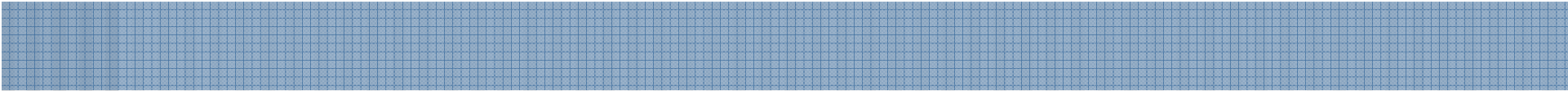
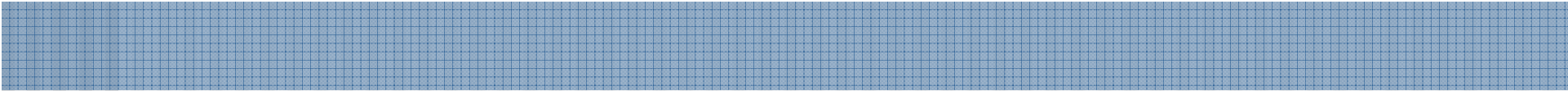


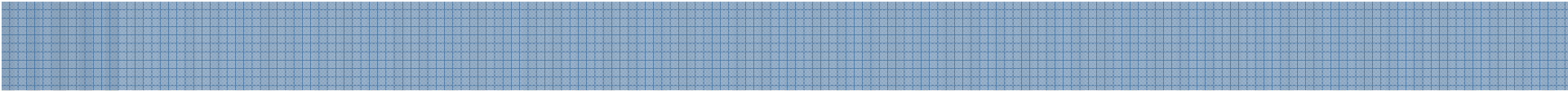
Mobile Communication Uses in Television Narratives: An Exploration of Apparatus Theory

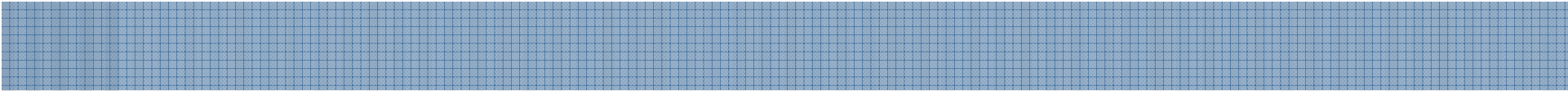


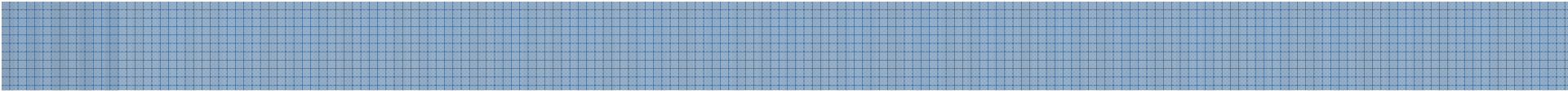
Emil Bakke and L. Meghan Peirce
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Theory of Apparatchgeist

- People tend to standardize the use of Personal Communication Technologies (PCT) regardless of unique cultural or individual characteristics
- Katz and Aakhus have identified an evolution of individual decision-making that either *promote* or *dissuade* individual's assessment of personal communication technology.



Gap in literature, purpose of study

- Television provides a window into current mainstream culture. However, few studies have considered the representation of mobile phones by television characters.
- The purpose of this study was to conduct a content analysis to advance knowledge about television's role in portraying mobile phone communication. This is important because these representations are telling pieces of mobile phone adoption, use and representation in today's culture.



Research questions

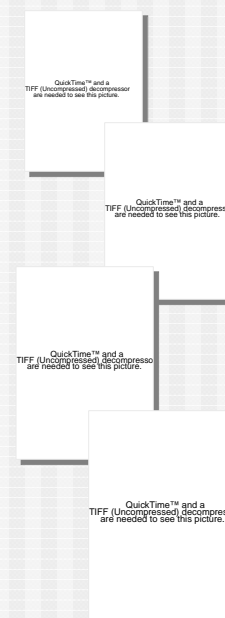
- RQ1: How are television characters using mobile phones?
- RQ2: What features of mobile phone technology are television characters using?
- RQ3: Are there differences in mobile phone use between teen and adult television programming?



QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Method: Sample

- Eight episodes from four different prime-time television series during the November 2008 sweeps period.
 - *One Tree Hill* and *Gossip Girl* represents two network television programs that target a teen audience
 - *Desperate Housewives* and *Brothers and Sisters* represents two network television programs that target an adult audience.



Method: Instrument

- Each coding unit is drawn from current mobile phone literature; 30 coding units in six categories:
 - mobile phone use
 - Display, safety, microcoordination, hypercoordination, adverse use, avoidance use, interpersonal use
 - Reference
 - Visual and verbal
 - Gender
 - Age
 - Feature selection
 - Voice, text, picture, internet etc.
 - Medium
 - Mobile phone, smart phone...

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Results

- How television characters used mobile phones for communication:
 - 374 instances of mobile phone use
 - Interpersonal (24%), microcoordination (20%), adverse use (18%) and display (17%).
 - Teens represented the majority
 - adverse uses
 - Age 40-59, the second largest group
 - interpersonal uses
 - Females used phones more than male characters
 - adverse uses



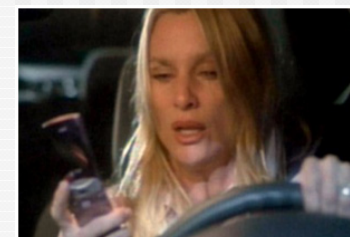
Results

- Differences in mobile phone representation between teen and adult television programming:
- Characters in the teen and adult television series use mobile phones for communication in unique ways
 - Teen series:
 - twice the number of references to mobile phone use (n = 261, 70%) vs the adult series
 - larger range of mobile phone uses than did the adult series
 - Both talk as well as displaying its use
 - Adult series
 - almost exclusively visually depicted mobile phone use (96%) verses talking about the phone (4%).



Results

- What features do television characters access?
 - Teens:
 - Voice (32%), text (27%), text and picture (26%)
 - Age 60+
 - Split between voice and text messaging
 - All other age groups
 - Almost exclusively voice communication
- Female characters
 - Voice (46%), text and picture (24%)
- Male characters
 - Voice (62%) and text (22%) feature.



Implications, and limitations...

- Some inconsistencies with how adults and teens use the phone in their daily life.
- Adverse uses of the mobile phone by female characters are an area of future studies.
- Consider this study is a first step to further understand the uses of mobile phones in our society as viewed through the cultural lens of television; it is an exploration of Apparatus Theory.
- More research, additional TV series and larger sample will provide further understanding

