Student leadership: the influence of television and film on today's student leaders

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STUDENT LEADERSHIP: THE INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION AND FILM ON TODAY'S STUDENT LEADERS

by
Alissa Krutoff

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration of The Graduate School at Rowan University May 7, 2009

Approved by
Dr. Burton R. Sisco

Date Approved May 7, 2009
ABSTRACT

Alissa Krutoff
STUDENT LEADERSHIP: THE INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION AND FILM ON TODAY’S STUDENT LEADERS
2008/09
Dr. Burton R. Sisco
Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration

The primary focus of this study was to explore the role the media has on undergraduate student leadership. The study investigated traditional undergraduate student’s understanding of leadership, personal leadership identities, perceptions of the media, and media viewing habits. Data about student views were collected by means of a survey using a series of Likert-style questions on a 5-point scale. Data were also collected with a two-part focus group series, investigating student’s opinions on television, film, and leadership. Students reported the importance of leadership for undergraduate students, while identifying themselves with many of the characteristics of a leader. Students reported watching television and film for pleasure but identified a number of ways that it could be used for leadership education.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** ii  
**LIST OF TABLES** vi  
**CHAPTER**  
**PAGE**  

I. **INTRODUCTION** ...................................................... 1  
   - Statement of the Problem ........................................ 1  
   - Purpose of the Study ............................................. 2  
   - Significance of the Study ........................................ 3  
   - Assumptions and Limitations .................................... 3  
   - Operational Definitions ........................................ 4  
   - Research Questions ............................................. 5  
   - Overview of the Study .......................................... 5  

II. **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE** .................................... 7  
   - Television, Film, and Youth ................................................ 7  
   - Motivation ..................................................................... 10  
   - The College Student and Leadership in the Media .............. 10  
   - The Study of Leadership .............................................. 13  
   - Leadership Practices, Identities, and Perspectives .......... 15  
   - Student Leaders on Screen .......................................... 19  
   - Summary of the Literature Review .................................. 20  

III. **METHODOLOGY** ........................................................... 24  
   - Context of the Study ................................................. 24  
   - Population and Sample Selection .................................. 26  
   - Instrumentation ....................................................... 26  
   - Data Collection ....................................................... 29  
   - Data Analysis ......................................................... 30  

IV. **FINDINGS** ................................................................. 32  
   - Profile of the Sample ............................................... 32  
   - Analysis of the Data .................................................. 33  
   - Research Question 1 ................................................... 33  
   - Research Question 2 ................................................... 36  
   - Research Question 3 .................................................... 38  
   - Research Question 4 .................................................... 40  
   - Research Question 5 .................................................... 42
V. SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .......................................... 45
   Summary of the Study.............................................................. 45
   Discussion of the Findings .................................................... 46
   Conclusions ............................................................................. 51
   Recommendations for Practice .............................................. 53
   Recommendations for Further Research ............................. 54

REFERENCES ............................................................................... 55

APPENDIX A: Rowan University Institutional Review Board
   Approval Letter ......................................................................... 58
APPENDIX B: University of Delaware Institutional Review Board
   Approval Letter ......................................................................... 60
APPENDIX C: Survey Instrument ................................................ 62
APPENDIX D: Focus Group Informed Consent ....................... 67
APPENDIX E: Focus Group Agendas ........................................... 69
### LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Survey of Student Leadership</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Survey of Student Leadership Behaviors and Actions</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Survey of Student Perceptions of Media</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Perceptions of Educational Content from the Media of Selected Students</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Leadership Traits and Behaviors on Screen</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Exposure to television and movies in American can influence decision-making in various aspects of a student’s life. Higher education is commonly depicted on screen, creating a general understanding of campus culture. College has been seen in films since the silent era. Leadership is often projected on the large and small screens, displaying fictional images of leaders. Institutions of higher education acknowledge the importance of involvement and leadership for undergraduate students and are increasingly offering workshops, courses and even majors in leadership and leadership development. Experiences in leadership allow students to learn about themselves and others by overcoming challenges and achieving successes to increase personal values and goals. Students’ decisions to engage in leadership opportunities are influenced by a variety of internal and external forces. The collegiate experience and leadership are popular themes in the media, both on television and in the movies and may act as an external motivation for some students.

Statement of the Problem

Media can serve as an extrinsic motivating factor for American youth, as they are exposed to an average of four hours of television, videos and DVDs per day (Boyse, 2008). Television and films can be educational allowing viewers to experience events and situations they may not have without the technology. Youth often replicate what they seen on screen when they understand the media as an educational resource and begin
to create a sense of reality based on what they have seen on screen. Exposure to the collegiate experience and leadership on TV and film often precede American youth personal experience at a college or university.

Leadership experiences provide positive outcomes for individuals who participate. Students maximize their overall learning experience by becoming involved outside of the classroom (Logue, Hutchens, & Hector, 2005). Those students who go beyond involvement and take on leadership roles, gain life skills that are applicable to future careers, achieve higher levels of educational success, and have an increased sense of personal values (Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, & Burkhardt, 2001; Logue et al., 2005). Leadership has become increasingly present on campuses, in the past 20 years as curricular and co-curricular leadership programs have expanded (Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, & Osteen, 2006).

The media can play a key role in the decision-making process and leadership experiences serve many benefits for students. While research describes opportunities, processes, results and perceptions of student leadership, what it is often ignored is why students undertake leadership roles. Research explains how the media affects youth’s sleep, weight, and behaviors. It has not evaluated the extrinsic motivating link that the media has on college student’s decision to engage in leadership opportunities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine how college students identify themselves as leaders, their basic understanding of leadership, and the media’s influence in decision-making. The study also examines the media as an external motivating factor
and how the media effects undergraduate student decisions to participate in leadership opportunities.

Significance of the Study

The study examined the role that television and film play in student motivations towards leadership responsibilities. The findings of this study may provide practitioners with information about student’s motivations as they engage in and develop a leadership identity. The findings may also provide information about students understanding of higher education and student leadership prior to enrollment through their exposure to the media. It may provide practitioners an understanding of student’s understanding of leadership, personal leadership identities, and how to better educate and motivate them utilizing television and films.

Assumptions and Limitations

The scope of the survey and focus group was limited to undergraduate students currently involved in at least one student organization. It was assumed that all students have been exposed to the concepts of leadership, television, and movies. The research was also limited by the subjects truthfulness in their responses to survey and focus group questions. Current leadership roles, lack of engagement on campus, exposure to media, knowledge of select television programs and movies, as well as perspectives of the researcher, may lead to potential bias in the presented findings. The findings are somewhat gender biased because the focus group only included female students, and the amount of available male students to complete the survey.
Operational Definitions

1. Chapter: Undergraduate group of a national fraternity or sorority, independently operated under the national policies of the national organization and the university at which it is located.

2. Engagement: Students who participate or are members of activities or organizations on campus or in the surrounding communities.

3. Films: Full length fictional movies available for viewing in theaters, television, video or DVD.

4. Involvement: Participation in at least one activity outside of the classroom on the university campus or surrounding communities.

5. Media: Mainly the forms of media as television and films.

6. Members: Students who are members of Alpha Epsilon Phi, Phi Chi chapter and Alpha Epsilon Pi, Rho Deuteron chapter at the University of Delaware during the spring 2009 academic semester.

7. Motivation: The driving force which causes a student to act.

8. Student Leadership: Undergraduate students who take an active role within their campus community. Positions are not limited to elected, appointed or titled, positions. Leadership includes all roles in which a student identifies with any leadership traits or characteristics.

9. Students: Traditional undergraduate students at The University of Delaware between the ages of 18 and 24, all members of Alpha Epsilon Phi sorority and Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity during the spring 2009 academic semester.
Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. How do selected undergraduate students perceive leadership and what traits and behaviors do they associate with student leaders?
2. How do selected students identify themselves as leaders and what leadership behaviors and actions do they engage in?
3. What role does the media play in the lives of selected college students?
4. How does the media influence college student’s perception of leadership from their youth to college?
5. How can practitioners utilize the media to promote, encourage, and teach leadership to undergraduate students?

Overview of the Study

Chapter two includes a review of scholarly literature in the areas of student involvement, leadership, motivation, and the influential role of the media. The section explores television, film, and youth, the study of leadership, leadership practices, identities, and perspectives, the collegiate theme and student leaders on screen.

Chapter three describes the methods and procedures used in the study. Provided is a description of the context of the study, population and sample, data collection instruments, data collection procedures, and how the data were analyzed.
Chapter four presents the findings of the study. This chapter addresses the research questions posed in the introduction of the study. Statistical and narrative analyses were used to summarize the section.

Chapter five summarizes the previous chapters and discusses the major findings of the study. It includes conclusions and recommendations for practice and further study.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Television, Film, and Youth

The media, specifically television and movies, play a large role in American society, it serves as extrinsic motivation for American youth. Educational psychology defines motivation as an internal state that stimulates, directs, and maintains behaviors (Woolfolk, 1995). As children, America’s youth are exposed to a number of extrinsic motivators, including, family, friends, teachers, and the characters they see on the big and small screens. Television programming and films for children have various levels of educational values and entertainment and are targeted to a range of ages from infants to adolescents. The amount of exposure, types of movies and programs, and the frequency of viewing may explain the role that the media plays as an extrinsic motivator.

According to The University of Michigan Health System on average children spend four hours a day watching television, videos, and DVDs. Sixty-eight percent of children 8 to 18 have a TV in their bedroom and 54% have a DVD or VCR player. In over half of the households studied the television was on during meals, has a TV on at “most” times and do not have rules about their children watching (Boyse, 2008). Television is often the first type of media that kids are exposed to, programming for young children and babies is increasing, television, DVDs and videos are often substituted for spending time with caregivers and parents.
Television can often be educational and entertaining allowing children opportunities to see and experience things they would likely not be able to without this technology. Research has shown that often children learn and replicate things they see through the media that parents don’t want them to learn. Studies have seen how TV affects youth’s sleep, weight, academic performance, and behaviors to name a few. The more time that is spent in front of the television the less time that is spent interacting with others, socializing and physical activities. The lessons that children learn from TV come from the stories they see and characters they form connections with. Characters are often seen as role models and their actions often replicate them. Many programs and movies are filled with elements that parents do not intend to teach their children including, stereotypes, violent solutions to problems, and morally unacceptable behaviors (Boyse, 2008).

Children are imitators and do not have the capacity to evaluate what they are being exposed to on screen and will act according to what they see (Graham, 2008). There have been many programs and DVDs created solely for educational purposes, allowing the media to serve as an educational resource for parents and caregivers. Positive results have been proven from these types of media, but a major lesson being taught to children is that you can learn from television. Drawing a clear line between facts and fiction is difficult for children. Television and movies shape a reality for kids, they gain an understanding of what the world looks like and how people behave often through stereotypes. Gender, race, weight are often misrepresented or represented in selective ways, providing young viewers with an understanding of how these groups are represented off screen.
From the earliest stage of life Americans are exposed to large amounts of TV and films. The affects of the media on children continue and transfer into adulthood. The role of television and film change throughout stages of a person’s life, but both continue to expose and teach individuals about experiences they may not see off screen.

Media has had an increasing impact on the current and upcoming generations of students (Scull & Peltier, 2007). Before students even apply for college, they are exposed to the college culture without stepping onto a campus. Movies and television shows that focus on college students, take place on college campus, or discuss higher education can introduce American’s to the university and collegiate environment. In his 2008 book *Campus Life in the Movies: A Critical Survey from the Silent Era to the Present*, John E. Conklin explains the history of college films. He explains that less then one-tenth of Americans between the ages of 18 and 24 were enrolled in institutions of higher education in the 1930s and currently every one in three Americans in the same age group are enrolled. “Over the years, college movies have influenced the way people perceive the undergraduate experience by both distorting it and accurately mirroring it” (Conklin, p.3). The understanding of student life and the college experience is limited to what individuals see in the media or what they are told by others. The dramatic power of the big and small screens allow individuals to understand experiences they may not have personally experienced.

Moffatt (1991) observed college students at Rutgers University to understand the reality of student life from what he describes as the fantasy that is understood to the media-born youth culture. He explains how students refer to what they see on screen more often then to what is written in higher education journals. Students understand less
from previous generations on their campus and more from what they see projected in the media. The reality of college life is greatly influenced by what students have seen and are seeing in the media.

Television and film serves as an extrinsic motivation for American youth, what they see on screen can guide the decisions that they make. Television and film allow a sense of understanding of the world outside of where we live sometimes guiding the choices undergraduates make in their lives.

Motivation

Educational psychology defines motivation as an internal state that stimulates, directs, and maintains behaviors (Woolfolk, 1995). The three main areas of focus through studies are; what cause people to initiate actions, the level of involvement the person chooses, and what causes a person to persist or give up? There are a number of factors that can motivate a student including, drive, needs, goals, social pressures, and curiosity. Woolfolk describes the two types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is the natural tendency to pursue personal interests, without the need for incentives or punishment. Extrinsic motivation is created by external factors such as rewards and punishments. The only way to determine if a students actions are intrinsic or extrinsic is to learn his or her reason for acting, this is referred to as locus of causality, the location of internal or external cause of behavior.

The College Student and Leadership in the Media

The American collegiate experience has inspired films since 1897. The genre has not been as popular as many others such as horror, Western or gangster, even though the important social role higher education plays in the country. Umphlet (1984) described
collegiate themed movies as those which are partly or entirely based on a lead character or characters that are socially motivated or conditioned by their relationship with an institution of higher education that helps develop the film’s dramatic conflict (1984). Conklin explains that the theme captured American audiences, as they saw youth fall in love, score touchdowns, and occasionally go to class. In an industry that focuses primarily on profits, producers have continued to create almost 700 films about college life, mainly focusing more on fun the course work (2008).

The genre of higher education in films reflects cultural values and fads. The changes and development of individuals of higher education is regarded highly in American society, and an appropriate theme for popular films (Umphlett, 1984). Audiences experience a connection with characters as they develop within the collegiate environment. The genre has opened the world of college life to the masses, allowing viewers to enter higher education. Throughout the genres history there have been both negative and positive depictions of higher education. Audiences who are not college educated or have not experienced a traditional college experience may see these films as reality. Just as those who understand the “wild west” through films of the Western genre. Cinematic depictions of the collegiate environment can alter attitudes and behaviors, of high school students who are a major audience to the genre (Conklin, 2008). These students develop ideas about what college will be like based on the Hollywood portrayals. Education both inside and outside of the classroom has been portrayed through popular films and TV series. These depictions are worthy of consideration from a variety of perspectives. Observing them as an educator can allow one to analyze perceived performance and how humans are depicted in popular culture.
They can also gain a better understanding the falsities and generalities that are being projected.

Leadership is a concept that children are exposed to at a very young age in a variety of media types. Such leaders are kings and royalty in fairytales, on TV and in movies. These rulers are the all mighty powerful being. Whitney and Parker (2000), discuss the theme of leadership comparing Shakespeare’s plays with modern situations. The major similarities between fictional and living leaders are that are identified and discussed are power, business as theater, and the integration of values, mission, vision, and strategy. Leaders are seen to have power, they play a role and must act as that role in all times to be believed and they are constantly developing themselves and their belief systems. The study tried to explain that an understanding of leadership and organizational life come from many sources, even fiction.

Books on leadership have been increasingly evolving to reflect popular culture and current media. Deborrah Himsel, Vice President for Avon wrote Leadership Sopranos Style, using the HBO series to teach leadership. While the book is rooted deeply in leadership theory she explains and teaches concepts through the popular TV series. By analyzing Tony and other characters in the series she explains the characteristics that define them as leaders. She explains the concepts of charisma, being the boss, and winning over the competition by analyzing scenes, relating them to her own experiences in the business world and explaining how they can be applied to the readers life. Roberts and Ross (1995) teach leadership in their book through lessons in Star Trek, the Next Generation. The book is written through the eyes of a fictional character who shares lessons learned and reflections from one character from the series to start
each chapter. Both books use fiction to teach real life leadership skills, the authors use relate what is seen on screen to leadership skills and explain how readers can apply them to their own lives.

The Study of Leadership

Leadership is a complex concept that can be perceived in numerous ways to various people. Komives, Lucas and McMahon (1998) explain leadership as a process, not the actions of individual leaders, but people working together. They explain that it is a rational process where the common goal is to accomplish change to benefit the common good.

Leadership has been explored in the business world, political and social sectors, and most recently education. Studies have explained leadership through theories, paradigms, frames, and models. Research has examined both the individual leader as well as the leadership process (Komives et al., 1998). Leadership does not always happen in an official manner, it can occur in many different situations and can be seen in a variety of functions. Current research reinforces the positive outcomes and effectiveness for individuals who participate in leadership activities.

Posner (2004) explains that leadership development studies and programs for collegiate students are based on models originally developed for managers in business and public-sector organizations. Most of the books written about leadership come from a business perspective, but in recent years have had an increasing focus on students. Posner discusses the vast differences of collegiate and corporate environments, and how the original models have been applied to undergraduate students. It is important to understand that only portions of all leadership studies are applicable to students.
Mission statements define the standards of a college or university and set the goals of the institution. According to Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, & Burkhardt (2001), developing leadership skills for students is commonly included in many college and university mission statements. A mission statement sets the goals the institution has for students, which include academics and overall development. Gellin (2003) adds that another primary goal universities claim is to help students develop the skills to think critically. For many years leadership was encouraged but was not included in the curriculum of the institution, but over the past 30 years the study of leadership has become common place in higher education.

Developing leadership skills and values is not the primary goal for students and often plays a secondary roll in a college education (Cress et al., 2001). Although institutions see the importance of leadership development other aspects of the university compete with the amount of focus that can be given to this area of student development. Involvement in student groups, clubs, and organizations commonly give students the opportunity to gain outside experiences from academics. Over the past 30 years, institutions have begun to offer an increasing number of leadership programs and workshops for students.

College is an extremely important developmental period in one’s life. Student development occurs both inside and outside of the classroom. Research indicates that students who become involved outside of the classroom maximize their learning experiences (Logue, Hutchens, & Hector, 2005). Leadership experiences, which can include holding an office, positions of responsibility, or becoming an active member of an organization or club represents an even higher level of involvement. Examples of
leadership activities on campus can also include volunteering or service, tutoring or peer mentoring, an elected student leadership position, and attending leadership development workshops (Cress et al., 2005).

Leadership experiences affect students in the areas of motivation, skills-building, interacting, conflict resolution, and civic responsibilities (Logue et al., 2005). Studies suggest that students who have taken on a leadership role or held responsibility within an organization or groups gain life skills that can be directly applied in their future. These positive experiences can be applied in careers, academics, and personal development (Logue et al., 2005). Involved students attain higher levels of educational success and increased personal values, as compared to students who do not actively participate (Cress et al., 2005). Cress et al. (2005) examined additional questions pertaining to leadership in the College Student Survey, some of the changes that students described included; ability to set goals, sense of personal ethics, ability to plan and implement programs and activities, and the willingness to take risks.

Leadership opportunities allow students to face challenges and make decisions that help them to develop individual skills and values. Studies suggest that the outcomes of leadership experiences are positive. Negative outcomes are rare, overshadowed by the positives, and in most cases are rationalized as a learning experience. Student involvement is important in the overall development of a college student and leadership directly affects positive developmental outcomes.

Leadership Practices, Identities, and Perspectives

Based on the Leadership Practices Inventory, the Student Leadership Practices Inventory (Student LPI) identifies behaviors and actions that students report using when
they are at “their personal best as leaders” (Posner, 2004, p. 443). Kouzes and Posner developed the original version in 1987, by collecting data from 1,200 business managers about their experiences (Posner, 2004). They examined the patterns of behaviors used when leaders were the most effective. Years later, the same method was used to develop the Student LPI. Data were collected from students through independent documentation of personal leadership experiences and then interviews. The five categories that were identified with the business sector were the same for the students surveyed, but differed in the leaders circumstances and outcomes. The Student LPI was created using terminology and concepts more appropriate to the college-student population (Posner, 2004).

Kouzes and Posner (2007) identify the practice of leadership through The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership which include: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. These practices are about behavior and not personality. Model the way means to behave in the way that you expect others to (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). It is the behavior and not the title that gains respect from others. Inspire a shared vision, having a dream or goal and having a picture that includes valuable expectations. Challenge the process, not waiting for something to happen but seeking for and excepting challenges. Enable others to act, a great leader does not do but inspires others to act together as a team. Encourage the heart, allow others to feel a deeper passion for the process. Through these five practices Kouzes and Posner (2007) explain what leadership is, how and where it happens and the importance of individuals engaging in leadership.
The Student LPI is used to measure student leadership effectiveness, behaviors and the frequency that students engaged in these actions (Posner, 2004) and it has two forms; self and observer. Regardless of how students score on the Student LPI most report engaging in the five categories of leadership. Those who reported engaging in more areas viewed themselves as more effective than those who did not engage in each of the areas.

Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, and Osteen (2006) describe a stage based model of leadership identity development (LID) integrating theory while connecting scholarship to practice. The LID brings student development together with leadership theories to understand how students develop when they actively participate in leadership experiences, the process is social and cognitive (Komives et al., 2006) as students come to adopt a leadership identity. LID research assists leadership educators in their facilitation by linking life span development and leadership education (Komives et al., 2006).

The six stages of the LID model are awareness, exploration/engagement, leader identity, leadership differentiated, generatively, and integration/synthesis. Students move through the stages during their experiences in following categories; broadening view of leadership, developing of self, group influences, developmental influences, and the changing of view of self with others (Komives et al., 2006). Movement through the stages is linear, within each stage the student passes through all of the phases before moving onto the next stage.

The first stage of awareness relates to a student's general understanding and awareness of what it means to be a leader. This understanding can come from a number
of places, including family, peers, teachers, involvement in high school clubs, youth organizations, and what they have seen on television and in the movies. Through experiences in the collegiate environment they broaden their view of leadership.

Shertzer and Schuh (2004) explain that previous research suggests the positive values of leadership and leadership development on students, but questions student perspectives. According to their research student views of leadership are positive, and one’s definition of leadership is significant in their personal evaluation as a leader. The researchers conducted the study through focus groups and interviews, to better understand how perspectives contribute to empowering beliefs. Students who see themselves as leaders perceive themselves as empowered and empowering. The four major themes that emerged from the research were, leadership is an individual possession, leadership is positional, leaders possess particular qualities and skills, and leaders act from internal motivations (Shertzer & Schuh, 2004). Students saw leadership as an individual action, what a single person does and the actions as the property of the individual. The results also described that students saw leadership as a position, a person at the top and the position provides opportunities. During interviews students identified specific skills which leaders possessed, such as outgoing, charismatic, and organized. Student leaders explained that they were internally motivated and external motivators were perceived as results and not a cause to engage in leadership roles. Overall, students felt confident in themselves through their leadership experiences, while disengaged students saw themselves as unqualified.
Student Leaders on Screen

Throughout the past 20 years there have been a number of TV series and movies about college life. The portrayals highlight the realities, exaggerate stereotypes and open the public's eyes to a world not usually accustomed to. One common theme within these is student leadership. These characters in both film and on television create a reality for viewer of what a student leader is, as well as an understanding of higher education.

John Singleton's 1995 film *Higher Learning* (Singleton & Hall, 1995), focused on the theme of diversity on one fictional college campus, Columbus University. This film shows how students embrace and reject diversity and the violence that can occur on a campus. The three main characters are Malik Williams an African American track star, Kristen Connor, a white female from Orange County who embraces diversity and becomes involved in a campus safety group, and Remy, a white male from Idaho who believes in the white race. These three characters become a part of three groups on campus, a black social group, a campus safety group and a Nazi skinhead group. Within these groups we see how powerful the leaders are toward the three freshmen and how they are influenced by them. Also it is clear to see how they each develop their own leadership identity and begin to take on leadership roles. While this film does not focus primarily on student leadership, clear leadership identities within student groups are developed.

*Legally Blonde* (Kidney, 2001), directed by Robert Lutetic in 2001 shows a humorous perspective on one college student who goes on to law school. In the beginning of the film, Elle Woods, president of Delta Nu sorority is expecting to be engaged. The other women in the sorority rally around her as though she is royalty,
fixing her hair, spraying perfume on her and cheering as she is greeted by her boyfriend, at the front door of the chapter house. There are two other scenes similar to this one in the movie where the women of the sorority react to Elle as a higher being. While this is a comedy and exaggerates college life, what we see in the student leader is someone who other’s look toward as a superior.

The ABC Family series *Greek* (Smith, 2007-2008) follows the lives of college students in fraternities and sororities at fictional Cyprus Rhodes University. Three of the main characters are the presidents of their chapters. Casey is the president of Zeta Beta Zeta sorority, Cappie is the president of Kappa Tau fraternity and Evan president of Omega Chi Delta fraternity. The three all lead in different ways, Casey is eager to please everyone and often needs coaching from others in order to make decisions, she is often challenged Cappie leads with little thought or concern for his action, his brothers do what he says. Evan appears to be a powerful leader, always dressed professionally and respected by his peers. Throughout the first two seasons other leaders are seen in both positive and negative situations.

Each of these characters posse traits of a leader, practice many of Kouzes and Posner’s practices and are at different developmental stages as leaders. While highly fictional and dramatized in many ways each of the characters is a leaders, and can help understanding student leadership, and may have an influence on actual and perspective student leaders.

Summary of the Literature Review

American youth is exposed to large amounts of television and films from their earliest days. TV has been proven to affect children’s, adolescent’s and adult’s health,
beliefs, and behaviors. Both television and film serve as an educational tool, allowing
viewers experiences they may not have had without the media. Individuals connect to
characters as role models and their behaviors can be linked to what is seen on screen.

Television and films have depicted the collegiate experience and leaders throughout its history. Audiences are fascinated with the collegiate experience, and the
growth of the characters from children to adults. Individuals gain an understanding of
higher education and leadership from characters they see on television and in film. Films
and television shows do not aim to teach perspective students about leadership, but they
can effect the perception of student leadership and the collegiate environment. Himsel
(2004) and Roberts & Ross (1995) write about how fictional characters can teach
leadership skills. Both relate fictional characters to leadership practices in everyday life,
while Conklin (2008) explains how American youth attach themselves to and copy the
actions of strong characters seen in college theme movies. Similar comparisons can be
made to many of the characters depicted as student leaders in college on television and in
film.

Leadership is a complex concept, which is highly respected and has become
increasingly more important for students in higher education. Positive outcomes and
effectiveness are results for those individuals who engage in leadership activities.
College students are at a critical developmental period in their lives, and can be greatly
impacted by leadership experiences. Prior to entering college students are exposed to a
number of factors that lead to an interest in leadership, the media being a major factor.

Universities aim for student success both inside and outside of the classroom.
Research emphasizes the value of involvement for undergraduate students and the
increased level of involvement that come with leadership roles. Students maximize their overall learning experience by involvement outside of the classroom (Logue et al., 2005). Students who engage in leadership are affected in numerous positive ways and are more prepared for their future then disengaged students.

Recent studies provide better understanding of student leadership. Kouzes and Posner (2007) studied leaders both in the business and academic realms and identified five characteristics that most leaders identify with when they are at their personal best. Understanding these practices gives greater meaning to what leaders do and how they feel during such experiences. The leadership identity development model explores how students identify themselves as they develop as leaders. Having knowledge of the stages undergraduates go through as they develop a personal leadership identity can help practitioners better understand how individuals view themselves as leaders.

Researchers as well as students themselves see the values and results of student leadership experiences. Positive outcomes greatly overshadow any negative results. Students engage in leadership roles for different reasons, including their previous experiences and understanding of student leadership. Research shows that the media plays a large role in American society. It affects children and adolescent’s decisions and behaviors. Exposure to leadership, higher education, and student leaders on screen creates a sense of reality for American’s without having personal experiences.

Research shows how the media influences behaviors, the role of collegiate themed movies throughout American history and the value of leadership opportunities for undergraduate students. Students act based on an internal or external motivation, thus
this study examined the media as an external motivator for undergraduates to participate in leadership experiences.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Context of the Study

The study was conducted with Phi Chi chapter of Alpha Epsilon Phi and Rho Deuteron chapter of Alpha Epsilon Pi at The University of Delaware in Newark, DE. The University of Delaware is one of the oldest land grant institutions, with over 100 academic majors. There are 16,000 undergraduate students and 3,000 graduate students from diverse backgrounds. The university has a large number of clubs and organizations for students to become involved in.

Alpha Epsilon Phi is a member of the National Panhellenic Conference, the umbrella organization for 26 national and international women’s fraternities and sororities. Fraternities and sororities are social organizations that enrich the college experience. Nationally founded in 1909 at Barnard University, the women’s college of Columbia University AEPhi was the first nationally Jewish Greek organization. Lifelong friendship, sisterhood, academics, social and community involvement, while providing a home away from home, were the original goals of the founders and continue to be the guiding values of the organization today.

The Phi Chi chapter was chartered at the University of Delaware in 1989. AEPhi is one of the nine Panhellenic sororities on campus. The chapter had 96 members and 50 new members in the spring of 2009. The members of the organization are all full time undergraduate students at the university. The women in the chapter have were initiated 24
into the organization between the spring of 2006 and spring 2008, the new members were not yet initiated and recruited at the beginning of the spring 2009 semester. Within the chapter there is an executive board that governs the chapter, and a number of chair positions, that oversee various aspects of chapter activity.

The members and new members all joined the sorority through the formal recruitment process. Formal recruitment is a process of mutual selection where potential new members and chapters make decisions throughout a series of events that allow the two to get to know each other. The process includes six days of events and ends with the offering of invitations for membership. The members of the chapter were each offered a bid for membership as a result of the individual’s and chapter’s decision.

Alpha Epsilon Pi is a member of the Inferfraternal Council, the umbrella organization for men’s national and international fraternities. The organization was founded at New York University in 1913, to provide opportunities for Jewish college men seeking the best possible college and fraternity experience. The organization continues to live up to its founder’s standards.

The Rho Deuteron chapter was re-chartered at the University of Delaware in 2005. AEPi is a member of the campus Interfraternal Council. The chapter had 54 members and 8 new members in the spring of 2009. The members of the organization are all full time undergraduate students at the university. The men in the chapter were initiated into the organization between the fall of 2006 and fall 2008. Within the chapter there is an executive board that governs the chapter, and a number of chair positions, which oversee various aspects of chapter activity.
The members and new members joined the fraternity through an informal recruitment process. The informal recruitment processes allowed the men to meet the chapter and were then offered a bid for membership. The recruitment process is continual and bids are offered towards the beginning of the fall and spring semesters.

Population and Sample Selection

The target population of the study was all traditional undergraduate students, ages 18-24, at large land grant institution in the northeastern United States. The available students were the members of Alpha Epsilon Phi, Phi Chi chapter and Alpha Epsilon Pi, Rho Deuteron chapter at The University of Delaware. The convenience sample was all members and new members, 146 sorority women and 62 fraternity men, of the organizations with or without elected or appointed positions, present at the chapter meetings when surveys were distributed. The members of the chapters are generally from the northeast representing a variety of academic majors, outside involvement and leadership experience. The survey was distributed to the total population and the focus group members were 5 students selected to participate in the focus group who had already completed the survey and were available at the time scheduled for the focus group.

Instrumentation

The survey instrument used to assess student leadership was based on surveys and interviews used in two different studies and the media questions are original to this study. The main instruments that were used to create the survey used in this study were Kouzes and Posner’s (2008) Online Student Leadership Practices Inventory-self form, questions
from Shertzer and Schuh's (2004) focus groups and interviews for their study of student perceptions of leadership, and original questions targeted towards media.

Kouzes and Posner (2008) developed the Online Student LPI self-version to identify behaviors and actions that students report using when they are at their personal best. The questions in the survey ask how often students participate in a series of behaviors. The survey determines the ways and frequency of actions students engage in as leaders. Shertzer and Schuh (2004) did a study of college student perceptions of leadership through a series of focus groups and interviews with current leaders. The focus groups and interviews were conducted with small groups of student leaders, asking a variety of questions to explain how student's perceived leadership.

The two instruments were changed significantly for this study to better fit the objectives of the research questions. The primary purpose of this study was to determine what motivates students to participate in leadership actions. The three instruments each explored a portion of this purpose: traits of a leader, what motivates students, and how students view leadership. Only small portions were taken directly from the instruments, as most of the items in the survey were created or adapted exclusively for this study. The original questions about media were created to better understand student's media habits, perceptions of the media and the relationship of movies, television and leadership.

The survey (Appendix C) consists of four parts: background information, leadership knowledge, leadership identity, and media viewing opinions. The first section collected background information about the students, and their leadership experience, viewing habits of television and movies and associated attitudes. The second section asked subjects to evaluate their understanding of leadership. Subjects ranked how much
they agreed or disagreed to statements about student leadership by ranking 18 Likert-style items on a five-part scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The third section asked subjects to evaluate how often they participated in leadership actions. Subjects ranked how often they participated in leadership practices by ranking 19 Likert-style items on a five-part scale from almost always to almost never. The fourth section asked subjects to rank 25 Likert-style items by evaluating their perception of the media, the collegiate theme and leadership on television and film on a five-part scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The second section had a Chronbach’s Alpha reliability of .758, the third had a .903, and the fourth had a .799, indicating a stable and internally consistent instrument.

The second form of instrumentation was a two-part series focus group. The focus group was comprised of five students who were current members of at least two student organizations. The participants were also between the ages of 18 and 24 and full time undergraduate students at The University of Delaware who completed the survey instrument. The series of the focus group included two meetings. The first addressed 15 questions about leadership perceptions and media habits. The meeting lasted an hour and the students were provided with snacks. The second session occurred after a 15 minute break and included television and movie clips. Three clips were viewed, prior to viewing each clip students were asked a series of questions, then again following each viewing. The questions both before and after relate to perceptions of leadership, effectiveness, and potential lessons for each television series or movie.

Following the approval of the Institutional Review Boards of Rowan University (Appendix A) and The University of Delaware (Appendix B), a pilot test of the survey
and focus groups were conducted. Five students at Rowan University were given the survey in order to test its validity and readability. The same students reviewed the questions for the focus group, viewed the selected clips. The students reported a few grammatical errors on the survey and no concerns with the focus group questions or clips.

Data Collection

The survey (Appendix C) was administered in February and March 2009 during chapter meeting of the Phi Chi chapter of Alpha Epsilon Phi and Rho Deuteron chapter of Alpha Epsilon Pi at the University of Delaware. All members of the chapters that were in attendance at the meetings received the survey that included a consent clause before the start of the survey at the beginning of the meetings. Surveys and consent forms were collected at the end of the meeting. In order to yield a high return rate, the sorority women received the Alpha Epsilon Phi pen that they were given to complete the survey and the members of Alpha Epsilon Pi received candy.

The focus group (Appendix E) was held in March 2009 in an academic building following an AEPhi chapter meeting. Participants were personally invited to join the focus group representing various ages, years in school, hometowns, and levels of leadership experience, by email two weeks prior to the sessions. Emails were sent to 10 students, 5 fraternity and 5 sorority members and new members utilizing chapter rosters, to invite them to participate in the focus group. In order to encourage members to participate the email explained that food and prizes were given. Students were asked in the email to respond if they were able to participate, I received responses from all of the women and three men that they could participate. One week before the focus group sessions I emailed a reminder to all of the students about the time and location of the
meeting. Additionally I contacted the two men who I had not heard from by phone, voicemails were left for both students. The five female students came to the focus group, but no men did and could not be reached that evening by telephone, voicemail messages were left. Prior to the start of the first part of the focus group participants were asked to complete an informed consent (Appendix D) form. The focus group had two parts that were conducted on the same evening, with a 15-minute break between the two one-hour sessions. The focus group was recorded using i-Movie Software then transcribed by the researcher. Field notes were utilized to document participants body language, nonverbal communication, and individual participation in the group conversation.

Data Analysis

The independent variables in this survey included gender, age, year in school and identification as a leader. These independent variables were collected in the first part of the questionnaire. The dependant variables were how often students participated in leadership behaviors, and their level of agreement with statements on student leadership and the media. Frequency of behaviors and levels of agreement were explored using the Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS). The variables that were explored were the frequency and median age and year in school of the participants. The frequency, mean and standard deviation for each of the Likert-style questions were also explored.

Qualitative data methods were used when analyzing transcribed focus group data and field notes. The procedure for content analysis began with the data being transcribed and organized by question. The data was then reviewed for common themes, phrases,
and what excited participants. After analyzing the data, the information was grouped into categories and analyzed based on frequency, themes, and patterns that may suggest generalizations (Sisco, 1989).
CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS
Profile of the Sample

The subjects for this study were members of Alpha Epsilon Phi, Phi Chi Chapter and Alpha Epsilon Pi, Rho Deuteron Chapter at the University of Delaware during the spring 2009 semester. Surveys were distributed at three meetings, a chapter meeting of Alpha Epsilon Phi on February 14, 2009, an Alpha Epsilon Pi chapter meeting on February 15, 2009, and an Alpha Epsilon Phi new member meeting on March 1, 2009. Seventy-three surveys were completed of the 76 members in attendance at the sorority chapter meeting, 24 of the 36 members that attended the fraternity meeting, and 32 of the 34 new members of the sorority, yielding a return rate of 88.3%. One hundred and five of the participants were female and 24 were male, all between the ages of 18 and 22 (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 contains demographics of the participant’s ages as measured in the spring 2009 semester. The average age of the students who completed surveys was 19.53. Table 4.1 also contains information about the subject’s academic year in college. Although there was a fairly even distribution of the subjects, 57.3% of the participants were in their freshman or sophomore year.

The selected participants of the focus group all had completed the survey. The available students who participated in the focus group were five female students between the ages of 18 and 24, representing various years in school, a transfer student, and
different hometowns in the northeast who responded yes to the email invitation they received. Ten students were invited to participate, eight responded yes to the first email, the two students who did not respond received a phone call to invite them. Only five women showed up for the focus groups, phone calls were made to all of the men, without responses. An attempt was made to hold a second session of the focus group but none of the male students responded. The two-part focus group session was held on the evening of March 8, 2009 following an AEPhi chapter meeting.

Table 4.1

Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N=129</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>129</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year in School</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>129</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>129</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of the Data

Research Question 1: How do selected undergraduate students perceive leadership and what traits and behaviors do they associate with student leaders?
An overall look at the responses dealing with undergraduate’s perceptions of student leadership indicates that students do understand the importance of leadership and identify behavior and traits of student leaders (see Table 4.2). One hundred twenty-four (96.1%) participants agreed that leadership is important for undergraduate students. No students disagreed that leadership can help your future, with 108 (91.5%) agreeing or strongly agreeing, and the remainder responded neutral. Only 17.8% of the students surveyed strongly agreed or agreed that a leader must have a title, while 66.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed. A majority of responses were strongly agree or agree for each of nine the statements about leadership behaviors.

For each the nine statements about the behaviors of student leaders, 67.2% of students or greater agreed or strongly agreed. The behaviors that participants reported that student leaders engage in the most were motivation, drive, influence, and communication. Ninety-two point one percent of the students who completed the survey agreed or strongly agreed that student leaders are motivated, zero disagreed and the remainder responded neutral. Eighty-eight percent strongly agreed or agreed that student leaders are driven and 85.3% strongly agreed or agreed that student leaders are influential.

The two behaviors that students agreed with the least often were handling conflicts and willingness to take risks. While 67.2% of students agreed or strongly agreed that student leaders handle conflict well and 69% agreed or strongly agreed that student leaders are willing to take risks, they were the two behaviors that participants agreed with the least. For all of the behaviors few students disagreed with any of the behaviors and only one strongly disagreed about a behavior.
Focus group participants considered a leader someone who takes charge, wants to make things better, and thinks about the group before themselves. The respondents thought that leaders were motivated, responsible and communicate their ideas effectively. Making a change was something that all of the five participants felt a leader should do. When asked why leadership was important they said that everyone needs someone to follow or members of a group would be doing different things.

Table 4.2

Survey of Student Leadership (N=129)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree=1, Agree=2, Neutral=3, Disagree=4, Strongly Disagree=5</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>m=3.57</td>
<td>sd=.975</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>m=1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A leader must have a title</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership can help your future</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student leaders are motivated</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student leaders are driven</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student leaders are influential</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student leaders communicate well</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student leaders are willing to take risks</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student leaders handle conflicts well</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student leaders are organized</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership is an individual action</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>m=2.51</td>
<td>sd=.858</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>m=2.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35
Research Question 2: How do selected students identify themselves as leaders and what leadership behaviors and actions do they engage in?

An overall review of the responses dealing with the characteristics of leaders indicates that the majority of the students do identify with a significant number of leadership behaviors and actions (see Table 4.3). Only 71.3% of students consider themselves leaders and 28.7% did not. Of the students surveyed 92 (71.3%) do not currently hold a leadership position, and 112 (86.8%) have held a leadership role. The majority of responses for each of the items in the third section of the survey regarding behaviors that they engage in were almost always or often.

The behaviors that students identified engaging most frequently were; following through with promises and commitments, actively listening to others, communicating well, and trying to learn from experiences. Ninety point seven percent indicated that they almost always or often follow through with promises and commitments, 88.4% almost always or often actively listen to others, and 80.4% almost always or often communicate well and try to learn from experiences. The two behaviors that the fewest participants identified with as behaviors or actions that they engaged in almost always or often were, looking for new ways myself and others can try new methods (50.4%) and enjoy taking risks (47.3%). No greater then 3.13% of students responded almost never for any of the behaviors or actions.
Table 4.3

Survey of Student Leadership Behaviors and Actions (N=129)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Almost Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Once in a while</th>
<th>Almost Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I follow through with promises and commitments</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=1.62 sd=.709</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I actively listen to others</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=1.73 sd=.726</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I try to learn from experiences</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I praise people for a job well done</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=1.92 sd=.767</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I communicate well</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=1.81 sd=.758</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I encourage others</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=1.84 sd=.79</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I support other's decisions</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=2.04 sd=.700</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am driven</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=128 m=2.01 sd=.835</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I set a personal example of what I expect from other people</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>I look for feedback for my actions</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I am organized</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=2.01 sd=.980</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I keep current with events and activities</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=2.07 sd=.877</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I handle conflicts well</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=2.09 sd=.857</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I look ahead to what I believe will affect us in the future</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=2.29 sd=.775</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I look for ways to develop and challenge my skills and abilities</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=2.47 sd=.902</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I make sure people adhere to principles and standards</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=2.44 sd=.865</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I look for new ways myself and others can try new methods</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=2.56 sd=.935</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy taking risks</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=2.60 sd=1.012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am influential</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=129 m=2.47 sd=.771</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question 3: What role does the media play in the lives of selected college students?

Students reported that 82.9% watch 0 to 10 hours of television, 99.2% watch 1 to 5 DVDs or videos per week, and 93.8% go to the movies 0 to 3 times a month. The genres of television that students responded yes that they viewed the most often were sitcoms (80.6%), reality television (78.3%), and movies on television (75.2%). The genres that they reported watching the least were kids programs and public broadcasting, 91.5% responded no to watching kids programs and 89.9% to public broadcasting. Ninety-eight point four percent of students said they watch comedy films, 81.4% watch dramas, and 55.8% watch action films.

Focus group participants explained that they watch television to relax, connect with others, and as an escape. Four of the five participants said that they watch less television and go to the movies less frequently during the academic semester, but watch both to get away from reality. When asked what role does the media play in your life, one woman said, “It is a sort of distraction from the real world” and another said, “Comic relief, which is a really nice distraction.”

Table 4.4 contains information about student’s viewing habits and opinions. Ninety-one percent of the students surveyed strongly agreed or agreed that they enjoy watching television and 91.5% enjoy watching movies. The majority of participants watch television and movies for entertainment, with 93.8% strongly agreeing or agreeing that they watch television and 89.9% watch movies for entertainment. Students report that both TV and movies play a large role in America, 97.1% agreed or strongly agreed that movies play a large role in America and 92.3% agreed or strongly agreed that TV
Table 4.4

Survey of Students Perceptions of Media (N=129)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree=1</th>
<th>Agree=2</th>
<th>Neutral=3</th>
<th>Disagree=4</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree=5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy watching television</td>
<td>N=129 m=1.74 sd=.796</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy watching movies</td>
<td>N=129 m=1.65 sd=.736</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I watch television for entertainment</td>
<td>N=129 m=1.61 sd=.653</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I watch movies for entertainment</td>
<td>N=129 m=1.61 sd=.711</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television plays a large role in America</td>
<td>N=129 m=1.54 sd=.663</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movies play a large role in America</td>
<td>N=129 m=1.84 sd=.734</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television is influential</td>
<td>N=129 m=2.24 sd=.836</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movies can be influential</td>
<td>N=128 m=2.16 sd=.751</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am influenced by characters on screen</td>
<td>N=128 m=2.80 sd=.991</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television can be motivational</td>
<td>N=129 m=2.33 sd=.782</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movies are motivational</td>
<td>N=129 m=2.40 sd=.713</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television has educational values</td>
<td>N=129 m=2.11 sd=.731</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movies have educational values</td>
<td>N=129 m=2.36 sd=.672</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television has a negative affect for adolescents</td>
<td>N=129 m=2.79 sd=.872</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movies have a negative affect on adolescents</td>
<td>N=129 m=3.13 sd=.995</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative stereotypes are often projected on screen</td>
<td>N=128 m=2.16 sd=.791</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often have the television on but don’t actively watch</td>
<td>N=129 m=2.57 sd=1.095</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television and movies allow me to connect with others</td>
<td>N=129 m=2.63 sd=.928</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV and movies effect my decision making</td>
<td>N=129 m=3.29 sd=.963</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership is often projected on TV and in movies</td>
<td>N=129 m=2.39 sd=.711</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College life is often projected realistically on screen</td>
<td>N=129 m=3.34 sd=1.012</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
does. Only 24.8% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that movies have a negative affect on adolescents and 34.9% agreed or strongly agreed television has a negative affect, but 69% strongly agreed or agreed that negative stereotypes are often projected on screen.

Few students reported that characters on screen influence them, 28.8% agreed or strongly agreed that characters on screen influence them, but 72.9% agreed or strongly agreed that movies are influential and 68.2% agreed or strongly agreed that television is influential. Seventy-two percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that television has educational values, only 2.3% disagreed, and the remaining 25.6% had a neutral response.

Research Question 4: What do selected students learn from the media from youth to present about leadership and hired education?

Focus group participants agreed that you can learn from media but that they do not watch with the intent to learn or watched for the purpose of education as children. Table 4.5 contains the themes that focus group participants identified as educational content in the media. When asked what role the media played in their childhood, each participant enthusiastically identified specific television shows and movies that they watched growing up. When one student stated that Rugrats taught a lot of things, another participant responded, “But you didn’t know that you were learning.” Students explained that they learned basic Spanish from Dora the Explorer and Sesame Street. They also identified learning about letters, numbers, telling time as children through television programming. When asked if they thought that the media was educational, they thought that some shows were. Life lessons was a common theme that students saw that they
All of the participants agreed that leadership is exaggerated on screen, and that most often a leader is seen as a hero. Students were able to identify leaders that they saw on TV and in movies both in their childhood and as college students. A few characters they mentioned were Tommy from *Rugrats*, Zach Morris from *Saved by the Bell*, Cory from *Boy Meets World*, and Regina from *Mean Girls*. One student felt that most of the leaders on screen were overly exaggerated and was happy that things are not that way in real life. Others disagreed with her and said that even though they are exaggerated they do exist in real life. All five agreed that in every group, even groups of friends one person tends to take the role as leader.

Participants did not think that the media affected the decisions that they made in their childhood when they were first asked. But after some discussion they disclosed that they had minor influences such as choosing extra curricular activities and Halloween costumes because of what they saw on television and or in movies. One student said that...
she “didn’t think it [her perception of college] was colored by what she saw on TV.” The other participants agreed that they did not think that their perception of college was shaped by what they saw on screen. They were influenced more by what they learned from teachers. Most of the women felt that the collegiate environment is exaggerated on screen and often shows the extremes of college life. They identified a number of characters that were college students who never went to class or did school work. All of the participants agreed that their real life in college is very different from the characters they saw.

Discussing and viewing clips of *Legally Blonde* (Kidney, 2001), *Higher Learning* (Singleton et al., 1995) and *Greek* (Smith, 2007/08) the focus group participants were able to identify items that could be learned about leadership and the collegiate environment from each. Table 4.6 contains themes that students identified as traits and behaviors of leaders on screen. They all agreed that you can learn from both television and movies, but if you are not looking to learn something often you do not think that you are learning. Similar to the life lessons that they learned from childhood characters, they were watching for entertainment not education but could identify lessons that could be learned and how the characters could serve as an influence.

Research Question 5: How can practitioners utilize the media to promote, encourage, and teach leadership to undergraduate students?

The discussions before viewing and then after viewing the clips were very different. Prior to viewing all three of the clips students were not able to identify specific leadership qualities of the characters. But after watching clips they were able to identify many qualities of leadership that the characters projected. The students were able to
identify multiple ways that the leaders in the films could influence viewers. The common themes that participants identified as the traits and behaviors of leaders were their motivation, ability to command an audience and power (see Table 4.6). While they did not agree that all three of the clips were realistic, a majority of the students agreed that they were relatable and could be educational. They were able to identify more than 15 ways that each of the characters could positively influence viewers.

Table 4.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Traits and Behaviors on Screen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commands an Audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students responded positively that media could be used to teach leadership. By viewing fictional leaders, they identified the ability to compare similarities and differences of leaders. The participants said that television and movies can influence perceptions of how to become a leader and how people respond to leaders. They agreed that the media may not always teach leadership, but it can influence them. One student explained that the negative power that the characters used in *Higher Learning* (Singleton et al., 1995) compared with the positive leadership of Elle in *Legally Blonde* (Kidney, 2001) made her realize that people can do very different things with leadership. They thought that each of the clips forced them to think differently about what they were
watching. When they watched the movies for entertainment, they thought differently then when they were watching for the purpose of education.

The possibility of escaping the real world to learn was appealing to a majority of the participants. They also thought that by using popular media practitioners could connect with their students better and add a level of entertainment to education. The ability to learn from fictional rather then real examples was something that the group identified as positive, since there was the ability not to talk about people and potentially hurt relationships. One student said, “There has to be a want for there to be a connection between media and leadership.”
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

This study investigated the influence of television and film on student leadership perceptions and practices of selected students at The University of Delaware during the Spring 2009 semester. The study was designed to assess student’s understanding about leadership, the leadership traits they possess and how the media influences them to engage in leadership activities. The subjects of the study were undergraduate members of a sorority or fraternity at the University of Delaware between the ages of 18 and 22.

A four-part survey including a consent clause was distributed to 144 students. The survey first collected demographic data, yes and no questions about leadership, and media viewing information. The second section was comprised of 18 Likert-style items about leadership, the third section had 19 Likert-style statements about personal leadership actions and the final section had 25 Likert-style items regarding the media. One hundred twenty nine surveys were returned yielding a return rate of 88.3%.

A focus group was conducted in two parts after all of the surveys were completed. Ten students who had previously competed the surveys were selected to participate in the focus group, eight agreed to participate, and five attended, all female students. The first focus group session consisted of eleven questions about the media and four questions about leadership. The second part of the focus group was held after a short break and consisted of viewing clips from Legally Blonde (Kidney, 2001), Higher Learning...
The same six questions were asked before and after watching each of the three clips and three after. To conclude the focus group five summarizing questions were discussed.

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data from the completed surveys. Variations in student’s understanding of leadership, personal leadership identities, and opinions about the media were explored using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software. Qualitative data from the focus groups were reviewed by doing a content analysis to find common themes. Significant themes were present in the areas of leadership and media by calculating and evaluating frequencies.

Discussion of the Findings

Research Question 1: How do selected undergraduate students perceive leadership and what trait and behaviors do they associate with student leaders?

Leadership is the process of people working together, not the actions of individuals, it is a rational process for a common goal to accomplish change that will benefit the common good (Komives et al., 1998). Leadership does not need to happen in official manner. The majority of the students who participated in the survey identified that they had an understanding of leadership consistent with current research. Respondents agreed with less then 20% agreeing that leaders must have a title, with 71.3% that consider themselves leaders and only 34.9% who currently hold a leadership role. One focus group participant said, “A leader doesn’t have to be the class president, but they do need to have common traits.” Explaining that a leader is a person who takes charge, does not wait for someone else to do something and wants to create change.
Ninety-two percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that leadership can help them in their futures, which supports research that says, students who take on leadership responsibility gain skills that can be directly applied in their futures, in areas such as careers, academics and personal development (Logue et al., 2005). The findings of this study support Logue et al. (2005) and Cress et al. (2005) who explain the types of experiences and behaviors of student leaders, with 89.89% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing that student leaders are motivated, 69% agreeing or strongly agreeing that student leaders are willing to take risks, 66.6% agreeing or strongly agreeing that leaders handle conflicts well. These traits are what the research explains as skills that students can gain from participating in leadership activities. Focus group participants said that student leaders are organized, responsible, trustworthy, and outspoken, similar to the qualities that Shertzer and Schuh (2004) identified.

Research Question 2: How do selected students identify themselves as leaders and what leadership behaviors and actions do they engage in?

Kouzes and Posner (2007) identify The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership as: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart through the use of the Student Leadership Practices Inventory. The majority of the participants in the study identified engaging in these behaviors and actions. Respondents identified that they model the way with 75.9% noting they almost always or often set a personal example of what they expect from others, and 90.7% noting they almost always or often follow through with promises and commitments. Survey participants identified that they enable others to act, with 80.6% noting they
almost always or often praise people for a job well done and 79.9% noting they almost always or often encourage others.

Participants were able to identify themselves as leaders through their behaviors and actions, which Cress et al. (2005) described as beneficial for overall student development. Eighty percent or more of the students surveyed identified that they engaged almost always or often in the following: actively listening to others, trying to learn from experiences, and communicating well. Focus group participants identified, organization, good listening, thinking of the group first, creating change, and taking action as some of the leadership qualities that they see in themselves. These qualities and behaviors are similar to the results of Shertzer and Schuh (2004).

Research Question 3: What role does the media play in the lives of selected college students?

Students reported that 82.9% watch 0 to 10 hours of television, 99.2% watch 1 to 5 DVDs or videos per week and 93.8% go to the movies 0 to 3 times a month. These finding are lower then research at The University of Michigan Health System. Focus group participants explained that prior to college they watched more television, but do not have the time to watch as much with their current schedules. The genres of television and movies that students identified that they watch the most frequently on TV and in film were comedy and drama. The majority of the survey participants agreed or strongly agreed that they watch television and movies for entertainment, and focus group participants explained that they watch to relax, escape, and to connect with others.

Students did not agree with the research that media plays a negative role in adolescent’s lives with less then 35% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing that
television and movies have a negative affect. Graham (2008) described children as imitators who do not have the capacity to evaluate what they are being exposed to. Focus group participants said that they separate fiction from reality, but younger children may not be able to do the same.

Few student's reported being influenced by the characters that they see on screen, but 72.9% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that movies are influential and 68.2% agreed or strongly agreed that television is influential. One focus group participant explained that through TV she was able to see people and cultures that she couldn't see in her own community. Similarly, Conklin (2008) explains that the cinema allows people to enter into worlds they are not a part of. Seventy-two percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that television has educational value. Overall, students watch television and movies for entertainment. Focus group participants explained that you can learn and be influenced from what is on screen if they are intentionally looking to do so.

Research Question 4: How does the media influence college student's perception of leadership from their youth to college?

The majority of the subjects agreed that television and movies play a significant role in the United States and can serve as an extrinsic motivation for youth. Students agreed that the media can serve as an educational tool and viewers do not always realize that they are learning. During the focus group, students were able to identify lessons that learned from television, movies, and characters on screen. They explained that they were learning without knowing as children. As college students they did not report learning from the media, but after viewing clips they were able to identify clear lessons. Students
explained that they do not learn from everything that they view but they can if they have intentions to do so.

Conklin (2008) explained how the collegiate environment is often distorted and exaggerated on film. Students expressed concern that characters on screen spend little time in class, which Conklin (2008) explains is true of almost all of the 700 films about college. Students reported many of the same characteristics of leaders they see on television and film that Whitney and Parker (2000) identify including, power, values, and organization when they were specifically looking for them. Overall the media is not a major influence for undergraduate students, but focus group participants thought that it can be.

Research Question 5: How can practitioners utilize the media to promote, encourage, and teach leadership to undergraduate students?

In the past 20 years leadership education has had an increasing presence on campuses (Komives et al., 2006) and media can help to further develop these programs and initiatives. Television and media have been a part of most undergraduate students experience since a very young age using them for educational purposes can be helpful to motivate. Graham (2008) described children as imitators and will act according to what they see on screen, but students explained that they can interpret and act accordingly with what they see on screen.

The ability to learn from fictional rather then real examples was something that the group identified as positive, since there was the ability not to talk about people and potentially hurt relationships. One student said “There has to be a want for there to be a connection between media and leadership.” Himsel (2004) and Robert & Ross (1995)
write about how fictional character’s leadership can be practiced in everyday life. Both authors use fictional characters as examples to teach leadership. Using the media to teach leadership practitioners would be responsible for creating a connection for their students. Undergraduates can benefit from looking at movies and television from different angles to gain a better understanding of leadership.

During the focus group students had a heightened level of enthusiasm as they began to discuss the movies and television shows. A connection was created between the facilitator and participants, allowing for a more open dialogue. Engaging student’s enthusiasm offered a learning environment that was both exciting and fun.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study it can be concluded that students understand the value of leadership for undergraduate students, engage in a majority of leadership behaviors and actions, and can benefit from the use of fictional characters from television and movies in leadership education programs. Students reported that they enjoy watching television and movies for entertainment, relaxation, to escape, and to connect with others. Integrating a medium that students enjoy, TV and movies, with an area that has become increasingly important in higher education, leadership, can be beneficial for both students and practitioners. Students reported that while they do not typically look to learn about leadership when they are watching TV or movies, they certainly could see the connections. After viewing selected media clips students were easily able to identify leadership behaviors of the character. Thus, with proper facilitation, students are able to learn real life lessons from fictional characters.
Institutions of higher education acknowledge the importance of involvement and leadership for undergraduate students, offering workshops, courses and even majors in leadership and leadership development. Leadership and college are popular themes in both television and movies. Students do not watch television and movies to learn but can see the educational value both offer viewers. Students did not identify the media as an external motivation to engage in leadership. But after viewing clips from two movies and a television series, they were able to identify leadership behaviors of the characters and ways in which other students could learn from these characters.

Beginning in early childhood, American children are exposed to hours of television and movies, allowing them to see and experience things that may not be possible in their own community. Subjects explained that they had been exposed to the collegiate environment and leaders through the media and found them to be more highly exaggerated. It can be concluded that undergraduate students have the ability to filter and process fictional media, and not act as imitators as has been seen in younger children.

A majority of the participants in this study have a solid understanding of leadership, qualities of a leader, and possess a number of traits of a leader. Today’s undergraduate students are learning about leadership, programs have increased over the past 20 years, and will continue to increase. Practitioners need to meet the needs of students through avenues they enjoy. Television and movies are a part of American culture and if presented properly, students can learn more from fictional characters that mimic real life. One student explained that she was able to talk about the characters more easily because she (or the others she was speaking with) didn’t have a personal connection. After viewing clips from Higher Learning (Singleton et al., 1995), students
were able to explain and understand how leadership can be used in a negative way, grateful that they didn’t have to personally experience what they saw on screen to understand.

Based on the findings of this study, integrating the use of media in leadership education and programming for undergraduate students can be extremely beneficial. Students explained that they watch television and movies for entertainment, an escape, to relax, and connect with others. Practitioners can reach students on a different level, educating them while they are relaxed, entertained, and connecting with others. Programs can be tailored specifically to the interests of the students that the professional is working with. Literature exists linking fictional characters to leadership and programming for undergraduate leadership should include them as well. This study showed that students have the ability to make direct connections from the media to real life if they are given an educational forum to do so. Based on the findings in this study, it can be concluded that student affairs professionals should include the use of television and movies in leadership programming and education.

Recommendations for Practice

Based upon the findings and conclusions of the research, the following suggestions are presented for practice:

1. Student affairs professionals should understand how students view themselves as leaders and try to understand all factors fictional and non-fictional that motivate them.

2. Practitioners should utilize popular media in leadership training, education, and advising.
3. Practitioners should keep current on programming and movies about higher education that undergraduate students are watching.

4. Practitioners should aim for a creative and fun environment for promoting leadership.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based upon the findings and conclusions of the research, the following suggestions are presented for future research:

1. Further studies should be conducted with larger populations of students including those who are not engage in student activities or have held leadership positions to confirm the findings of the study.

2. A follow up study should be done at various times of the year, since students expressed that their viewing habits of both television and movies are significantly different during the academic year.

3. A follow up study should be done with a larger number of male students, to compare the responses of male and female students.

4. Further studies should include other types of media and technologies, including but not limited to the internet, print media, and cell phones.

5. Future studies should explore specific programming and movies that students watch currently watched as children.
REFERENCES


Retrieved February 7, 2008 from http://vnweb.hwwilsonweb.com/hww/results/results_single_ftPES.jhtml
APPENDIX A

Rowan University Institutional Review Board Approval Letter
Alissa Kurutoff
111 Greenvale Road
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034

Dear Alissa Kurutoff:

In accordance with the University’s IRB policies and 45 CFR 46, the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to inform you that the Rowan University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your project:

IRB application number: 2009-046

Project Title: Student Leadership: The Influence of Television and Film on Today’s Student Leaders

In accordance with federal law, this approval is effective for one calendar year from the date of this letter. If your research project extends beyond that date or if you need to make significant modifications to your study, you must notify the IRB immediately. Please reference the above-cited IRB application number in any future communications with our office regarding this research.

Please retain copies of consent forms for this research for three years after completion of the research.

If, during your research, you encounter any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects, you must report this immediately to Dr. Harriet Hartman (hartman@rowan.edu or call 856-256-4500, ext. 3787) or contact Dr. Gautam Pillay, Associate Provost for Research (pillay@rowan.edu or call 856-256-5150).

If you have any administrative questions, please contact Karen Heiser (heiser@rowan.edu or 856-256-5150).

Sincerely,

Harriet Hartman, Ph.D.
Chair, Rowan University IRB

c: Burt Sisco, Educational Leadership, Education Hall
APPENDIX B

University of Delaware Institutional Review Board Approval Letter
January 7, 2009

Ms. Alissa Krutoff
111 Greenvale Rd
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034

Re: Student Leadership: The Influence of Television and Film on Today's Student Leaders

Dear Ms. Krutoff,

I understand that the above project has been approved by the IRB at Rowan University, your home institution, and that you have permission from the Alpha Epsilon Phi Sorority to recruit research participants from their current membership at the University of Delaware. The University of Delaware IRB appreciates your notification of the work you will be doing on our campus.

Should any concerns regarding human subjects research rights arise while you are on our campus, please advise me of those concerns immediately.

Best of luck with the project.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth D. Peloso
IRB Administrator
Director of Compliance
Research Office

Cc: Harriet Hartman, PhD, Chair IRB Rowan University
APPENDIX C

Survey Instrument
Survey of Student Leadership and Media

This survey is being administered as part of a graduate course research project at Rowan University. While your participation is voluntary and you are not required to answer any of the questions herein, your cooperation and participation are important to the success of the project and are greatly appreciated. If you choose to participate, please understand that all responses are strictly confidential and no personally identifiable information is being requested. Moreover, whether you agree to participate or not, your decision will have no effect on your grades, standing in class or any other status. I understand that by completing this survey I agree to participate in the study entitled by “Student Leadership: The Influence of Television and Film on Today’s Student Leaders” which is being conducted by Alissa Knufoff, knufoff@students.rowan.edu.

Indicate your choices by checking all that apply.

1) Gender
   - □ Female
   - □ Male

2) Age
   - □ 18
   - □ 19
   - □ 20
   - □ 21
   - □ 22
   - □ Other

3) Year in School
   - □ Freshman
   - □ Sophomore
   - □ Junior
   - □ Senior

4) Do you consider yourself a leader?
   - □ Yes
   - □ No

5) Do you currently hold a leadership role?
   - □ Yes
   - □ No

6) Do you currently hold an elected leadership position?
   - □ Yes
   - □ No

7) Have you ever held a leadership role?
   - □ Yes
   - □ No

8) Have you participated in leadership education courses or workshops?
   - □ Yes
   - □ No

9) Are you a member of another club or organization?
   - □ Yes
   - □ No

10) Do you volunteer or participate in community service?
    - □ Yes
    - □ No

11) Is leadership important for undergraduate students?
    - □ Yes
    - □ No

12) How many hours of television do you watch a week?
    - □ 0 to 5
    - □ 6 to 10
    - □ 11 to 20
    - □ 20 or more

13) What types of television programming do you watch? Check all that apply
    - □ Sitcoms
    - □ Dramas
    - □ Reality
    - □ News
    - □ Movies
    - □ Sports
    - □ TV Magazines
    - □ Investigative
    - □ Game Shows
    - □ Talk Shows
    - □ Kids
    - □ Entertainment
    - □ Public Broadcasting
    - □ Other

14) How many DVDs or videos do you watch a week?
    - □ 0 to 2
    - □ 3 to 5
    - □ 6 to 8
    - □ 9 or more

15) How often do you go to the movies a month?
    - □ 0 to 1
    - □ 2 to 3
    - □ 4 to 5
    - □ 6 or more

16) What types of movies do you watch? Check all that apply
    - □ Comedy
    - □ Drama
    - □ Action
    - □ Documentary
    - □ Other
Indicate your choice by checking the appropriate response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Leadership is an individual action</td>
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<td>2) A leader must have a title</td>
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<td>3) Student leaders are motivated</td>
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<td>4) Student leaders are organized</td>
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<td>5) Student leaders are influential</td>
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<td>6) Student leaders are driven</td>
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<td>7) Student leaders are willing to take risks</td>
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<td>8) Student leaders communicate well</td>
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<td>10) Student leaders handle conflicts well</td>
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<td>12) I am motivated</td>
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<tr>
<td>13) I am organized</td>
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<tr>
<td>14) I am influential</td>
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<td>15) I am driven</td>
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<td>16) I am willing to take risks</td>
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<td>17) I communicate well</td>
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<tr>
<td>18) I handle conflicts well</td>
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<tr>
<td>19) Leadership is important to me</td>
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<td>20) Leadership can help your future</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Survey of Student Leadership and Media

Indicate how frequently you engage in the behavior described by checking the appropriate response.

1) I set a personal example of what I expect from other people.
2) I am influential.
3) I look ahead to what I believe will affect us in the future.
4) I look for ways to develop and challenge my skills and abilities.
5) I praise people for a job well done.
6) I make sure people adhere to principles and standards.
7) I look for ways myself and others can try new methods.
8) I actively listen to others.
9) I encourage others.
10) I follow through with promises and commitments.
11) I keep current with events and activities.
12) I try and learn from experiences.
13) I look for feedback for my actions.
14) I support other's decisions.
15) I enjoy taking risks.
16) I am organized.
17) I am driven.
18) I communicate well.
19) I handle conflicts well.
Survey of Student Leadership and Media

Indicate your choice by checking the appropriate response.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I watch television for entertainment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Television plays a large roll in America.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Television has educational values.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Movies have a negative affect on adolescents.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Movies are motivational.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Negative stereotypes are often projected on screen.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>I am influenced by characters on screen.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Leadership is often projected on TV and in movies.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Movies have educational values.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Television plays a positive role for adolescents.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>I enjoy watching movies.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>I watch television to learn.</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Television and movies allow me to connect with others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Television is influential.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Television has a negative affect for adolescents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I model my leadership style after characters I see on screen.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Movies play a large roll in America.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I watch movies to learn.</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>College life is often projected realisticly on screen.</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Television can be motivational.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Movies can be influential.</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>I watch television for entertainment.</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>I often have the television on but don't actually watch.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>TV and movies effect my decision making.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>I watch movies for entertainment.</td>
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APPENDIX D

Focus Group Informed Consent
I agree to participate in a study entitled “Student Leadership: The Influence of Television and Film on Today’s Student Leaders” which is being conducted by Alissa Krutoff, a masters student in the Educational Leadership department at Rowan University.

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the influence of the media on undergraduate student leadership behaviors. The data collected from this study will be combined with data from previous studies as a research paper for Seminar/Internship in Higher Education course.

I understand that participation is voluntary and that my responses will be anonymous and all the data gathered will be confidential. I understand that my responses will be audibly recorded and notes will be taken for back up measures. My name will not be disclosed in recordings, written notes, or publication. I understand that recorded and written information will only used by the primary researcher for the purpose of the study and will be destroyed five years following the completion of study.

I agree that any information obtained from this study may be used in any way thought best for submission, publication or education provided that I am in no way identified and my name is not used.

If I have any questions or problems concerning my participation in this study I may contact Alissa Krutoff at 856-607-7170 or krutof90@students.rowan.edu or Dr. Burton Sisco at 856-256-3717 or sisco@rowan.edu.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date
APPENDIX E

Focus Group Agendas
Focus Group
Part 1

Media

- Why do you watch TV?
- Why do you watch movies?
- What role did the media play in your childhood?
- Who are some characters on TV or in movies that you remember?
  - Why?
  - Did they effect any of your life decisions?
- How is the media educational?
- What role does the media play in your life?
- Does the media influence you?
  - How?
- How is the collegiate environment portrayed on screen?
  - What was your perception of college before you came?
  - How has your perception changed?
- How is leadership portrayed on screen?
  - Name some characters you would consider leaders on TV.
  - Name some characters you would consider leaders you have seen in the movies.
    - Why?
- Name movies or TV shows about student leaders.
- Name movies or TV shows about college.

Leadership

- Who do you consider a leader?
  - Why?
- What leaders do you look up to?
  - Why?
- What are traits that you see in other leaders?
- What are leadership qualities that you see in yourself?
- Why is leadership important?
Focus Group
Part 2

Media Clips

Prior to viewing Legally Blond

- Have you seen the movie Legally Blond?
  - How familiar are you with it?
- What are your favorite parts?
- Do you think it teaches leadership?
- How is the collegiate environment portrayed?
- What are some examples of leadership in the film?
- What lessons can be learned?

After viewing selected clips of Legally Blond

- What ideas of leadership did you see?
- Was it realistic, relatable, or educational?
  - Why?
- Do you think the characters could influence your decisions to engage in leadership roles?
  - Influence others?

Prior to viewing Greek

- Have you seen the TV series Greek?
  - How familiar are you with it?
- What are your favorite parts?
- Do you think it teaches leadership?
- How is the collegiate environment portrayed?
- What are some examples of leadership in the film?
- What lessons can be learned?

After viewing selected clips of Greek

- What ideas of leadership did you see?
- Was it realistic, relatable, or educational?
  - Why?
- Do you think the characters could influence your decisions to engage in leadership roles?
  - Influence others?
Prior to viewing Higher Learning

- Have you seen the movie Higher Learning?
- How familiar are you with it?
- What are you favorite parts?
- Do you think it teaches leadership?
- How is the collegiate environment portrayed?
- What are some examples of leadership in the film?
- What lessons can be learned?

After viewing selected clips of Higher Learning

- What ideas of leadership did you see?
- Was it realistic, relatable, or educational?
  - Why?
- Do you think the characters could influence your decisions to engage in leadership roles?
  - Influence others?

Follow up

How can the media influence your perception of leadership?
Others perceptions?
Do you think media influenced your perception of leadership or college?
Do you think media plays a positive or negative role?
Why?