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AN EXPLORATION INTO THE
REALITY OF MEDIA PERCEPTIONS:
THE DEPICTIONS OF WOMEN
PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS
IN REALITY TELEVISION

Cherese E. Colston
Dr. Regina Luttrell, Mentor

ABSTRACT

Reality television is a media staple for this generation. Reality programs including *Jersey Shore*, *Keeping Up with the Kardashians*, and *Teen Mom 2* are among the most watched programs in the United States. In the last five years, reality television has highlighted professions including Public Relations. However, these new reality shows depict an unrealistic image of female practitioners in the PR field. These negative portrayals have been analyzed in film, yet there is a lack of research in regards to reality television. The purpose of this study is to analyze the portrayal of women in the Public Relations profession as seen on reality television. This study examines two reality shows pertaining to the field of Public Relations: *Kell on Earth* and *The Spin Crowd*. These programs will be analyzed through a coding system that identifies the positive and negative images of female Public Relations professionals as portrayed in reality television.

INTRODUCTION

The key to understanding a field as multifaceted as Public Relations (PR) is to begin with learning the industry's history. Unfortunately, the profession cannot be described with one definition. Since the profession of Public Relations is so broad and entails so many different things, it is difficult to define (Wilcox, Cameron, Reber, & Shin, 2011). Therefore, media depictions of

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the profession are influential on public perception. While there have been new PR television shows in the last decade, the Public Relations industry is still being shown in a negative light. This is why the few television shows that highlight the profession are obligated to be true to the profession and its practitioners. Although the Public Relations field has been misrepresented as a whole, the images of its female professionals are most noticeably tarnished. It is important to the women in the field and future professionals to have positive images reflected in the media.

Over the years, there have been many definitions of Public Relations. In 1982, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) formally adopted the definition as follows: "Public Relations helps an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other" (PRSA's former definition of Public Relations, 2011). Revered scholar and researcher Frasier Seitel (2010), states that "Public Relations is a planned process to influence public opinion, through sound character and proper performance, based on mutually satisfactory two-way communication." The definition continues by including a clearer idea of what a PR practitioner is: "A Public Relations practitioner is a manager / orchestrator / producer / director / writer / arranger and all-around general communications counsel to management" (Seitel, 2010). Consistent with the continuous changes in the profession, PRSA has redefined Public Relations for 2012. The new definition states, "Public Relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics" ("What is Public Relations?" 2012). While each of the definitions focus on several different aspects of Public Relations, they share the main idea that organizations and communities should seek mutual communication or understanding.

With the various definition modifications of PR, there are several opportunities for misunderstandings which eventually lead to misconstrued images in the media. Studies suggest that between 1930 and 1995, misconceptions and stereotypes of the Public Relations industry exposed to the public through media have created negative attitudes toward the industry and Public

Relations practitioners (Miller, 1999). Now, with the popularity of reality shows in the younger generation, the influence of media perceptions is greater, especially among those who are unable to distinguish fiction from fact. The negative associations and terms such as “PR bunnies” are overshadowing the positive, strong images that were once associated with women in the field when the industry first began.

While men dominated the field of Public Relations in the early years, there were several powerful women, such as Doris Flesichman, who were active in the field. As one of the first women in Public Relations, Flesichman was an advocate for issues such as women’s pay and the advancement of women in media careers. Ruth Jacobson, a pioneer for women in the field, was known to her colleagues for 46 years as ‘a one-woman, women’s right movement’ at one of the world’s leading strategic communication firms, Fleishman-Hillard (Agency News: Ruth Jacobson: Public Relations Pioneer, St. Louis Civic Icon, 2010). There is also the “Princess of the Press,” Ida B. Wells-Barnett, who used rhetorical tactics to change public opinion in America and Europe. These tactics resulted in support for her campaigns promoting women’s suffrage and the abolition of lynching. Another pioneer was Inez Kaiser, who founded Inez Kaiser & Associates in 1957, which is the oldest African-American, female-owned Public Relations firm in the country (Taylor, 2010). These women, amongst many others, have each made an impact on what the profession is today. The percentage of women practitioners in the field of Public Relations has grown to 63 percent, according to a ‘Salary Survey’ taken on February 23, 2009 by *PR Week* (Wilcox, et al., 2011). Unfortunately, despite this increase in number, perceptions about women in the field have become comparatively negative. The strong image associated with pioneers like Doris Fleischman has been replaced with the images of ditzy, fluffy, airheads in skirts. Over the last 30 years, these negative images have become prevalent and remained unchanged in the media (Miller, 1999).

The purpose of this study is to examine the various portrayals of women in the Public Relations industry in the last de-

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cade. This study will look specifically at the images in the popular genre of reality television, where there is a lack of accurate PR information. This research will answer the questions: (1) does the format of reality television give an accurate portrayal of women in the Public Relations profession, and (2) overall, are the portrayals shown in television detrimental or beneficial to women in the profession? The study will also seek to prove the following hypothesis: Reality television offers viewers unrealistic portrayals of women practitioners in the field of Public Relations.

This study will analyze how television programs from the genre of reality television portray female Public Relations professionals. The two programs chosen for the study were *Kell on Earth* (documenting the life of a mother who works in a Public Relations office in the fashion industry), and *The Spin Crowd* (a reality TV show produced by Kim Kardashian that centers around six cast members who work for a Hollywood Public Relations firm).

Because women in Public Relations have been depicted negatively in the media since the early 1930s, it is important to introduce accurate portrayals of women practitioners into mainstream media. As a result of the media's strong influence on society, the portrayals shown to audiences are pertinent to the credibility of the industry and the female professionals in it.

LITERATURE REVIEW

While elements of reality television have been present in American culture since 1948 (Breyer, 2004), reality television has become increasingly popular in the last 20 years. With the help of shows like *The Real World*, *The Bachelor*, and *Survivor*, the format has become a staple of our everyday lives. In 1998, reality television programming was largely absent from television networks. By 2011, the number of hours occupied by reality television increased to 15 hours per day, and each week it brought in top ratings ("Reality Rules," 2011). Researchers have described reality television's premise as "cheap, unscripted television programming that follows the lives of 'real' people" (Hall, 2009; Reiss & Wiltz, 2004).

Despite the description from other researchers, Croteau and Hoynes (2000) argue that most media do not try to reflect the “real” world because that requires a higher level of production difficulty. Simply constructing a reality that caters to the targeted audiences is cheaper and easier for producers, compared to producing shows “fairly and accurately.” For such an uncomplicated concept, this format of television attracts millions of viewers on any given night. Each viewer seeks reality television for different reasons or to satisfy different needs. Many reality television viewers are looking to satisfy a psychological need. In a 2004 study conducted with Midwestern college students, researchers Wiltz & Reiss found that most of the participants watched reality television to see ordinary people or people like themselves dealing with real life experiences. Theories by Cohen & Weimann have explained the detrimental effects that could result from watching these types of television shows.

Cultivation Theory

A theory used by several media scholars is the *Cultivation Theory* (Cohen & Weimann, 2000; Hammermeister, Brock, Winterstein, & Page, 2005; Hughes, 1980). The Cultivation Theory states that the more an individual watches television, the more he/she associates facts from TV with reality. This results in viewers’ having differing perceptions of reality than those who watch comparatively less television. There are two main processes related to understanding the Cultivation Theory and how the images on television shape the beliefs of those who watch it.

The first process is *mainstreaming*. This process refers to the converging of a viewer’s perceptions from television and their perceptions of reality. In mainstreaming, viewers construct their perceptions of social reality from the ‘facts’ they get from watching television. The second process, *resonance*, deals with the direct experiences of the viewer. If there are several similarities between what it is believed to be ‘reality’ and what is shown on television, the effect of shifting the viewer’s perception is higher. Put simply, real world experiences interact with mediated experiences to create

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an image of the world. While television has a great influence on society, it is only one of the media formats capable of shaping viewers' perceptions of reality (Morgan & Shanahan, 1999).

Effects of Reality Television

With the turn of the 21st century, more sub-genres of reality television have emerged, however, the earliest form of reality TV remains documentary style programming. Shows such as the Public Broadcasting Service's (PBS) *An American Family* (1973) gave viewers their first "authentic" look into the lives of real people (ACMA, 2007). The concept of the show was simple, but the impact it made with audiences hinted towards the future phenomenon. As more and more reality shows were added to everyday programming, new ways of classification were necessary to establish the emerging subgenres.

Reality television is broken into eight basic subgenres, including: documentary, game/competition shows, makeovers, renovations, social experiments, hidden cameras, supernatural programs and hoaxes. The focus of this study is centered on the documentary. As one of the longest running genres of reality television, the documentary genre contains several sub-categories. The reality shows chosen for this study belong to the professional activities category. The professional activities format is intended to give the audience an unfiltered view of how professionals perform in their respective careers. In a sense, the shows are intended to give the audience a visual of what the profession entails. While some professional reality television shows may depict a somewhat realistic picture of professions such as doctors, residents, or interns in medicine, other occupations are misrepresented. Research has found that the realistic aspects associated with careers in the fields of nursing, law enforcement, and law may have all been distorted and edited to present viewers with an entertaining, yet unrealistic view of the profession (Jones, 2003).

While reality TV shows, such as the FOX network's *Cops*, have focused on certain professions for years, viewers are only recently beginning to see shows focused on the field of Public Rela-

tions. The small amount of actual reality shows that depict women practitioners minimizes the number of accurate opportunities for viewers to see how the profession actually works. Therefore, if the few portrayals of women practitioners are negative, it can potentially influence the public's perception of women in the field. Sometimes it is difficult to identify inaccurate depictions of women in media because the images have become accepted reflections of what is considered real and authentic (Rossides, 2003). This is detrimental to the generation of future practitioners who are reality television viewers. According to Suzanne Martin (2006), today's youth spend many of their waking hours exposed to, and influenced by television. With the younger generation receiving a majority of their 'facts' from television, the possibility of their attitudes being constructed by the negative messages are higher (Martin, 2006).

The Number of Women in Public Relations

In 1960, there were 23,870 men in the Public Relations workforce, making up about 76 percent of the field. The first official PR practitioner dates back as far as the 1900s. The journalist, Ivy Lee, was just establishing a Public Relations office that eventually represented clients such as Pennsylvania Railroad and most notably, John D. Rockefeller. Following World War II, Edward B. Bernays emerged as a highly respected practitioner after his work with the committee of another PR innovator, George Creel. Bernays would go on to be known as "the father of modern public relations" (Wilcox, et al, 2011). Even though men are credited with being the innovators of Public Relations, women increasingly became the dominant gender of the profession. By 1979, the influx of women in the field of PR was evident. Women made up a total of 41 percent of the field; four years later, that number was 50.1 percent. By 1993 that number had grown to 66.3 percent. Today, women constitute 70 percent of all PR practitioners, a percentage that has been consistent since 2000. These trends are not only apparent in the workforce, but at universities as well. Women make up 70 to 75 percent of Public Relations majors and 64 percent of all majors in journalism or mass communication programs (Wil-

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cox, et al, 2011). Unfortunately, this means that the competition for PR entry-level jobs is intense. The increased interest in the field creates more qualified applicants than jobs available.

While entry-level jobs may be scarce, the overall outlook of the Public Relations field is positive. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the employment of PR professionals is expected to grow 24 percent from 2008 to 2018, much faster than the average of other occupations (Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2011). These statistics are further evidence that the growing profession's image should be accurately portrayed to audiences of reality television.

Characteristics of Public Relations Practitioners

To distinguish what can be seen as a negative or positive depiction, the characteristics of a Public Relations practitioner must be understood. Each practitioner is different and contributes various skills based on his/her abilities. Although every practitioner is different, there are essential abilities that anyone going into the field of PR should demonstrate. The abilities include: writing skills, research ability, planning expertise, problem solving, and business or economics competence (Wilcox, et al, 2011). For the purpose of this study, the list of characteristics of a successful practitioner was modified to those traits that can be seen on screen. Therefore, this study will focus on the attributes of commitment, cooperation, problem solving, organization, and showing initiative (Miller, 1999).

To balance the study, the negative characteristics of a Public Relations practitioner will also be documented. Traits associated with a negative portrayal of a Public Relations professional include: dishonesty, no progress for the company or personal career, little effort put towards the job, and unnecessary aggression. As with the positive characteristics, the negative characteristics that will be focused on are visible on screen. Those characteristics are: cynicism, manipulation of others, obsequiousness, "ditzzy" (superficial) behavior, excessive attention to appearance, and disrespect of others (Miller, 1999). Further definitions of both the positive and negative characteristics can be found in the Methodology section, below.

METHODOLOGY

This study analyzes two reality television series depicting female Public Relations practitioners. The purpose of this study is to compare the depictions used in reality television programs to the actual duties of female Public Relations professionals. For the purpose of understanding the methodology, the attributes associated with the respective portrayals are given, below:

Positive Portrayal

This type of character showed the following attributes: honesty, pride in one's work, the ability to conduct research, and credibility with clients. High moral standards, patience, and poise can also be included in the positive attributes. (Grunig, Toth & Hon, 2000; Wilcox, et al, 2011; Miller, 1999).

- **Committed** – staying committed to a project whether in times of success or struggle;
- **Cooperative** – able to cooperate with clients, media and consumers;
- **Accomplished** – showing confidence and pride in work; respected, trusted, efficient and responsible;
- **Problem solver/strategic thinker** – having innovative ideas and fresh approaches to solving problems with clients or consumers;
- **Organized** – having everything in order and easily understood;
- **Initiative** – taking on a task without having to be prompted to complete.

Negative Portrayals

This type of female character displayed the following attributes: dishonesty, little effort towards the job, an overwhelming concern with beauty in relation to job effectiveness, and lack of contribution to the progression of the company. Below are the specific traits related to this type of portrayal (Miller, 1999):

- **Cynical** – sarcastic, edgy, angry, contemptuous;
- **Manipulative** – deceptive; continuous lying and cheating to further advance her personal career and the development of the client's company;

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- **Obsequious** – considered a “yes man”; has no set of principles to guide behavior, heavily guided by whatever may satisfy the client;
- **Ditzy** – bubbly, jovial, lively, chipper;
- **Vanity** – superficial appearance plays major role in the successfulness of the character;
- **Disrespectful** – negative interactions with clients, media and/or other publics.

CODING INSTRUMENTS

The coding instruments created for this study include several different criteria to analyze the chosen reality television shows (Figure 1). The complete questionnaire consists of seven questions and a list of commonly used “key terms,” both positive and negative, which are related to the Public Relations profession. The method of content analysis used in this study has been applied in similar studies on women practitioners in television shows such as *Sex in the City* and *What I Like About You*, as well as films including *Jersey Girl*, *Jerry Maguire*, *Dead Heat*, and *Sweet Smell of Success* (Everidge, 2010; Miller, 1999). Data taken from these earlier studies aided in creating the coding instruments.

Figure 1: Coding Instruments: Question Sheet

1. Which television show is being viewed?
2. In what year was the television show released?
3. What season and episode is being viewed?
4. In what year was this episode aired?
5. Fill in the table below with the necessary information regarding the character(s) portraying a public relations practitioner:

Character Name	Male or Female	Age Range	Official Job Title	Major/Minor Character

6. How many times were the following positive characteristics of public relations practitioners displayed or mentioned in the episode? Fill out the chart accordingly for each character being viewed.

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Character Name	Title
Positive Characteristics	Occurrences
Commitment	
Respectful interaction with media/client	
Organization/detail oriented	
Creative problem solving	
Accomplished	
Initiative	

7. How many times were the following negative characteristics of public relations practitioners displayed or mentioned in the episode? Fill out the chart accordingly for each character being viewed.

Character Name	Title
Negative Characteristics	Occurrences
Importance of looks emphasized	
Manipulative	
Unorganized	
Ditzy	
Cynical	
Disrespectful interactions with media/client	

8. Key terms for identification:
- **Spin**: to distort the truth to have a favorable light.
 - **Socialite**: a socially prominent person.
 - **Liar**: a person who lies.
 - **Party**: Enjoy oneself at a party or other lively gathering, typically with drinking and music.
 - **Glamour**: Beauty or charm that is sexually attractive.
 - **Event planning**: Event planning is the process of planning a festival, ceremony, competition, party, or convention.
 - **Management**: The process of dealing with or controlling things or people.

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In order to test the hypothesis of whether reality television depicts inaccurate portrayals of women in PR, a *content analysis* was conducted on the two reality television shows. Several elements composed the analysis in order to produce the most accurate results. These elements include: sampling, context units, previously determined recording units, and distinguishing coding elements and instruments (Neuendorf, 2002; Kolbe & Albanese, 1996).

CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis is the best method for this study because it allows the analysis of negative portrayals of women in a representative sampling of the mass-mediated popular art form of television (Berger, 1991). According to Neuendorf (2002), the general concept of content analysis is the summarizing, quantitative analysis of specific messages that rely on the scientific method, without limitations to how the messages are created and presented. Another researcher, Krippendorff (2004), defines content analysis as “the analysis of the manifest and latent content of a body of communicated material (as a book or film) through classification, tabulation, and evaluation of its key symbols and themes in order to ascertain its meaning and probable effect.”

Content analysis is the ideal method for comparing the images displayed in the two selected reality television series. The two series were selected using a sampling process. Four hours of each series were coded by the researcher. This equaled eight, 30-minute episodes of *The Spin Crowd*, and four, 1-hour long episodes of *Kell on Earth*. The researcher watched each episode once and coded the characters and content accordingly, using the coding sheet created for this particular study. A coding sheet used in a similar study that identified the portrayals of Public Relations practitioners in film and television (Everidge, 2010) was modified to fit this study, and was used to address the research questions regarding the portrayals of female Public Relations practitioners. The two reality television shows were chosen based on three criteria: 1) women are the main characters of the show; 2) the show is an actual portrayal of life as a PR professional, meaning the plot, script and events are not scripted

television; and 3) the show is viewed by varying demographics. These criteria are based on the assumption that reality television is defined as “‘factual’ programming on television, particularly the ‘radical dispersal’ of a documentary ‘look’ across program forms and schedules, and, crucially, a foregrounding of the primary impetus to deliver entertainment” (Holmes & Jermyn, *Understanding Reality Television*, 2004).

An additional method for this study was the *comparative attribution analysis*. Using this method, at least two lists are contrasted. Having the two lists allows the content to be easily compared and contrasted to “real life.” Establishing the differences between the two lists will provide data on whether female Public Relations practitioners are portrayed unrealistically on television series based on “real life” qualities of women in the field. Some researchers who conduct *attribution analyses* use expected behavior as the basis for comparison, then analyze the extent to which the information presented differs from what is common (Krippendorff, 2004; Peterman, Roehm Jr., & Haugtvedt, 1999; Hegerl, et al., 1997).

This study attempts to record the number of occurrences of each item found on the coding sheet, including: *positive portrayal*, *negative portrayal* and key terms such as *spin*, *socialites*, *liar*, *party*, *glamour*, *event planning*, and *management* in order to understand how a female Public Relations practitioner is depicted in reality television.

SAMPLES

The content of each of the television series was viewed to determine whether the portrayals of the public relation practitioners are negative or positive. The television shows are:

(1) *Kell on Earth*, a docu-series, described by Bravo’s (2009) website as:

Founder of the powerhouse PR firm People’s Revolution, Kelly Cutrone is a major player in the fashion world. A notable New Yorker with fashion world credibility, Cutrone lives a fast-paced life, balancing her business in a tough economic climate, organizing

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major fashion shows across the world, and managing the everyday hectic pace of People's Revolution. She also takes time for her personal life, which includes being a proud single mom to daughter Ava.

The show was produced by the lead character of the show, Kelly Cutrone, and Billy Taylor, Dan Cutforth and Jane Lipsitz.

(2) *The Spin Crowd*, a reality show on the E! channel, is described by *Media Life Magazine* (2010) in the following manner:

E! is coming to the rescue with "The Spin Crowd," a new reality series about Command PR, a Public Relations firm run by a flamboyant individual named Jonathan Cheban, who's so over-the-top that he's beneath consideration. Fortunately, his young female staffers are both relatable and attractive, and they make the half hour bearable.

The show was produced by reality TV star Kim Kardashian, Jon Murray, Jeff Jenkins and Gil Goldschein. Specific female characters from each series were analyzed for this study.

The major characters analyzed in the series *Kell on Earth* included: Kelly Cutrone (the founder of the fashion public relations, branding, and marketing firm People's Revolution), and a selection of her female account executives. In *The Spin Crowd*, the four women analyzed were Katie, Lauren, Erika and Summer; these women are all employees of Command PR. Both of the television shows selected for this study were aired within the last two years. *Kell on Earth* aired from 2010 – present, and *The Spin Crowd* aired in 2010.

FINDINGS

The Spin Crowd offered the most unrealistic depiction of women in the PR field and the PR field in general. In the first episode of season one, entitled "Image is Everything," one of the female associates was coaxed by her male boss into getting collagen lip injections to fit the image of the company. From the be-

gining, it was evident that this show would display the negative stereotypes of ditzy, PR “bunnies.” As the season went on, the women performed fewer PR duties, and instead focused on being socialites, rather than meeting with clients. The coding sheet revealed that the women exhibited a significantly larger number of negative characteristics than positive characteristics (Figure 2).

Reality Program	Negative Characteristics	Positive Characteristics
The Spin Crowd	17	8
Kell on Earth	1	21

Figure 2: Numbers of Positive and Negative Characteristics in *The Spin Crowd* and *Kell on Earth*. (Note: Author’s Table)

Kell on Earth offered a more accurate portrayal of women in the field of PR (see Figure 2, above). Each episode took viewers through the process of signing a client, satisfying the client, and actually planning fashion events. It showed the female characters making phone calls, writing press releases, becoming frustrated, making mistakes, and so forth. At one point, Kell received a frantic call from one of her associates’ mother because the mother had not heard from her son. The office associate had been working so hard for Fashion Week, that he had not left the office in days. This example illustrates the commitment to one’s job that is necessary in a field as fast-paced and hectic as PR. There was also a clip during the show where two female associates were fired because of their social drinking.

DISCUSSION

While it is certain that neither show was completely accurate, *The Spin Crowd* exhibited more of the negative stereotypes associated with women in the PR field in the media. There were aspects of the study that could have been altered to make the results more comprehensive. The amount of time allotted for this particular study limited the number of episodes examined of each reality television show series. Given the time constraint,

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the researcher only viewed four episodes of each show's season, and analyzed data based only on those viewed episodes. Viewing more episodes would have noted the progression or regression of the image of the women in these shows. It would have been valuable to see how, or if, the shows' focuses or directions changed from one season to the next. In addition to being able to view more episodes, each of the episodes should be viewed more than once. This would have provided a more thorough coding of the practitioner's behavior.

Determining the information to use on the coding sheet was difficult when viewing the television episodes. Most of the words used to describe successful Public Relations practitioners were skill related. When viewing a television show, it was difficult to identify instances when someone was demonstrating certain skills, such as a strong writing ability. The researcher chose to use positive and negative characteristics instead of skills to code each episode and character. Identifying characteristics such as "disrespectful" behavior or being a "good problem solver" was easier to code visually, because a character's actions can be classified using characteristics, as opposed to skill level.

Another limitation the researcher faced was the small selection of reality television shows that depicted women in the Public Relations industry. Though the first popular reality television show that focused on women in Public Relations premiered on MTV in 2005. It was never renewed after the first season, leaving television without any Public Relations reality television until 2009. Four years after *Power Girls* premiered, Bravo introduced *Kell on Earth*, and then a year later the E! Network premiered *The Spin Crowd*. The researcher chose the latter two shows for this study because they were the most popular and the only Public Relations-focused reality television shows currently on television. The small collection of television shows narrowed the scope of the research.

As a result of the limited amount of reality television shows depicting women in the role of a Public Relations practitioner, there were few past studies on the topic. This proved to be both an asset and limitation to the research. It allowed this study to help close the gaps present in the current body of existing research — particularly regarding female practitioners and media

portrayals in reality television. The small selection of shows also emphasizes the importance of media accurately depicting women in the PR field. The limitation was evident when trying to identify my focus regarding women practitioners in reality television.

Despite the few limitations, there are solutions that could allow further research to continue in this area of study. First, more time should be given to viewing and coding the television programs. Additional viewings would have provided supplementary instances that were not coded during the first viewing. Second, including scripted television shows in the study can be a solution to the limited selection of PR television shows. Perhaps more information could be gathered on the depiction of female Public Relations practitioners on television by comparing two reality television shows and two scripted television shows. This would contribute additional viewpoints from the scripted and unscripted perspectives of television. This could also serve as a solution to the problem of not finding enough published research on reality television and female practitioners. There are several studies that have focused on the relationship between women in the industry and scripted television. Incorporating the scripted genre of television gives the researcher more resources to support the study. The alternative decisions worked well in providing the data needed to conduct a strong study on the portrayals of female Public Relations practitioners in reality television.

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