

**From *Ally McBeal* to *Sábado Gigante*:
Contributions of Television Viewing to the Gender Role
Attitudes of Latino Adolescents**

Rocío Rivadeneyra

Illinois State University

L. Monique Ward

University of Michigan

Although previous findings indicate that frequent television viewing is associated with holding more stereotypical attitudes about gender, no studies have examined this connection among Latino youth, who are frequent viewers of both English- and Spanish-language programming. The present study attempted to rectify this situation by examining connections between exposure to this content, viewer involvement, and the gender role beliefs of Latino adolescents. Surveying 186 Latino high school students, we found that girls who watched more television and who perceived it to be realistic exhibited more traditional gender role attitudes. Similar contributions were seen from the viewing of specific genres of English- and Spanish-language programming, underscoring the importance of investigating associations by language, sex, and genre.

Keywords: *Latinos; gender roles; television; Spanish-language television; adolescents*

Television has become a central feature in the daily lives of many American adolescents. From sitcoms to soap operas, teens are estimated to spend approximately 3 hours each day watching TV (Roberts, Foehr, Rideout, & Brodie, 1999), which, during the course of a year, is more time than they spend in school. Although many adults may view this as wasted time, media serve many functions for adolescents, including providing outlets for mood control, models for emulation, and scripts for exploring possible selves (Arnett, 1995; Dorr, 1986). At the same time, TV portrayals contribute directly and indirectly to shaping adolescents' notions of social reality. In every image, line of dialogue, and behavior enacted, television conveys important messages about cultural norms and belief systems, providing information about what is valued, expected, and possible.

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However, the portrayals that dominate television programming do not always present accurate characterizations of adult behavior. Analyses of TV programs broadcast from the 1970s through the 1990s document that portrayals of women and men are commonly limited and stereotypical (Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Browne, 1998), presenting often one-dimensional representations of male and female behavior. Male characters are featured in a greater variety of roles and occupations than are female characters and are seen as powerful, assertive, problem-solving agents whose needs and opinions are taken seriously. Women, on the other hand, are typically featured less frequently and often serve as subordinates to the male lead. Female characters are more often passive, dependent, emotional, and youthful, with a greater focus on their physical attractiveness. Few married female characters (37%) are employed outside the home and shown meeting the demands of both family and career, in contrast to 67% in the real world ("TV vs. Reality," 1998). Although there have been some improvements in these trends during the past decade, with increasing portrayals of professional women and of nurturing men (Signorielli & Bacue, 1999), evidence indicates that the general patterns persist.

Associations Between TV Viewing and Gender Belief Systems: Existing Correlational Research

Because of television's prominence in young people's lives, concern has been expressed that repeated exposure to its limited perspectives might lead youth to adopt equally limited views of masculinity and femininity. Indeed, if women are seldom portrayed as problem solvers, heroines, and working mothers, and if men are rarely depicted as nurturant and sensitive, viewers' own self-conceptions, aspirations, and gender ideologies may become equally constrained. Data linking the acceptance of stereotypical gender roles with negative mental health outcomes, such as poor body image, alcohol abuse, and sexual risk taking (Monk & Ricciardelli, 2003; Pleck, Sonenstein, & Ku, 1993; Tolman, 1999) reveal the gravity of adopting such constrained belief systems.

Is there any indication, then, of television's possible influence here? Although not conclusive, empirical evidence suggests that regular exposure to TV's stereotypical gender roles is associated with young viewers' ideas about gender (for review, see Signorielli, 2001). We divide this work into two domains and summarize existing studies testing children, adolescents, or college students in Table 1. One set of studies (Outcome 1) examines whether regular media use is associated with people's beliefs about the occupations, activities, and attributes associated with each sex. Findings indicate several

significant connections in this area. First, frequent television viewing is associated with holding more stereotypical associations about masculine and feminine traits, activities, chores, and occupations (Morgan, 1987; Signorielli & Lears, 1992). Second, greater exposure to specific genres is associated with viewers' assumptions about the distribution of real-world roles and occupations (Carveth & Alexander, 1985; Potter & Chang, 1990). For example, greater exposure to action or adventure programs is associated with lower estimates of the number of working and professional women. Finally, associations have been reported between regular exposure to educational television or to programs with nontraditional characters and less stereotypical sex role beliefs (Rosenwasser, Lingenfelter, & Harrington, 1989).

The second group of studies (Outcome 2) examines associations between TV viewing and students' attitudes about gender, assessing their agreement with statements concerning the appropriate roles and behaviors of women and men, the appropriateness of women's place in the domestic and work arenas (e.g., married women should stay home and be housewives and mothers), and the skills and competencies of each sex (e.g., men are more rational than women). Here, more frequent TV viewing is typically linked with holding more sexist attitudes (Morgan & Rothschild, 1983), although most findings are conditional, indicating results only for girls (Morgan, 1982; Ward & Rivadeneira, 1999) or specific genres (Potter & Chang, 1990). Together, evidence suggests that frequent exposure to mainstream TV portrayals is often associated with stronger support for sexist attitudes and with more stereotypical associations about what the sexes do and how they behave.

However, these connections are far from complete. Null, conditional, and counterintuitive outcomes have also been reported using these same paradigms (Meyer, 1980; Perloff, 1977), and the field is plagued by minimalist assessments of media use. Indeed, a common approach has been to ask participants one or two questions about the number of hours they watch TV in a typical school day (Gross & Jeffries-Fox, 1978; Meyer, 1980; Morgan, 1982; Morgan & Rothschild, 1983; Signorielli & Lears, 1992) and then to correlate this response with their gender role attitudes. Not only does this approach gloss over potential contributions of specific TV genres, but it also leaves open the possibility of vast over- and underestimation of viewing amounts that may come with open-ended, free recall. Using cued-recall and genre-sensitive assessments may prove more informative. In addition, because nearly all studies have tested predominantly European American samples, little is known of the extent to which these connections hold for Latino and Black viewers, who tend to consume higher levels of TV than their White counterparts (Blosser, 1988; Roberts et al., 1999).

TABLE 1. Alphabetical Summary of 21 Studies Examining Associations Between Regular TV Use and Students' Gender Typing

<i>Author and Year</i>	<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>Demographics</i>	<i>Genre</i>	<i>Outcome Tested</i>
Buerkel-Rothfuss & Mayes (1981)	UG	Unspecified	Soaps	1
Carveth & Alexander (1985)	UG	Unspecified	Soaps, TV	1
Freuh & McGhee (1975)	Chn: K, 2, 4, 6	All White, predom middle class	General TV	2
Gross & Jeffries-Fox (1978)	Teens: 6-9	Unspecified	General TV	2
McCaulley, Thangavelu, & Rozin (1988)	UG	Unspecified	General TV	1
McGhee & Fruh (1980)	Chn: 1, 3, 5, 7	All White, predom middle class	General TV	1
Meyer (1980)	Chn: 1, 2, 5, 6 girls	Predom White working class, rural	General TV	1
Miller & Reeves (1976)	Chn: 6	Unspecified	5 shows	1
Morgan (1987)	Teens: 8	Heavily lower middle class, rural	General TV	2
Morgan (1982)	Teens: 6-9	98% White, mixed SES	General TV	2
Morgan & Rothschild (1983)	Teens: 8	Heavily lower middle class, rural	General TV	1
Perloff (1977)	Chn: 5-6	White middle & upper middle class	General TV	1
Potter & Chang (1990)	Teens: 8-12	66.4% White, 22.7% Black	12 genres	1, 2
Repetti (1984)	Chn: K-3	Professional, white-collar	General & educational	1
Rosenwasser, Lingenfelter, & Harrington (1989)	Chn: K & 2	Predom White middle & upper class	Individual shows	1
Signorilli & Lears (1992)	Chn: 4-5	64% White, 21% Black, 14% "other"	General TV	1
Walsh-Childers & Brown (1993)	Teens: 6-9	70% White, 30% Black	3 TV types	2
Ward, Hansbrough, & Walker (in press)	UG	54% White, 26% Asian, 12% Latino	3 genres	2
Ward & Rivadeneyra (1999)	Teens: high school	100% African American	3 genres	2
Wroblewski & Huston (1987)	Teens: 5-6	Unspecified	General TV	2
Zuckerman, Singer, & Singer (1980)	Chn: 3-5	Predom White, mixed SES	General TV	1

NOTE: Chn = children; UG = undergraduates; Predom = predominantly; SES = socioeconomic status.
 Outcomes: 1 = stereotyping of gender traits, occupations, activities; 2 = gender role attitudes.

Accordingly, in exploring connections between regular media use and students' gender role attitudes, this study seeks to address existing limitations in three key ways. First, we examine these dynamics among Latino youth, a high-media consuming yet understudied audience. Second, to add more specificity to assessments of viewing amounts, we test the contributions both of multiple genres and of English-language and Spanish-language programming. Finally, we expand definitions of *media use* to include viewing amounts and viewer involvement levels under the assumption that paths of media influence are likely to be diverse.

Expanding Existing Approaches: Media Use and Latino Youth

One limitation in existing approaches is the limited diversity of the samples selected. As can be seen in Table 1, nearly all of the studies tested predominantly non-Latino, European American samples, as stated directly or by omission. None focused solely on Latino participants. We believe there are several reasons to suspect that links between TV use and gender role attitudes among Latino youth warrant special attention. First, media effects are believed to be strongest for the most frequent viewers, and Latinos are among the heaviest consumers of the media (Blosser, 1988). Cultivation theory argues that the more frequently people watch TV and are exposed to its narrow portraits of social reality, the greater the likelihood that they will gradually come to adopt beliefs about the real world that coincide with this portrait (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1994). In their national survey of U.S. children and adolescents, Roberts et al. (1999) found that Latino children aged 8 to 18 watched an average of 3 hours and 50 minutes of TV a day, significantly more than the 2 hours and 47 minutes averaged by European American youth. Thus, if frequent viewers are most vulnerable to absorbing television's messages about gender, then Latino youth may be particularly at risk.

Second, some researchers have found Latinos to be more traditional in their gender role attitudes than European Americans (Mirande, 1997). Based partly on patriarchal values attributed to the Catholic Church (Soto, 1983), traditional gender roles within Latino cultural groups encourage men to be dominant, strong, rational, virile, and controlling, and expect women to be submissive, obedient, self-sacrificing, and chaste (Raffaelli & Suarez-Al-Adam, 1998; Soto, 1983). However, these traditional cultural norms describe ideals and not actual behavior of all group members. Indeed, studies have found that endorsement of these values among Latinos diminishes with acculturation and that even in Latin America, these values are changing (Mirande, 1997; Soto, 1983; Sugihara & Warner, 1999). Consequently, Lati-

nos may represent a unique sample for the study of media use and gender role development, with particular attention to the role of acculturation in mediating this relationship. Indeed, previous research indicates the importance of acculturation for both media use and sex role beliefs (Deshpande, Hoyer, & Donthu, 1986; Ruiz-Balsara, 2002).

Third, not only do Latino youth watch more mainstream TV, but they are often exposed to a second television world that is not part of the media diet of most non-Spanish speakers (Subervi-Velez & Colstant, 1993). Among Latinos in the United States, Spanish-language television is both popular and accessible, with Univisión reaching close to 95% of the U.S. Latino audience and Telemundo reaching approximately 84% (Subervi-Velez, 1993). It is also reported that the top 20 programs among Latino households are all on Univisión (Navarro, 2002). Moreover, evidence from advertising research suggests that Spanish-language TV may hold more credibility and possibly more influence among Latinos than English-language TV although both are typically watched in equal amounts (Fullerton & Kendrick, 2000). Additionally, whereas little research has focused on Spanish-language television, existing evidence suggests that its gender role portrayals match those of their English-language counterparts. In a content analysis of 92 commercials airing during prime time on Univisión, Fullerton and Kendrick (2000) found that 52 of the 62 commercials (84%) featuring primary characters of any kind were found to portray women or men in traditional roles. Thus, Latino youth are exposed to traditional gender images from both mainstream and Spanish-language programming.

Broadening Assessments of Media Use

A second limitation of the existing approaches has been an overemphasis on viewing amounts as the influential force with less attention to other aspects of media use. In assessing associations between gender role attitudes and media use, much of the existing research has examined the number of hours of regular TV viewing (Morgan, 1987; Signorielli & Lears, 1992) based on assumptions of cultivation theory. However, one's sheer exposure to media messages is not the only avenue through which media use may shape a person's attitudes and beliefs. Instead, several additional mechanisms have been proposed and studied. For example, proponents of uses and gratifications theory (see Rubin, 1994, for review) argue that viewers' motivations for choosing certain content will shape the nature and extent of that content's influence. In addition, both social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1994) and Greenberg's (1988) drench hypothesis focus on viewers' levels of connection or identification with particular media models as the influential

force. We term these additional avenues of media influence as *viewer involvement* and see involvement as including several components such as viewers' motivations for viewing, identification with central characters, and perceived realism of media content. Previous research indicates that viewers' level of involvement with media content does shape the nature and extent of its influence with greater levels of involvement typically predicting stronger endorsement of dominant media messages (Perse, 1986; Ward & Rivadeneira, 1999). Because levels of viewer involvement may or may not correspond with viewing frequency, independent assessments of both are needed to more fully capture the dynamics of media use.

The Present Study

Three hypotheses guided the present study. First, we expected a relationship between hours of television viewed and Latino adolescents' attitudes about gender. As noted earlier, many existing studies of European American youth and their viewing of English-language programming have found that stereotypical portrayals of gender dominate on TV, and that heavier TV exposure is related to expressing more traditional gender roles. Accordingly, for Latino adolescents, we expected that frequent viewing of either English- or Spanish-language programming would be associated with holding more stereotypical gender role attitudes because both formats appear to portray gender roles in limited and stereotypical ways.

Our second hypothesis addressed connections between viewer involvement and gender role attitudes, focusing on the following three dimensions of viewer involvement: character identification, viewing motivations, and perceived realism. Based on theoretical premises (Bandura, 1994; Rubin, 1994) and on previous findings of media effects (Perse, 1986; Ward & Rivadeneira, 1999), we expected that viewers who identified more strongly with popular TV characters, who viewed TV more intently for the purposes of learning, and who attributed greater realism to the portrayals would be more likely to endorse its dominant messages (i.e., stereotypical gender roles).

Our final hypothesis focused on features of individual viewers that may shape the use and potential impact of media content, with particular attention to the roles of sex and acculturation. Many studies investigating connections between media use and viewers' attitudes about gender report stronger links for girls than for boys (Morgan, 1982; Ward & Rivadeneira, 1999), perhaps because of the type of genre studied or differences in the strength of their acceptance of gender stereotypes. Based on these findings, we hypothesized that associations between TV use and gender role attitudes would be stronger for girls than for boys. Contributions of acculturation were also examined for

they have been found to be related both to Latino viewing habits and to gender role attitudes. Less acculturated individuals were expected to watch more Spanish-language TV and to express more traditional gender role attitudes (Deshpande et al., 1986; Ruiz-Balsara, 2002). Accordingly, this study explored the role of acculturation as a possible mediator of the link between television use and gender role attitudes.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 186 Latino or Latina students from a high school located in an urban area in Los Angeles County. The student population at the high school was approximately 80% Latino, most of whom were of Mexican descent. The mean age of the participants was 16.3 years; 56% were female. The mean reported grade point average (GPA) was 2.79. The majority of students (71%) indicated that they were the first generation in their family to be born in the United States. Of the participants, 20% stated that they were immigrants themselves. Serving as proxy measures of socioeconomic status, the mean maternal and paternal education levels fell at 10.6 and 10.5 years of formal schooling, respectively.

Measures

Viewing amounts. To assess media exposure levels, a list was provided of all prime time comedies and dramas, soap operas, and talk shows broadcast at the time of the study on the following major networks: NBC, CBS, ABC, WB, FOX, UPN, Univisión, and Telemundo. Using a 5-point scale, participants indicated how frequently during the past month they had watched each of the 132 English-language and Spanish-language programs listed. For programs that aired on a weekly basis, the scale included the following markers: "every week," "pretty regularly," "every other week," "occasionally," and "never or not this season." For programs that aired every day on weekdays, the scale included the following markers: "almost every day," "a couple of times a week," "once a week," "a few times a month," and "never or not this season." Average monthly viewing amounts were then calculated for each participant and for each genre based on the frequency that each program was viewed and the length of the program. For example, if a participant indicated that she watched a 1-hour program every week, this was coded as 4 hours a

month of viewing time (1 hour show \times 4 weeks a month). Hours were then summed across the programs making up that genre. Resulting were the following six media exposure variables calculated for each participant: Spanish-language prime time hours, English-language prime time hours, Spanish-language soap opera hours, English-language soap opera hours, Spanish-language talk show hours, and English-language talk show hours.

Viewer involvement. Participants also reported on their involvement with television programming, defined here as viewing motivation, character identification, and perceived realism. The *motivation for viewing* measure was adapted from the instrument developed by Ward and Rivadeneira (1999) to examine viewers' motivations for watching TV. Participants were asked to rate each of 22 possible motivations on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Of the items, 11 assessed a learning motive (alpha = .88), examining the extent to which individuals watched television to learn about the world (e.g., "I like to watch TV comedies and dramas because they help me learn about myself and others"). The other 11 items measured an entertainment motive (alpha = .78), assessing the extent to which individuals watched television for purely entertainment purposes (e.g., "I like to watch TV comedies and dramas because it's something fun to do with my friends"). Responses were summed across the 11 items of each subscale.

The second measure of viewer involvement addressed students' identification with the characters on the television programs that they watch. To do so, 16 characters (8 females, 8 males, 5 Latino) were selected from popular television programs. Participants indicated the extent to which they related to each of the characters on a 4-point scale anchored by *can't relate to at all* and *can really relate to*. A "not applicable" option was available in cases where the participant was not familiar with the character. An average identification score was calculated for female characters (alpha = .93) and for male characters (alpha = .89). Pulled for use in later analyses was participants' level of identification with same-sex characters. We chose to use a measure that included the same characters for all participants so that we could compare identification levels across participants. In addition, participants were asked to note their favorite television character and to respond to a series of eight questions about their level of identification with this character. Responses were indicated using a 7-point scale anchored by *strongly disagree* and *strongly agree*. Questions included "I like what this character is about" and "I would like to have the type of life that this character has." A mean score was taken across the items to yield an identification score for each student's favorite TV character (alpha = .77). We chose to include an identification measure

that used participants' favorite character as this was expected to be more telling of each individual's personal connection with selected TV characters.

The last media involvement measure assessed adolescents' perceived realism of television content via the perceived realism on television scale. This instrument is a 22-item measure ($\alpha = .91$) currently under development that asks specific questions about participants' views of the realism of television, its characters, and its story lines. Individual items were either created from theoretical discussions of perceived realism (Dorr, 1986; Potter, 1988) or were adapted from other measures (Potter, 1986; Reeves, 1978). Using a 5-point scale anchored by *strongly disagree* and *strongly agree*, participants were asked to rate how strongly they supported notions such as "Friendships between characters on TV are just like real friendships" and "People on TV handle their problems just like real people do." A mean score was taken across the 22 items, such that higher scores indicated attributing more realism to TV portrayals.

Gender role attitudes. Assessments of gender role attitudes were conducted using the three-item feminism subscale of the Cultural Identity Scales for Latino Adolescents (Felix-Ortiz, Newcomb, & Myers, 1994). Participants indicated their level of agreement with each statement on a 5-point scale anchored by *disagree strongly* and *agree strongly*. Sample items include "the husband should make all the important decisions in the marriage" and "a wife should do whatever her husband wants." Responses were scored such that higher scores indicated more traditional gender attitudes. These items have yielded good reliability ($\alpha = .81$) and validity among Latino adolescents.

Cultural identity. Students' level of acculturation or cultural identity was measured using the Cultural Identity Scales for Latino Adolescents (Felix-Ortiz et al., 1994). This is a 35-item measure with 10 subscales that provides a multidimensional assessment of cultural identity, with Latin America and the United States. Unlike many acculturation measures, its Latino and U.S. dimensions are independent. Thus, an individual can be high on both Latin American and U.S. cultural identity. In addition, it measures cultural identity across attitudes (e.g., "even if a child believes that his parents are wrong, he should obey without question"), beliefs (e.g., "I have been treated unfairly because I am Latino or Latina"), knowledge (e.g., "how familiar would you say that you are with history and politics of your Latin American country?"), and behavior (e.g., "what language do you use when you speak to your parents?"). Other acculturation measures have traditionally focused only on behavior, thereby neglecting other important factors of a person's cultural

identity. The instrument includes questions about language proficiency (Spanish alpha = .88, 3 items; English alpha = .91, 3 items), language preference (5 items, alpha = .87), cultural knowledge of Latin America (4 items, alpha = .77) and the United States (4 items, alpha = .69), Latino activism (4 items, alpha = .79), preferred Latino affiliation (3 items, alpha = .89), perception of discrimination (3 items, alpha = .72), and parental respect (3 items, alpha = .77). The scale also includes a three-item feminism subscale that was used as the gender role attitudes measure.

Procedure

Students were invited to participate during elective classes. They were informed of the study, and those who wanted to participate took packets home. The packet included letters to the parents explaining the study and asking for consent. The project was presented as a study on television and school. The packet also included the paper-and-pencil questionnaire assessing students' viewing amounts, viewer involvement, gender role attitudes, and cultural identity. Students completed the measures at home during their own time and were asked to return the packets to school a few days later.

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

Descriptive statistics of the media use variables and gender role attitudes scale are provided in Table 2. In general, students reported watching an average of 104 hours of primetime comedies, dramas, soap operas, and talk shows per month, which is comparable to the 3.75 hours per day reported by Roberts et al. (1999). An average of 26% of this viewing was devoted to Spanish-language programming. The overall trends reveal that participants exhibited preferences for certain genres in certain languages.

Three sets of tests were conducted to examine potential sex differences in the central variables. First, as summarized in Table 2, a one-way analyses of variance confirmed strong sex differences in students' gender role attitudes, with boys expressing significantly more traditional attitudes about gender than girls. Second, multivariate analyses of variance revealed a significant sex difference across the 10 viewing amount variables. Follow-up univariate analyses revealed that the girls in our sample reported watching a significantly higher amount of Spanish- and English-language talk shows and Spanish- and English-language soap operas. The girls also watched signifi-

TABLE 2 Descriptives of Television Exposure and Viewer Involvement

Variable	Sample Mean (n = 186)	Standard Deviation	Range in Sample	Female Mean (n = 104)	Male Mean (n = 78)	Sex Differences
Gender role attitudes	1.86	1.06	1.00-5.00	1.39	2.48	61.41***
Viewing amounts						7.71***
Total hours of TV	104.35	78.89	1.5-380.5	125.11	75.08	20.32***
Spanish prime time	0.22	0.62	0.00-4.00	0.26	0.14	ns
English prime time	35.61	22.60	0.00-102.00	35.74	35.67	ns
Spanish talk show	7.21	10.73	0.00-43.00	9.37	4.23	10.57***
English talk show	30.25	32.74	0.00-119.00	35.26	23.01	6.48*
Spanish soap opera	27.98	36.13	0.00-129.00	40.22	10.63	36.55***
English soap opera	3.08	7.01	0.00-32.00	4.27	1.40	7.86**
Total Spanish hours	35.41	43.55	0.00-172.50	49.84	15.00	34.34***
Total English hours	68.94	50.18	1.50-239.00	75.27	60.08	4.18*
Percentage of Spanish	0.26	0.27	0.00-0.96	0.36	0.13	34.99***
Viewer Involvement						ns
Entertainment motive	41.22	9.01	20.00-60.00	40.62	41.74	
Learning motive	33.46	10.69	11.00-59.00	34.23	32.62	
Identify—same-sex	2.30	0.81	1.00-4.00	2.28	2.32	
Identify—favorite	4.48	1.20	1.00-7.00	4.67	4.26	
Perceived realism	2.90	0.63	1.18-4.73	2.99	2.77	

* $p > .05$. ** $p > .01$. *** $p > .001$.

cantly more hours of Spanish-language TV, English-language TV, and total TV and watched a higher percentage of Spanish-language programming. Finally, multivariate analyses of variance revealed no overall sex difference in students' viewer involvement levels.

A series of zero-order correlations was then run examining connections between girls' and boys' gender role attitudes and the following possible moderating variables: age, GPA, immigrant generation, maternal education, paternal education, and the nine subscales of the cultural identity scale. No demographic correlates emerged for either sex; however, several of the cultural identity subscales produced significant associations. Among girls, expressing more traditional gender role attitudes was associated with greater knowledge of Spanish, $r(100) = .20, p > .05$, less knowledge of English, $r(100) = -.23, p > .05$, less disregard for parental authority, $r(102) = -.20, p > .05$, and less preference for English, $r(102) = -.23, p > .05$. Among boys, expressing more traditional gender role attitudes was associated with less knowledge of English, $r(75) = -.24, p > .05$, and greater belief that they have been discriminated against, $r(74) = -.42, p > .001$. These findings indicate that participants who were least acculturated to U.S. culture on several dimensions also held more traditional gender role attitudes.

Finally, to test connections between cultural identity and media use, another series of zero-order correlations was run. Results are provided in Table 3. In general, participants indicating lower acculturation to U.S. culture were more likely to watch TV, to watch Spanish-language TV, to watch television to learn, and to perceive what they watch on television as realistic.

Testing the Main Research Questions

The first research question addressed whether students who watch more hours of television express more traditional gender role attitudes. To test this assumption, bivariate correlations were run between the nine viewing amount variables and gender role attitudes. Because preliminary analyses had indicated different levels of media use and gender role attitudes for girls and boys, all analyses were run separately by gender. Results are summarized in the upper portions of Table 4.

Results indicated that the total number of hours watched per month (summing across the three genres) was significantly related to the gender role attitudes of the female participants, with girls who watch more TV expressing more traditional gender role attitudes. These findings confirm expectations of the cultivation model. Additional outcomes emerged for associations tested by genre and language. Here, girls who watched more total hours of Spanish-language TV (specifically prime time comedies, talk shows, and

TABLE 3: Zero-Order Correlation Between Television Use and Demographic and Cultural Identity Factors

	Age	Knowledge of Spanish	Knowledge of English	Knowledge of Latino culture	Knowledge of U.S. Culture	English Lang Preference	Parental Respect
Overall viewing amounts							
Total hours per month						-.21	
Total Spanish-language hours		.30				-.40	
Total English-language hours	-.25						
Percentage Spanish hours		.35				-.46	
Viewing amounts by genre							
Spanish prime time hours						-.25	
English prime time hours	-.27	.25		.25		-.30	
Spanish talk show hours							
English talk show hours							
Spanish soap opera hours		.29				-.39	
English soap opera hours							
Viewer involvement							
Entertainment motivation							
Learning motivation							
Identification—same-sex	-.29		-.21				-.23
Identification—favorite					.30		
Perceived realism				.29			-.22

NOTE: Only correlations for which $p \leq .005$ are reported.

TABLE 4: Correlation Coefficients of Television Use and Traditional Gender Role Attitudes

	<i>Females (n = 89-102)</i>		<i>Males (n = 64-75)</i>
	<i>Bivariate</i>	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Bivariate</i>
Overall viewing amounts			
Total hours per month	.31**	.22*	-.02
Total Spanish-language hours	.31***	.18	-.01
Total English-language hours	.21*	.18+	-.01
Viewing amounts by genre			
Spanish prime time hours	.32***	.24*	.09
English prime time hours	.06	.03	-.01
Spanish talk show hours	.27**	.17	.13
English talk show hours	.26**	.25*	-.02
Spanish soap opera hours	.30**	.16	-.07
English soap opera hours	.12	.07	.05
Viewer involvement			
Entertainment viewing motivation	.11	.12	-.08
Learning viewing motivation	.20*	.14	-.03
Identification—same-sex characters	.13	.10	.10
Identification—favorite	.04	.08	-.04
Perceived realism	.35***	.27**	-.05

NOTE: Higher scores indicate more traditional gender role attitudes.
 + $p > .07$. * $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$.

soap operas) and total hours of English-language TV (specifically talk shows) held more traditional gender role attitudes. No significant links were found between boys' attitudes and their TV exposure. Partial correlations were then run among the girls, controlling for the four cultural identity measures noted above to be significant correlates of girls' gender role attitudes. Results (see Table 4) indicated continued relations between traditional gender role attitudes and total hours, total English-language hours (only marginally significant), Spanish prime time hours, and English talk show hours. However, relations between gender role attitudes and the viewing of total hours of Spanish-language TV, Spanish-language talk shows, and Spanish-language soap operas disappeared when cultural identity factors were controlled.

The second hypothesis addressed whether higher levels of viewer involvement are associated with a stronger endorsement of traditional gender role attitudes. To test this hypothesis, bivariate correlations were run between the five viewer involvement variables and students' gender role attitudes, with separate analyses conducted for girls and boys. Results presented in the bottom portion of Table 4 indicate two significant outcomes among the girls.

More specifically, watching television more intently for the purpose of learning and attributing greater realism to the portrayals were each associated with holding more traditional gender role attitudes. After controlling for significant cultural identity correlates, associations between perceived realism and traditional gender role attitudes remained. No outcomes emerged for the boys.

Finally, we used multiple regression analyses to address the following research question: Which factor best predicts girls' gender role attitudes—their viewing amounts, viewer involvement levels, or acculturation? Drawing from the correlational analyses reported earlier, the four significant cultural identity correlates were entered as the first step of the model, and the following media use correlates were added on the second step: Spanish prime-time hours, English talk show hours, and perceived realism. As indicated in Table 5, the first regression model was found to be a significant predictor of girls' gender role attitudes, accounting for 8.5% of the variance. However, no individual cultural identity subscale emerged as a significant contributor. When the media use variables were added to the model, the variance increased to 23.6%, a significant change from the previous model ($F = 7.13$, $p > .001$). Each media use variable emerged as a significant contributor such that frequent exposure to Spanish prime time comedies and English talk shows predicted holding more traditional gender role attitudes, as did attributing greater realism to media portrayals. Thus, when all factors were considered together, media use emerged as a stronger predictor than acculturation of girls' support for traditional gender roles.

DISCUSSION

As a growing segment of the U.S. citizenry and as avid media consumers, Latino adolescents represent a critical population for the study of media effects. Watching more TV than their European American counterparts and embracing both English- and Spanish-language programming, Latino youth are exposed to an abundance of media portrayals modeling society's expectations of women and men. Because tentative evidence suggests that stereotypical gender roles dominate both programming formats, we examined whether higher levels of viewing amounts and viewer involvement are associated with a stronger endorsement of traditional gender roles. Our findings indicate that this is indeed the case, with heavier viewing of specific genres of English- and particular Spanish-language programming associated with girls holding more traditional gender role attitudes. The resulting picture offers valuable insight into possible consequences of high levels of media use.

TABLE 5: Regression Coefficients for Media Use Variables Predicting Gender Role Attitudes for Females

	Step 1		Step 2	
	Unstandardized coefficients B	Standardized coefficients Beta	Unstandardized coefficients B	Standardized coefficients Beta
Knowledge of Spanish	.03	.12	.02	.08
Knowledge of English	-.06	-.16	-.04	-.10
Language preference	-.02	-.12	-.01	-.04
Parental respect	-.04	-.17	-.01	-.04
Spanish prime time hours			.25	.25**
English talk show hours			.00	.19*
Perceived realism			.30	.29**

NOTE: For Step 1, adjusted $R^2 = .085$, F value = 3.26, and $n = 98$. For Step 2, adjusted $R^2 = .236$, F value = 5.29, and $n = 98$. Higher scores indicates more traditional gender role attitudes.

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$.

First, significant associations emerged between students' gender role attitudes and their viewing of English-language programming and of talk shows in particular. Here, adolescent girls who watched more hours of television also expressed more traditional attitudes about gender, offering stronger endorsements of statements such as "a wife should do whatever her husband wants." These findings corroborate existing work that suggests that watching TV's limited portrayals of gender may lead viewers to adopt equally constrained attitudes. Because our findings are correlational only, we stop short of making causal inferences about the associations reported here. Although it is possible that frequent media exposure, over time, has contributed to girls' adopting more traditional attitudes about gender, it is equally possible that girls' existing beliefs about gender have shaped their current viewing choices. We note, here, then that the existence of such associations warrants further investigation.

Adding to previous work, we found that watching Spanish-language television was also related to expressing more traditional gender role attitudes. However, most of the connections with Spanish-language programming disappeared when acculturation was taken into account, leaving only a connection with prime time comedies and dramas. This indicates the importance of measuring acculturation when looking at media effects among Latino youth. Acculturation was related to watching more Spanish-language TV and to holding more traditional gender role attitudes; it did not, however, entirely mediate the relations between the two, for connections between TV viewing and gender role attitudes remained, even with acculturation accounted for.

Second, our findings indicate that these connections differ by media genre. Watching English-language talk shows was a predictor of gender role attitudes among girls. This is an intriguing finding that highlights the need for further examination of this genre. Emerging as a strong predictor of girls' gender role attitudes was their watching of Spanish prime time comedies and dramas. This is an interesting finding, given that Spanish-language prime time sitcoms are a relatively new phenomenon. The Spanish prime time landscape traditionally, and even today, has belonged to soap operas. However, during the time of the study, Telemundo was broadcasting 2 half-hour family situation comedies each week: *Los Beltrán* and *Solo en América*. This weekly hour of programming accounted for the total number of hours of Spanish-language prime time comedies and dramas. Hence, those who watched these two shows more frequently were more likely to express traditional gender role attitudes. Why did associations emerge here and not for any other type of Spanish-language programming? It is possible that these sitcoms were especially gender typed because they were family situation comedies. Family sitcoms have traditionally portrayed gender roles very

stereotypically (Olson & Douglas, 1997), and these Spanish-language sitcoms are likely to have followed suit because they were produced in the United States. It is also possible that these two sitcoms were especially salient and potentially influential because they depicted Latino characters living in the United States, much like the participants themselves. Because the bulk of Spanish-language entertainment programming focuses on characters living in Latin America, the characters on these sitcoms may have appeared more realistic and relevant to the participants and hence potentially more influential.

Finally, our findings demonstrate that dimensions of viewer involvement are significant contributors as well. For example, we found initial connections among the girls between having a learning motivation for watching TV and holding more traditional gender role attitudes. However, this association was mediated by cultural identity. In addition, perceived realism played a strong role, such that attributing greater realism to media portrayals was associated with expressing stronger support of the traditional gender values commonly portrayed. This was an expected finding that replicates past work (Ward & Rivadeneira, 1999) and highlights the importance of viewer involvement as a significant and independent predictor of gender role attitudes, beyond the number of hours of TV viewed. At the same time, however, students' levels of identification with popular TV personalities and with their favorite TV character made no contribution. It is possible that the characters selected for the identification measure were too diverse or too similar in their gender roles, such that collapsing students' responses to them washed out any contributions. However, students' levels of identification with this same group of characters did predict their attitudes on other dimensions tested elsewhere (e.g., awareness of ethnic stereotypes; Rivadeneira, 2002). Further study employing a larger and more diverse group of media figures may help clarify this null result.

Replicating previous findings, expected connections between students' media use and their gender role attitudes emerged for female participants only. It would appear as if girls' notions about gender are more tied to their media use than are boys' notions. What circumstances might account for this relatively consistent sex difference? First, it must be acknowledged that boys used the media genres in question significantly less frequently than girls did. With lower levels of exposure, it may have been difficult for associations with gender notions to emerge. A second explanation is that most boys at this age are already quite traditional in their ideas about gender (Galambos, Almeida, & Petersen, 1990). If boys are more inclined to endorse traditional notions about gender, perhaps as a result of their accumulated gender training or of

their status in the gender hierarchy, then there is less room available for possible media influence.

Although this study expands considerably on existing approaches, there are several limitations that could be addressed in future research. First, more extensive assessments of gender role attitudes may be needed to more fully capture the complexity of this construct. Our assessments focused mainly on students' attitudes about the appropriate roles for women and men in the home and in the workplace. These domains, however, represent only a small portion of people's beliefs about gender roles, which include notions about physical appearance, social competencies, and personality traits. Second, in addition to looking at students' viewing of prime time sitcoms, dramas, soap operas, and talk shows, future research may want to examine the contributions of other genres, such as movies, which are available in both English and Spanish in some markets. Finally, it would be beneficial to collect data at multiple time points to better determine how levels of media exposure during childhood shape gender role beliefs in adolescence and adulthood. Such longitudinal data could also help clarify the direction of the association.

In conclusion, the findings reported here indicate that greater levels of exposure to specific genres of English- and Spanish-language programming are associated with holding more traditional views about gender roles. We acknowledge that media use is not the only force contributing to teens' beliefs about gender; gender-related expectations and messages are transmitted in everyday interactions with multiple models. Yet because the hours adolescents spend with the media are vast, typically surpassing time spent in school or with parents, their contributions to gender role development are likely to be substantial as well. The implications of these findings for girls and their development are potentially far-reaching. If the media frequently portray a stereotypical view of women and of femininity and if female viewers' own conceptions are indeed shaped by this exposure, the most direct effects are likely to be girls striving to adhere strongly to the dictates of the traditional female role, believing that this is what society expects of them. As noted earlier, many believe that such efforts contribute to the high incidence of low self-esteem, poor body image, and depression seen among adolescent girls. As such, these images have the potential to be harmful to today's young Latinas, and further research among this population is therefore warranted.

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Rocio Rivadeneira is currently an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at Illinois State University. She received a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Michigan and conducts research on the socializing influence of the media on adolescents' conceptions of self, gender, sexuality, and academics, with particular interest in Latino youth.

L. Monique Ward is an associate professor of psychology (developmental) at the University of Michigan. She received a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles, and conducts research exploring contributions of parents, peers, and the media to gender and sexual socialization.