "Red roses are given to those who you want to show love and passion, people who you have great respect for, and those who have shown great courage... a single red rose shows love."²¹ With a rose symbolizing more than a simple gesture or a simple flower, this ceremony is of great importance because the rose is a love symbol and stands for hope that these contestants still stand a chance at their happily ever after.

Although both shows rely on the rose ceremony, *The Bachelor's* ceremony has greater success. "*The Bachelor* serves as the archetypal example, offering all the accoutrements of modern-day fairy-tale romance, from evening gowns to extravagant dates."²² When the "princess" is the one in charge, choosing her prince, there isn't as much of the fundamental fairy tale elements there.

Even their gender-flipping variants, such as *Cupid*, *The Bachelorette*, and *Average Joe*, often made the single female appear more desperate than the cool and collected men and they allowed the men considerably more power and agency in the process.²³

A woman in power is not necessarily seen as attractive in the eyes of society. Gender roles engrained in society prove that the men are to be the strong and powerful partner in a relationship to take care of the weak woman. "Those shows that rely heavily on a fairy-

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Tersigni, Dean. "The Meaning of Roses." The Meaning of Roses. www.thealmightyguru.com/Pointless/Roses.html (accessed December 9, 2012).

²² Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette, , *Reality TV Remaking Television Culture*, ed. Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette (New York, New York: New York University Press) 263.

²³Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette, , *Reality TV Remaking Television Culture*,, 164

tale ethos can render women inevitable losers.”²⁴ The women give up part of their power and identity for the sole purpose of winning over the bachelor and to be the chosen one. “Man eventually chooses her above all other suitors, thereby validating her as a person, completing her, rescuing her from a humdrum life, and giving her the chance to become a princess of Reality TV-Land.”²⁵ To be the chosen one feels as though a person has great worth and self-satisfaction over having the power to choose.

Reality television in general allows the viewers to have a connection to the cast:

What ties together all the various formats of the reality TV genre is their professed abilities to more fully provide viewers an unmediated, voyeuristic, and yet often playful look into what might be called the ‘entertaining real.’ This fixation with ‘authentic’ personalities, situations, problems, and narratives is considered to be reality TV’s primary distinction from fictional television and also its primary selling point.²⁶

In this sense, *The Bachelor* is no different from any other reality television show. Love is a complicated subject in the lives of people. People strive to find that one person who is the perfect match and can lead to that fairy tale life they have always read and dreamt about. Other shows, such as *Say Yes to the Dress*, put a great emphasis on a person’s wedding day. For this reason, *The Bachelor* mirrors society for the most part. There is the underlying fairy tale dream that starts in the mind of young girls in which they are told some day they will find a prince charming who will rescue them. Even when they grow up to find that these stories were make-believe, that dream never truly goes away. The idea that the viewer could very well be on the show or that the viewer has been in the same type of situation is what draws the audience. Watching the relationships develop between the bachelor and the contestants is a feeling most viewers can empathize with.

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Ibid, 163

²⁶ Ibid, 5

Since dating and falling in love can be one of the most difficult and confusing parts of life but at the same time is so rewarding, it is a concept audiences love.

The audience watching the show becomes involved in the show by playing along. "Part of the "game" for the viewer at home lies in guessing who will win, such shows can actively encourage viewers to criticize the women's relative style and looks, hence adding considerable scrutiny to the voyeurism of the male gaze."²⁷ The male gaze has been a concept around for ages and one that society has not overcome. "The male gaze looks at a female person as an erotic or aesthetic object. The mass media, for example, promote women's bodies as objects of men's desires as a means to satisfy the male gaze."²⁸ As the name itself implies, it is a masculine concept, one that empowers men over women.²⁹

The reality of reality is that as viewers, they feed into the ability to constantly watch the contestants behind the scenes, including how they talk about the other women and how they treat each other. The audience gets wrapped up in not only what happens between the bachelor and the contestants but, how they act "behind the scene". "Female contestants criticizing each other in secret, and in doing so, they further establish a secondary sport of encouraging viewers, too, to criticize the women's looks."³⁰ If the contestants on the show talk poorly about one another, it influences the views of the audience and allows them to begin to create these negative and critical perceptions as well.

²⁷ Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette, , *Reality TV Remaking Television Culture*, 165

²⁸ *Encyclopedia of Social Theory*, s.v. "MALE GAZE," accessed February 03, 2013, http://dbproxy.lasalle.edu:2048/login?qurl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.credoreference.com/entry/sagesoetheor/male_gaze

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ *Encyclopedia of Social Theory*, s.v. "MALE GAZE."

The objectification and degradation of women bring into question why women put themselves through this agony. Stephanie Pappas, she states, "Numerous studies have found that feeling objectified is bad for women. Being ogled can make women do worse on math tests, and self-sexualization, or scrutiny of one's own shape, is linked to body shame, eating disorders and poor mood."³¹ *The Bachelor* clearly plays into this objectification of the contestants on the show. The contestants themselves do it to one another, giving more credibility to the idea of women being viewed for their appearance rather than who they are as a person. A study by Pappas, shows our brains themselves perceive men as whole objects while women are interpreted in parts.³² "There could be evolutionary reasons that men and women process female bodies differently, [Sarah] Gervais said, but because both genders do it, 'the media is probably a prime suspect.'³³ This concept goes so far back in history and begins to take shape in the lives of children at such a young age; it truly is a part of American culture. Therefore, before jumping to conclusions that society has not progressed at all due to the stereotyping and gender roles that still exist, it is partially due to the advancement made in the media to this point that results in our inability to overcome objectification.

The Bachelor has such great ratings and acceptability because it is a relatable show. One of its greatest appeals is due to the fact that viewers at one point or another have been pursued or pursued someone.³⁴ While watching the show, it is easy to find someone to relate to. "ABC's *The Bachelor* (and the direct spin-off *The Bachelorette*)

³¹ Pappas, Stephanie. "Our Brains See Men as Whole and Women as Parts: Scientific American." Science News, Articles and Information | Scientific American. <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=our-brains-see-men-as-whole-women-as-parts> (accessed December 10, 2012).

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Huff, Richard M. "Love Is in the Air." In *Reality Television*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2006. <http://ebooks.abc-clio.com/reader.aspx?isbn=9780313086175&id=C8170-556>

offered viewers the opportunity to see 25 single contestants vie for the romantic affections of a member of the opposite sex.”³⁵ There is a gratification feeling that the audience experiences from this show because of the competition that goes on during the show. “This study identified one new gratification in reality television viewing: personal utility.”³⁶ This concept is new to the reality television factors. As reality television has become more prominent in society and adjusting to the needs of the audiences to gain higher ratings, the study shows that the programs are aiming towards specific groups.

One possible explanation for the higher level of gratifications obtained for this factor might be that as reality programs have become more individualized and specific in terms of content, they no longer appeal to the wider audience they did at their inception. Reality programming may begin catering more and more niche groups and subgroups for ratings. In this, viewers may no longer be watching them as much for social utility, but to obtain gratifications on an individual or specialized level.³⁷

In a study reported in *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, the people in the study reported 79.7% of people who watching *The Bachelor/Bachelorette* were women and only 44.1% of males watched them.³⁸ This evidence indicates that women make up the majority of viewers that watch *The Bachelor* and therefore support what the show stands for. The fact that *The Bachelor* has greater ratings makes it evident that the show has personal utility and is more relatable and gratifying.

Furthermore, the show allows women to be torn down even when they are the main viewers and supporters of the show. Articles even describe the show as one that tears down women. One such article written by Joshua T.E. Kirchner, he states, “Who

³⁵ Barton, Kristin M. “Reality Television Programming and Diverging Gratifications: The Influence of Content on Gratifications Obtained” *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 53, no. 3: 460-476. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed December 11, 2012).

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Barton, Kristin M. “Reality Television Programming and Diverging Gratifications.

but sexism can tolerate a program whose aim is to portray women as objects to be sorted through for the purpose of finding a shiny one to keep as a wife? I cannot fathom why these women participate in such a show. Yet many more are addicted to watching it.”³⁹

A man wrote this article and even he finds the way the women are displayed to be unacceptable. This raises the question of how society views women when reality shows are created to be relatable and reflect the lives of Americans.

In addition to the show degrading women and making them look fragile and weak, the show leads to the natural reaction of jealousy among the women on the show. “Just a week later on the ABC reality show... her ecstasy turned to agony. Fueled by envy, the once sweet and flirty dentist, 26, turned into an emotional wreck, threatening to walk out – and promos show her wreaking havoc on group dates in an upcoming episode.” The contestant was later quoted in the article, Ashley H. said, “I had what I think to be a pretty normal reaction: a little bit of jealousy.”⁴⁰ Indeed jealousy is a natural reaction to the situation, when 25 women are all after the same man. In the very first episode of season fifteen of *The Bachelor*, or any season at that, the girls are vying for the first impression rose as well as to continue to stay on the show; they become jealous of one another right away. The girls cut in on one another while they are trying to talk to *The Bachelor* and make a connection with Brad, the bachelor. Women willingly sign up to participate on *The Bachelor*, which shows these women as emotional beings who are unable to overcome jealousy even though it is evident in this situation.

³⁹ WHY IS 'THE BACHELOR' SO POPULAR?; TV show Mocks Ethics, Degrades Women." *Sunday News*, Nov 24, 2002. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/306896017?accountid=11999>.

⁴⁰ Jennifer O'Neill. "The Bachelor: Jealousy Kicks in!" *Us Weekly* no. 833 (Jan 31, 2011): 74-75. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/848393932?accountid=11999>.

However, when the roles are reverse on *The Bachelorette*, there is a double standard in the idea that a woman can be dating twenty-five guys at one time and be the one in power. "Initially, there was some concern within ABC that having a woman be the hunter could leave some with the impression that the woman was easy."⁴¹ The idea of a woman in power is not standard. "Relationships between men and women have been characterized, since their origins, by inequalities. This situation of inferiority in which women find themselves, both in their professional and personal relationship..."⁴²

The idea that *The Bachelor* is a hit when it comes to ratings in the reality television dating shows genre, but *The Bachelorette* has had less viewers, lower ratings, and had a hiatus speaks for the actuality of viewers' opinions. This stereotype that the man has to be superior to the woman and that problems can arise when he feels inferior to the woman shows the inequalities that are alive in American society. "Finding [*The Bachelor* and *Joe Millionaire*] to contain a complex interplay of gender performance, fairy tale, unruly women, and camp vulgarity, [Jonathan] Gray argues that many viewers read these programs as carnivalesque, distancing themselves from the often repressive stereotypes of men, women, and romance that lie within."⁴³ The show is almost a satirical representation of how far people are willing to go in order to find prince charming. Some of the events on the show are hard to believe that a person would truly and willingly do them, making the producers play a role in the way the show is shaped and cut.

⁴¹ Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette, , *Reality TV Remaking Television Culture*, ed. Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette (New York, New York: New York University Press).

⁴² Herrera, M. C., Francisca Expósito, and Miguel Moya. "Negative Reactions of Men to the Loss of Power in Gender Relations: Lilith Vs. Eve." *The European Journal of Psychology Applied to Legal Context* 4, no. 1 (2012): 17-42.

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/1140194253?accountid=11999>.

⁴³ Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette, , *Reality TV Remaking Television Culture*, ed. Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette (New York, New York: New York University Press) 17.

Reality television shows simply want to give the audience entertainment that resembles real life topics and situations. "And as long as viewers are willing to understand that not all that they see is real, and to live in the fantasy of the adventure, then networks will continue to air unscripted dating shows."⁴⁴ Reality television show is all about ways to draw in viewers at any cost. *The Bachelor* has great success in attracting viewers regardless of how the season ends or how the relationships turn out.

The fact that the couples never really stuck together, or all, didn't affect the ratings, either. As viewers began to realize that not everything on a reality show is real, but rather contrived or manipulated to meet a potential storyline, the pressure to create real-life couples became secondary to creating good drama.⁴⁵

The need for a happily ever after is ingrained in American society whether it is by being a contestant on *The Bachelor* or by watching and supporting the show, the need to be a part of the fairy tale is a significant part of American culture. The prince saving the princess is the American Dream and although it is a stereotype that should not have survived until this time it defines American traditions. *The Bachelor* goes well beyond the acceptable actions for finding prince charming, but mirrors the view society has on love and fairy tales.

⁴⁴ Huff, Richard M. "Love Is in the Air." In *Reality Television*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2006. <http://ebooks.abc-clio.com/reader.aspx?isbn=9780313086175&id=C8170-556>.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

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http://dbproxy.lasalle.edu:2048/login?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.credoreference.com/entry/sagesoetheor/male_gaze

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<http://search.proquest.com/docview/306896017?accountid=11999>.

Buying the Lies
By: Kristin MacKenzie

In 1998, *The Truman Show* asserted that we accept the reality of the world with which we are presented.¹ Humans naturally believe what they are told. They are taught to believe in Santa and the Easter Bunny without little doubt that what we are being taught is fake; however, when we find out that we have been tricked, we act as though we've known all along. Undoubtedly, we will tell our kids about Santa and the Easter Bunny. It should come as no surprise that when the cast of *Laguna Beach* and *The Hills* admitted that the nine season enterprise had been completely staged and scripted, audiences were not phased by it all. Most will admit that they knew all along it was fake. Yet why do viewers still tune in each week after they bought the lie that what they were watching was not real?

In 2003, MTV and producers Liz Gateley and Adam DiVello developed a show that would document the lives of several wealthy teenagers living in California. Originally meant to take place in Beverly Hills, the show was forced to relocate to Laguna Beach High School when the producers failed to reach an agreement with Beverly Hills High. The producers had hoped for the show to be a reality version of the hit TV show *Beverly Hills: 90210* in which they would capture “the conversations that happened at the lockers and in the lunchroom quad.”²

After receiving approval from Laguna Beach High School, the producers were given three days to interview and cast the students. The crew held numerous interviews at

¹ "The Truman Show (1998) - Memorable quotes." IMDb - Movies, TV and Celebrities. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0120382/quotes> (accessed December 13, 2012).

² "MTV The Hills Revealed (Part 1/2) - YouTube." YouTube. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NMhAtCw48wY> (accessed December 13, 2012).

the school, where they got to know the students and determine who was perfect for the show. Through the casting interviews, the producers uncovered a love triangle that seemed to involve numerous students at the school. It was at that point that the producers realized they had found their focus. However, fearful that MTV's portrayal of the students would reflect poorly on the school, school officials later decided to forbid MTV from filming inside the school. No school meant no classrooms, no prom, and no football games.³

Producers decided to continue with the concept of the show and only filmed the students outside of school. "Faced with no access to the school, producers took a massive gamble: to shoot a high school drama without ever being able to show the high school itself. That's what turned the show into more about what the kids were doing Thursday, Friday, Saturday night or what they were doing at the beach."⁴

The producers' gamble paid off. *Laguna Beach* aired for three seasons and in 2006, *The Hills*, a spinoff of *Laguna Beach* premiered. *The Hills* aired for six seasons and starred many of the original cast members from *Laguna Beach* while incorporating many new cast members. However, during the fifth season of *The Hills*, critics began to question the legitimacy of the shows. Rumors began to spread that the producers scripted the show and started drama between the cast members in order to improve the ratings of the show.

The series finale of *The Hills* aired on July 13, 2010. The episode aimed at closing the book on most of the cast members. However, the show left one question unanswered: was everything real or was it all a hoax? Entitled "All Good Things..." the show ended

³ "MTV The Hills Revealed (Part 1/2) - YouTube."

⁴ Ibid.

in a finale that was later ranked #21 on the TV Guide Network special, *The Most Unforgettable Finales*.⁵ The episode followed the characters as they said goodbye to one another and presumably moved onto life after *The Hills*. All was well until the closing scenes:

After a quick flashback of our favorite Hills memories, the camera pans out -- and we see the entire crew watching the action, the exterior of Kristin's apartment replaced by a Hollywood sound stage. Kristin hops out of 'her' car (it's only three feet away), laughs, and gives Brody a playful hug. So ends the sixth and final season of *The Hills*. Or, as the director would say, 'that's a wrap.'⁶

Viewers were left amazed. After nine seasons and two series, had we really been hoaxed into believing that what we were really watching was the cast members' real life? Cast members admitted that we fell victim to their manipulation. In an interview with Regis Philbin and Kelly Ripa on *Regis and Kelly Live*, Kristin Cavallari revealed the truth about the show. Regis asked Kristin, "This was the first reality show or was it a reality show? Was anything scripted on the show?"⁷ Kristin visibly tensed at the question, but answered: "We don't have cameras with us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week so there's only so much of someone's real life that you can capture."⁸ He then asked, "Have they captured your real life?"⁹ She laughed and responded, "No. I look at the hills as work and I have my personal life and my friends that aren't on the show."¹⁰

⁵ "The Hills | Ep. 612 | All Good Things... | Episode Summary, Video, Photos | MTV." New Music Videos, Reality TV Shows, Celebrity News, Top Stories | MTV.

http://www.mtv.com/shows/the_hills/season_6/episode.jhtml?episodeID=168981#moreinfo (accessed December 13, 2012).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ "Kristin Cavallari interview about The Hills - YouTube." YouTube. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qiVDzFIDraM&list=PLqfHcdIfB-Zzi_KnadFs2ryJSNjpvMqRo&index=4 (accessed December 13, 2012).

⁸ "Kristin Cavallari interview about The Hills - YouTube."

⁹ "Kristin Cavallari interview about The Hills - YouTube."

¹⁰ Ibid.

Kristin talked about how when the cast members showed up at restaurants or public places, they had their own sections to sit in where they are removed from the public. She made a clear distinction between her real life and the life she led on the show. Finally, she concluded the interview saying, "I was just going to high school one day and now here I am."¹¹ Since *Laguna Beach* and *The Hills*, Kristin has pursued an acting career and has starred on *Dancing With the Stars*. She is currently engaged to Chicago Bears football player Jay Cutler, and they have one child together.

So why do we continue to watch shows that manipulate us into believing they are? Why do we accept that we have been lied to and continue to watch them? According to research, we have sixteen basic desires, or motives, that need to be fulfilled for us to experience a fulfilled life. These sixteen desires include: power, curiosity, independence, status, social contract, vengeance, honor, idealism, physical exercise, romance, family, order, eating, acceptance, tranquility and saving. When a basic goal is obtained, people experience joy, or an intrinsically valued feeling.¹² Basic motivation influences what people pay attention to and what they do.¹³

Furthermore, we have the potential to experience the sixteen desires as a consequence of direct or vicarious experiences.¹⁴ This explains why we watch reality TV. When we experience a joy vicariously, it is short-lived, which means we have to experience the event repeatedly to experience the joy often. Therefore, we embrace television viewing as a convenient, minimal effort means of vicariously experiencing the

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Steven Reiss, and James Wiltz. "Why People Watch Reality TV." *Media Psychology* 6 (2004): 363-378.
http://fh6gr8dl7j.scholar.serialssolutions.com/?sid=google&auinit=S&aualast=Reiss&atitle=Why+people+watch+reality+TV&id=doi:10.1207/s1532785xmep0604_3&title=Media+psychology&volume=6&issue=4&date=2004&spage=363&issn=1521-3269 (accessed December 13, 2012).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Steven Reiss, and James Wiltz. "Why People Watch Reality TV."

sixteen desires repeatedly. Sensitivity theory claims that media use is motivated and that people select media based on their needs.

According to sensitivity theory, people go through life seeking to experience 16 basic (end) goals and associated joys, and they concentrate on those that are strongest and most highly valued (which depends on individuality). Soon after a basic goal is obtained, the desire reasserts itself and must be satisfied anew. A few hours after eating, for example, hunger re-emerges. A vengeful person who has experienced a few days of minimal conflict may become motivated to pick a fight or argument. Because basic desires quickly reassert themselves and, thus, can be satiated only temporarily, people seek ways to repeatedly satisfy their most important basic desires.¹⁵

Furthermore, research shows that not only do we watch shows that appeal to our desires, but we watch shows based on our age. "Results indicate that as persons perceive themselves to be in different stages of life and take on age-appropriate roles, tasks and perspectives, they have distinctively different reasons for viewing."¹⁶ Typically, factors that have been seen as determinants of heavy television use include availability of free time, low income or class status, low education, emotional difficulties and lack of structured social interactions. However, research suggests that our age plays a large role in our susceptibility to reality TV programs:

To a large degree, age norms anchor and structure our lives. Every age carries with it expectations of certain roles that should be performed and statuses that should be attained if one is to be considered (by his or herself and others) to be "on time." By identifying with others in age-related "life-stages," individuals make decisions about what they should be feeling and doing (getting married, building a career, retiring) based on what they perceive others in their "stage" to be doing.¹⁷

We have a need to associate ourselves with others and to relate our actions to the actions

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Mary Chayko. "How You "Act Your Age" When You Watch TV." *Springer* 8 (1993): 573-593. <http://dbproxy.lasalle.edu:2149/stable/pdfplus/684964.pdf?acceptTC=true> (accessed December 13, 2012).

¹⁷ Mary Chayko. "How You "Act Your Age" When You Watch TV."

of others. By doing so, we are able to determine if our actions are appropriate.

“All TV shows, not just reality shows, help construct scenarios that demonstrate how some behaviors will be rewarded or punished. The concern is that frequent viewers of these shows will learn these behaviors, see them as desirable and then model them in the actual real world.”¹⁸ Referring back to the sensitivity theory, it is important to look at the effects of reality TV shows, such as *Laguna Beach* and *The Hills*. These shows are targeted at teenagers and young adults.

The audiences of these shows typically range from 15-30 years of age. At this age, individuals are impressionable. According to Erik Erikson, individuals are in the fifth stage of Psychosocial Development.¹⁹ The major milestone at this stage is known as Identity vs. Role Confusion. During the “psycho-” aspect of this stage, adolescents explore, experiment with, and are interested in developing new and uniquely personal aspirations, possible future selves, personal beliefs, occupational interests and sexual orientations.²⁰ Adolescents have an inbred inclination to seek experiences that help them determine their personal opinions about themselves. They need interactions that allow them to figure out their opinions about situations.

Furthermore, during the social aspect of this stage, adolescents learn through peers, role models and a variety of other members of the culture or society.²¹ These examples provide and encourage a wide range of lifestyles about ways of making a

¹⁸ Micki, Fahner. "The real effects of reality TV | USA TODAY College." Untitled Document. <http://www.usatodayeducate.com/staging/index.php/campuslife/the-real-effects-of-reality-tv> (accessed December 13, 2012).

¹⁹ "Identity vs Role Confusion." The University of Iowa. <http://www.uiowa.edu/~c07p075a/class1/Classhandouts/identityvsconfusion.htm> (accessed December 13, 2012).

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ "Identity vs Role Confusion."

living, ways of behaving, ways of expressing oneself and ways of thinking.²² Adolescents look to their peers for confirmation on what is acceptable and what is not. While they are seeking ways to be an individual, they look to society to tell them if they are becoming socially acceptable. That concept is the ultimate Psychosocial Conflict of this stage. "Adolescents explore variation in identities they see others express/model and they then test out how the culture reacts to their own expressions of these identities."²³

There are two outcomes of this stage: identity or role confusion. If adolescents develop a willingness to seek out, experiment with, explore, and even commit to aspects of identity, then they have achieved the goal of identity. However, if adolescents foreclose on an identity without exploring options or postpone the exploration and commitment process then they begin to experience role confusion.²⁴

Many adolescents today grow up in homes without role models or people to model appropriate social behavior. They are left to fend for themselves and they often turn to television for models of behavior. The problem arises when they turn to shows like *Laguna Beach* and *The Hills* as examples. As previously stated "All TV shows, not just reality shows, help construct scenarios that demonstrate how some behaviors will be rewarded or punished," Gorham said. "The concern is that frequent viewers of these shows will learn these behaviors, see them as desirable and then model them in the actual real world."²⁵ Adolescents see behaviors shown on *Laguna Beach* and *The Hills* and try to emulate those behaviors. They see Kristin Cavallari drinking in high school and they learn to set unrealistic goals about their lives. They see the cast of *Laguna Beach* as

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Micki Fahner. "The real effects of reality TV | USA TODAY College."

emulations of who they should be one day without realizing that the lives the cast members are leading are not their real lives.

Furthermore, adolescents do not watch reality TV shows with an objective eye. They are drawn into the storylines and the cast members' lives and they fail to realize any scripting that may take place. They buy the lie that the producers sell them: that everything they see is real life. Sherri Williams, a PhD. candidate and adjunct instructor at Syracuse University, said that casting decisions in reality television seem to be based on stereotypes – a notion she finds to be problematic. “It seems that reality show directors and producers are not looking to cast whole, complete people. They're casting types, and that leads to stereotyping,” Williams said. Williams also notes that many reality programs demonstrate behavior, but never show the characters facing the results of their actions. “There aren't any consequences on these shows, and that's problematic.”²⁶

Most teenagers do not realize that they are being tricked into buying whatever the shows present them with. Unfortunately, they are led to believe false information. They are shown stereotypes and taught that is how they should grow up. When they fail to fulfill these stereotypical roles, they reach a sense of role confusion. Decades ago, younger generations were taught to look up to people with Judeo-Christian morals. Today, the youth of America is taught to look up to models that get by doing nothing. These people don't have to work hard to earn a living, but sadly they will earn more than any of us, yet it took them less than half of the effort. In an interview, Kristin Cavallari admitted that she willingly participated in whatever the producers asked her to do.²⁷ She admitted to causing drama between cast members, faking relationships and faking friendships on the show. These are the type of people adolescents are learning to become.

Furthermore, both *Laguna Beach* and *The Hills* use nametags. Whenever a cast

²⁶ Fahner, Micki. "The real effects of reality TV | USA TODAY College."

²⁷ "Was The Hills Scripted? - Reality Tea." Reality TV News Spilled Daily From Your Favorite Reality Shows! - Reality Tea. <http://www.realitytea.com/tag/was-the-hills-scripted/> (accessed December 13, 2012).

member enters the scene, their name flashes across the screen. While the cast members are already established and remain the same throughout the show, the producers still feel the need to introduce the cast every time they enter. This is an example of the superficiality that is evident throughout the program.

In the final season of *The Hills*, Lauren Conrad, who was the original star of both *Laguna Beach* and *The Hills*, decided not to star. The producers of the show encouraged her not to return for the final season because she was too nice. According to an interview, *The Hills* was competing on MTV with controversial shows like *Jersey Shore* and *Skins*. Lauren was perceived as a nice girl, “but that’s not always entertaining.”²⁸ So for the sake of entertainment, the nice girls were replaced with the not-so-nice girls. As Sherri Williams said, “It seems that reality show directors and producers are not looking to cast whole, complete people.”²⁹ These people who are being casted are not the models American youth should be looking up to. They are not well-rounded people, with strong morals. For the record, Lauren Conrad has gone on to become a *New York Times* best-selling author and is the manager of two clothing lines. Kristin Cavallari has gone on to have a baby with a man she isn’t sure she will ever marry.³⁰

Furthermore, the show uses various tactics to encourage viewers to watch. One such tactic is the use of music. Every week, the programs showcase new artists. They are the type of artists that the “in” crowd would listen to. The artists and song titles are shown at the bottom of the screen as the song plays throughout the episode. This type of product placement is interesting because it is a subtle encouragement to promote various

²⁸ "Was The Hills Scripted? - Reality Tea."

²⁹ Fahner, Micki. "The real effects of reality TV | USA TODAY College."

³⁰ "Kristin Cavallari interviewed by Perez Hilton - YouTube." YouTube. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBCMDNqj6bl&list=PLqfHcdIfB-Zzi_KnadFs2ryJSNjpvMqRo&index=1 (accessed December 13, 2012).

artists. Each week young viewers tune in to hear these new songs.

The most important point to remember is that things were not always supposed to be this way. When the show first started, it was meant to be a documentary about the lives of teenagers. It was supposed to catch those moments in high school that everyone can relate to: catching up with your friends at your locker between classes, discussing the upcoming football game, and talking about prom dates. That is what the producers originally set out to capture; however, nine seasons later, they ended up with something much more. As the seasons went on, the producers couldn't help but run with what they had been given.

The necessary question is, why did we continue to watch? When we found out that the shows were staged and scripted, why didn't we turn away? Despite that we found out we had been deceived, we still tuned in the following week to see if Kristin and Brody finally got back together. The truth lies in what draws us to shows like this. While we accept that the show is not as real as its title claims to be, the people are real. They are faced with real life situations whether it be a break up or a parents' divorce, and these are all things that real life teenagers can relate to. While the situations are exaggerated, the emotions are real. The tears, upset, and happiness are all emotions that real life teenagers can relate to and that is what brings the viewers back week after week.

Humans are naturally curious, and reality TV undoubtedly feeds our curious natures. It allows us to watch someone else's life without it having any direct effect on our own. We were not emotionally distraught when Stephen dumped Kristin for Lauren. In fact, most of us probably thought "I'm glad that's not me" and that is exactly what reality TV does for us. Reality TV shows us that maybe our lives aren't as bad as we

thought they were before tuning in to the latest episode of *Laguna Beach* or *The Hills*.

Ultimately, when the camera panned out and Kristin got out of the car and hugged Brody as he stood on a Hollywood sound stage, we weren't shocked. We had accepted the reality of the world that we were presented with. We bought the lie possibly because all along we knew we were being lied to. What it comes down to is that we became invested in the cast members and the stories, real or not. They were examples of what we hoped to become or what we were glad we weren't.

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Physicians', Surgeons' Tools: Past and Present
By: Moira McEntee

Across centuries, many factors affected American medicine, but the tools doctors have used across time have played a dominant role in medical development of medicine in America from the Civil War era to the present.

American Civil War 1861-1865:

The Civil War served as a “watershed” in the development of American medicine. At the start of the war in 1861, hospital and ambulance facilities did not exist as they do today. Injured men often became stranded, alone on battlefields for several days without receiving care for their wounds. Health and hygiene practices were primitive at the beginning of the war. This allowed diseases, such as typhoid and dysentery, to run rampant in military camps and hospitals. In addition, the lack of sanitation posed many problems for both the Union and Confederate armies as sickness and loss of life became increasingly prevalent.

Some argue that the legacy of the war can be observed in the transformation of the hospital from a “charity institution for the destitute into a curative institution that appealed to all classes.”¹ In addition, the Civil War allowed for the expansion of “medical science to include such principles as sanitation, standardization, and organizational efficiency.”¹ Along with reorganization of hospitals and developments in medical science, the Civil War led to a rise of a formally trained class of medical professionals, specifically nurses. Troops generally relied on field surgeons, Catholic nuns, and volunteers who were always in short supply. ¹

¹ John Harley Warner and Janet A. Tighe, *Major Problems in the History of American Medicine and Public Health* (Boston, Massachusetts: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning , 2001), chap. 6.

The massive number of injuries and casualties during the war challenged the system of medical care that America had relied on since its birth. In addition to developments in hospital function and service, the Civil War allowed for development in medical techniques as well as instrumentation, specifically in the area of surgery. However, it is clear that doctors of the era faced unprecedented challenges, as few of them were experts in surgery.² Along with shortages of personnel, difficulty with transport of supplies, combined with the unpredictability of battle that made it impossible for these doctors to be fully prepared.² The conditions these doctors faced were far from ideal; however, the advances produced by the Civil War in the realm of medicine were truly remarkable.

It is important to note that during the Civil War era, the Germ Theory did not yet exist. Germs were indeed responsible for several diseases that took a toll on soldiers. It is estimated that approximately 620,000 soldiers died from various diseases.² In addition, poor diet and lack of sanitation played dominant roles in the demise of soldiers in both the Union and Confederate armies. However, doctors, nurses, and volunteers quickly took action. A battlefield triage and transportation system developed, which involved specialized ambulances, dedicated train cars, and hospital ships.² Thousands of patients were transported to brand new hospitals, where new systems of management were in use.²

² Boyd, Jane E., Ph.D. and Robert D. Hicks, Ph.D. The College of Physicians of Philadelphia, "Medicine: Pennsylvania Civil War 150." Accessed February 1, 2013. <http://pacivilwar150.com/ThenNow/Medicine>.

³ Boyd, Jane E., Ph.D. and Robert D. Hicks, Ph.D. The College of Physicians of Philadelphia, "Instruments & Techniques: Pennsylvania Civil War 150." Accessed February 1, 2013. <http://pacivilwar150.com/ThenNow/Medicine/InstrumentsTechniques>.

The war led to advances in surgical techniques and instrumentation. Surgery was often the sole option if one were injured on the battlefield. In many cases, the only way to save a soldier's life was via amputation.³ In addition to the process of amputation, other techniques used during the Civil War include excision and resection. These procedures “removed only the injured section of one's arm or leg, leaving a shortened, less functional limb.”

A wide range of tools could be found inside a Civil War doctor's medical kit. Dr. Jane Boyd of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia writes, “medical kits of the era included several types of cutting tools such as knives, scalpels, bistouries (long narrow knives for minor incisions), curettes for scraping and cleaning, and double-bladed lancets for making punctures.”³ The tools used for amputations included tourniquets, bone saws, chain saws, sutures, and bandages.

Two main approaches to amputation were most common. These approaches included the circular method as well as the flap method.³ The circular method consisted of the skin and tissue being rolled up around the damaged limb and then pulled down and sewn together after the damaged limb was removed. The flap method required two long flaps of skin to be cut around the damaged limb and then folded over and sewn to form a stump.³ In field hospitals, these procedures were performed outside. Infections were common upon the completion of these procedures, which caused several soldiers to die. If soldiers survived these procedures some prosthetics were available. These included various types of braces along with articulate artificial legs and artificial arms with hooks and other tools.

Medical issues stemming from the Civil War called for the abandonment of “heroic medicine.” According to the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, “wartime conditions called for a different sort of heroism: the courage to experiment, sometimes radically.”³ These new medical techniques included tracheotomies, arterial ligation, neurosurgery, and even plastic surgery to repair facial damages.³ Because X-Ray technology did not exist, it was difficult for doctors to assess the damage inside soldiers’ bodies. Severe wounds to the chest and abdomen were almost impossible to treat, as damage in these areas was not easy to identify, however, doctors did experience some success in repairing damaged lungs and bowels.

Although contemporary medical tools such as thermometers and hypodermic syringes were uncommon during the Civil War era, doctors used the most advanced technology of the time: the stethoscope. Doctors used the stethoscope for listening to hearts and lungs. In addition, the microscope was used to examine blood and tissues.³ A new technology in the mid-1800s, the camera, allowed doctors to document patients and their wounds. Many of these tools were actually made in Philadelphia, which was a major manufacturing center to precision instruments of all types.³

Upon witnessing these open, public amputations and surgeries, many soldiers labeled surgeons as butchers. Philip Brandt George vividly discusses this in his article, “Tools of the Surgeon’s Trade.” According to George, “it is commonly and erroneously believed that the more than 12,000 Union and roughly 3,200 Confederate surgeons who served during the war were ill-trained, amputation-happy incompetents who did more damage than good.”⁴ George believes that this statement is absolutely false. He argues

⁴ George, Phillip Brandt. "Tools of the Surgeon's Trade." *American History* 39, no. 6 (2005): 56-57. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/224064223?accountid=11999>.

that this belief is rooted in the “chaotic medical scene” that was the first part of the Civil War.⁴ George notes that prior to the Civil War, there were only 113 surgeons in the United States Army, but as the war waged on and the casualties increased, so did the number of surgeons as well as the number of medical successes. Extensive training programs helped prepare these new surgeons for duty as these men developed new skills and learned new procedures at a quick pace. This thoroughly improved medical treatment in the field. Ultimately, Civil War surgeons deserve more credit than they are given.

The creation of the tools doctors used in this era was driven by a serious need for this type of medical equipment. The overall shift in medicine during this time as well as the abandonment of “heroic” methods led to much development, specifically in techniques and instrumentation in the realm of surgery. It is interesting to consider that the stethoscope and microscope were some of the most advanced pieces of the era. The most common surgical procedure of the time, amputation, forced doctors to use grisly tools such as bone saws, chain saws, and tourniquets which allowed Civil War surgeons to be viewed in a negative light. Ultimately, these tools, though shaped by American medical needs of the time, played a dominant role in American medicine of the mid-to-late 1800s.

America Post-Civil War 1870-1900:

The Post-Civil War era revealed a dramatic change in the medical arena. The work of scientists such as Louis Pasteur and Joseph Lister demonstrated that scientific medicine was on the rise. By 1900 it was widely accepted that microorganisms played a role in causing disease. As a result, the understanding of the cause, prevention, and

control of disease was ultimately transformed. The Germ Theory challenged long-standing assumptions about relationships among dirt, moral culpability and illness. Most importantly, the Germ Theory demonstrated that germs did not discriminate between races or social classes.

Two images that define the change in medicine of the Post-Civil War era as well as the effects this change had in the arena of medical instruments are *The Gross Clinic* and *The Agnew Clinic* by Thomas Eakins. *The Gross Clinic* was completed first in 1875, and *The Agnew Clinic* was finished in 1889. One can identify that a shift in medicine was occurring during this era by examining these paintings. In *The Gross Clinic*, the doctors are wearing street clothes of the era, while in *The Agnew Clinic*, years later, the doctors are wearing protective clothing. In addition, the tools displayed in *The Gross Clinic* are out in the open, while in *The Agnew Clinic* the tools appear to be encased. Though gloves and masks were not yet present in these images, it is evident that these doctors were aware of germs by 1889, when Eakins completed *The Agnew Clinic*. Germ Theory had, and would continue to have, a significant effect on medicine.

In addition, it is clear that the use of anesthesia was popularized by the 1870s. Though anesthesia existed before this time, it was used on a more standard basis throughout the Post-Civil War era. This concept is also depicted in Eakins' *The Agnew Clinic*. In this image a doctor is holding a cone like device over the face of the patient. However, in *The Gross Clinic*, a doctor is holding what appears to be a chloroform soaked rag over the face of the patient. This example highlights the development of the use of anesthesia.

Before the Civil War, most people viewed pain as one of God's punishments for the sins they had committed.⁶ Doctors either shared this same view, or were highly concerned about operating on an unconscious patient as well as the potential risk of death from an overdose of anesthetic. However, the main goal of administering anesthesia was to "revolutionize practice, enabling surgeons to develop finer skills and life saving invasive procedures."⁶ By the 1880s, anesthesia was a standard practice in both America and Europe.⁶ It is interesting that "while the surgeon's prestige and power soared, the anesthetist was a mere assistant--a nurse, intern or medical student. The development of the independent medical specialty of anesthesiology would not occur until the early 20th century."⁶

Though the Germ Theory is not a physical medical instrument, it can still be considered a medical tool. The Germ Theory, along with the use of anesthesia as a medical tool changed the way that medicine was practiced. The Germ Theory allowed for a huge breakthrough in microbiology as well as medicine in general. Tools were no longer left out in the open during surgery. They were placed in designated cases in order to keep them clean. Also, surgeons began to dress in protective clothing to keep germs away from their street clothes. The use of anesthesia during surgery changed American medicine immensely. Pain was no longer viewed as punishment from God, and was avoided whenever possible. Surgeons became more confident in administering anesthesia and were therefore able to develop their skills and complete life saving surgical procedures. Ultimately, the medical tools of the Post-Civil War era, specifically the Germ Theory and the use of anesthesia during operations, shaped American medicine. Without

⁶ The Louise M. Darling Biomedical Library, University of California, Los Angeles, "The Anesthesia Revolution of the 1880s." Last modified 1998. Accessed April 28, 2013. <http://unitproj.library.ucla.edu/biomed/his/painexhibit/panel2.htm>.

these two tools, American medicine would not be what it is today. If those in the medical field today were unaware of germs and the role they play in disease, countless people would be seriously ill and would not know the cause of their sicknesses. Without anesthesia, operations that occur everyday would be excruciatingly painful, and some may even be impossible.

Upon identifying significant changes medicine of the Post-Civil War era, it is difficult not to notice the lack of a presence of women in the medical field. This is true during the Civil War as well, as there were very few women surgeons in the field. This is especially apparent upon comparing Eakins' two paintings depicting the medicine after the Civil War. In *The Agnew Clinic* one can identify a woman nurse, but still no women doctors. This observation connects to the American Myth of Gender. It is evident through history "how completely our gender derives from cultural myths about what is proper for men and women to think, enjoy, and do."⁷ In the Post-Civil War era, women were mobilizing to fight for their rights. Becoming a doctor was almost unheard of for women as it was considered a man's career. Nevertheless, women began to take advantage of education. Because of this, there is an abundance of women doctors today.

Contemporary America 2000- present:

Medicine, specifically medical instruments and technology, has changed immensely since the Civil War. The Civil War spurred several developments surgery as well as in battlefield medicine. After the Civil War, the world became aware, via microbiology, that germs do exist and that they play a dominant role in the spread of

⁷ Gary Colombo, Robert Cullen, and Bonnie Lisle, *Rereading America* (Boston, Massachusetts: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007), 373.

disease. In addition, the use of anesthesia during surgery became prominent. These medical tools, and many more, played a significant role in the progress of American medicine. Shifting focus to contemporary medicine, the tools that doctors use today differ greatly from those used in the past.

The world today revolves around technology. It is not often that one visits a public place, whether it is a shopping mall, school, or restaurant, without seeing cell phones, iPads, nooks, and kindles. This trend has spilled into the realm of medicine as doctors, nurses, and other health professionals use innovative medical technologies while caring for their patients. Currently, iPhones and iPads are in constant use in medical offices and hospitals across America. These gadgets easily organize various types of data and allow for information to be available immediately, with the touch of a fingertip. According to Katie Hafner, contributor to *The New York Times*, “the proliferation of gadgets, apps and Web-based information has given clinicians...a black bag of new tools: new ways to diagnose symptoms and treat patients, to obtain and share information, to think about what it means to be both a doctor and a patient.”⁸ Hafner’s words demonstrate the idea that these tools have redefined the traditional black doctors’ bag.

Innovative medical apps for the iPhone and iPad play a significant role in the daily routine of the modern day doctor. For example, Dr. Rajkomar, who is featured in Hafner’s article for *The New York Times*, is a man of technology. Hafner writes, “Along with MedCalc, the clinical calculator, Dr. Rajkomar’s phone has ePocrates, an app for looking up drug dosages and interactions; and Qx Calculate, which he uses to create risk profiles for his patients. His favorite technology is his electronic stethoscope, which

⁸ Katie Hafner, "Redefining Medicine With Apps and Ipads," *The New York Times*, October 8, 2012.

amplifies heart sounds while canceling out ambient noise.”⁸ Hafner’s words illustrate the abundance of high-tech medical tools used in hospitals and doctors offices today. Hafner also emphasizes that Dr. Rajkomar is aware of the drawbacks of these digital systems. Regarding computerized records Hafner writes that “while efficient, they can give rise to robotic bookkeeping without regard to how the patient is faring.”⁸ While it is exciting to consider these innovative medical tools, it is truly imperative to be aware of the dangers that come hand in hand with dependence on technology.

In addition to the constant use of technology inside the hospital, these groundbreaking medical tools are beginning to be utilized outside of medical facilities as well. Patients are using innovative technologies too, so that doctors are more aware of their patients’ symptoms even when they are not visiting with them. According to journalist Matt Richtel, “the software is still being tested and studied for its effectiveness. But mental health experts and researchers say it shows great promise — not just for spotting worsening conditions, but also for picking up on behavior changes that suggest someone has stopped taking medication or needs a dosage change.”⁹ Though this technology appears to be capable of making significant, positive changes in the realm of medicine, there are a few concerns regarding these medical tools. Concerns include whether such systems might send alerts that people are sick when they actually are not, thus causing costs to rise.⁹ There are also concerns about the privacy of these patients; however, in order to use this new medical technology, the patient must consent and the information gathered is given only to health professionals and designated members of the patient’s family.⁹ Overall, these innovative medical instruments demonstrate medical

⁹ Matt Richtel, "Apps Alert the Doctor When Trouble Looms," *The New York Times*, October 8, 2012.

progress. Though this technology is still being perfected, it is interesting to examine the change in medical tools over the past 150 years.

Through the examination of American medicine, the tools doctors used have both helped to shape and have been shaped by prevailing ideas within the realm of American medicine and ultimately American culture. Each era reveals various developments in medical technology. In some cases, specifically during the Civil War, it is clear that medical tools were designed as a result of what was happening at the time. The tools used on the battlefield were shaped by a common need for procedures of battlefield medicine such as amputation and bullet removal. After the Civil War, medicine experienced a substantial change. The Germ Theory allowed healthcare professionals to better understand disease and its origins. Also, the use of anesthesia became standard. Examining Thomas Eakins' *The Gross Clinic* and *The Agnew Clinic* reveals both of these aspects of medicine in the Post-Civil War era. Lastly, taking a closer look at the "digital doctor" in contemporary American medicine reveals that medical tools of today both shape and are shaped by prevailing ideas in medicine and American technological culture. Ultimately, medical tools function as both proponents and results of development in the medical arena.

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