

Running head: GENDER DIFFERENCES IN HUMOR USE

Exploring gender differences in deprecatory humor use:

Discriminatory utterances aimed at women.

Lindsey Hummel and Sara Shake

Hanover College

April 17, 2007

Exploring gender differences in deprecatory humor use:

Discriminatory utterances aimed at women.

Deprecatory language use is disadvantageous to society. A major influence on society is television, which demonstrates this type of language. Exposure to and use of deprecating humor increases the tolerance for discrimination of disenfranchised individuals. The present study developed a coding scheme that captures which gender uses more deprecating language. The coding scheme was applied to two sitcoms, *Roseanne* and *Everybody Loves Raymond*. It is hypothesized that there may be gender differences in speakers' use of deprecating humor, and that more deprecating humor will target women rather than men. Data collected included coded material from *Everybody Loves Raymond* ($n = 22$) and *Roseanne* ($n = 22$). Results indicate that women are using significantly more deprecating utterances than men ($X^2 = 4.355, p < 0.05$).

Exploring gender differences in deprecatory humor use:

Discriminatory utterances aimed at women

The invention of the television brought with it the potential for comedians to visually entertain people in their homes. What constitutes ‘popular’ television has changed over the course of time, ranging from 1950’s variety shows to a more recent trend of situational comedies that reflect American family life in a humorous manner. The type of entertainment available to the general public has expanded greatly over the past fifty years; instead of choosing between Channel 2 and Channel 4, viewers today can choose from among hundreds of channels, each offering its own genre of programming. Even though there are a wide variety of channels available to watch, people have a limited time to watch television because they work and attend school. Post-dinner and pre-bed time slots, better known as ‘prime time’ are dominated by situational comedies that focus on everyday family situations and interpersonal relationships. Most of the humor found in these everyday situations relate to a majority of viewers’ own, often stereotyped, experience, from dad’s disastrous diaper change to mom’s inability to fix a flat tire.

Just as humor can be found in a variety of everyday situations, it can also be expressed differently. Humor is a continuum, ranging from slapstick (physical comedy) to deprecating (wit). Humor, broadly defined, is the “quality or ability to perceive, appreciate or express what is funny, amusing, or ludicrous” (Webster’s New World, 2001). Because of humor’s broad definition, it is important to note that there are a wide variety of categories within the context of humor. Deprecating or disparaging humor, as defined by Webster’s New World (2001), is a type of humor that degrades, or expresses disapproval of another individual or group of individuals.

Humor is conveyed in various ways, most notably through speech. Each person has hundreds of daily interactions, in which they use language to express their ideas, thoughts,

beliefs, and values, while at the same time affecting those around them. Statements such as “I’m so stupid,” and “Sucks to be you, loser,” illustrate deprecating statements that put oneself or others down by belittling some aspect of an individual or group. These deprecatory statements assert one’s position in relation to others by creating a power differential. When an individual says “Sucks to be you, loser”, the speaker emphasizes how the “other” individual is in a disadvantaged state. This supposes that the speaker is not a “loser” and has risen above that lowly rank. In this interaction, the speaker asserts his/her position in relation to another by incorporating a deprecatory statement into conversation. Ford, Wentzel, and Lorion (2001) found that exposure to disparaging humor will only affect a listener’s stereotypes if the target of the humor is disadvantaged (e.g., women). Therefore, putting down a person in power has little to no effect on the listener’s stereotypes. However, these findings imply that this type of humor serves to create a status hierarchy between the speaker and the subject of the utterance (Ford et. al., 2001). This type of humor creates a social status hierarchy, such that the speaker is superior and the subject is inferior within an utterance. It is important, therefore, to differentiate which gender is making these remarks in order to identify which stereotypes are upheld and discover what implications they might have on an individual and the greater society.

Superiority and inferiority are conveyed through the words speakers use in daily interactions. Conversations allow for many instances of humor use, in particular, opportunities for deprecating remarks. The current study utilizes techniques from discourse analysis, which arose out of Ethnomethodology, which is the study of linguistic relations and structures in conversation. This type of analysis focuses on the nature of conversation and language use in social situations. By using this type of analysis, Gill (1993) concluded that language use reflects each person’s sense of reality. Since we all hold different perspectives of what reality is, it is

inevitable that there are conflicting interpretations of that reality. Not wanting to change one's own perspective, a person will try their best to change others' perspectives. Gill's (1993) other findings stipulate that all discourse is social action that can be used by speakers to convey their power, portray themselves as good people, and assert their position in society. People use language as a way to interpersonally perform these social actions. People jokingly call others 'bitch', 'stupid', or 'loser' to assert their place within the social status hierarchy. The meaning behind these words has not changed, but because they are said with a chuckle, they seem less harsh, making them more acceptable.

Simply because someone perpetuates the utilization of these labels, does not mean that they particularly enjoy hearing them. For some, going with the flow and accepting what they believe to be the 'norm' is easier than standing up and potentially upsetting others for disagreeing with them. Therefore, the question to ask is: is it possible to tell what a person believes by listening to what they say, or must we look at what people are not saying? Kleinman (2002) emphasizes the importance of derogatory language use. Generally speaking, people do not verbalize language they dislike using. Goldstein (1976) concluded that people enjoy hearing jokes that reflect what they believe; they do not enjoy hearing jokes that oppose what they believe. This has been called the Endorsement Theory. However, Lengbeyer (2005) offers a critique of this, in which he states that enjoying humor does not involve the endorsement of the basis upon which the logic of the joke depends. This would indicate that the listener, although he or she finds a joke humorous, does not share the same beliefs as the joke implies. For example, a "dumb blonde joke" can be found humorous, even if the listener may not actually hold the belief that blonde women are *dumb*. He or she may have experience with intelligent blonde women, which reflects their true feelings.

An important aspect to keep in mind while thinking of the aforementioned example is: does it matter what the genders of the listener and speaker are? When males tell this joke to male audiences, the listeners laugh, endorsing the idea that some women can be dumb, or share similar qualities with the “dumb blonde” in the joke. However, when a male tells this joke to a female audience, their laughter may not signify their endorsement of women being dumb blondes, but rather, by laughter they accept and display their place in society as lesser than males, whether in terms of intelligence or power. The purpose of wit, or humor, is to elicit laughter, but until now, the question of how such humor perpetuates power/status inequity has not been studied directly (Wyer & Collins, 1994). Additionally, the question of who is saying these remarks lingers, leaving us to wonder as to the role deprecation plays in our daily conversations. Juni and Katz (2001) looked at the use of deprecating humor within groups of disenfranchised individuals.

The current study focuses on this same group of people. For the purpose of the current study, disenfranchised individuals are defined as those who are part of a minority and are to some extent disempowered, more specifically, women. The amount of money one earns translates into amount of power one has in our society. Since males' incomes are higher than females', they can be assumed to hold the highest status and power in America. There is a masculine bias in our society as men hold positions of power, prestige, and wealth, which can be illustrated by the wage gap. Currently the wage gap is measured by incomes reported in questionnaires distributed by the United States Census Bureau. An article discussing the wage gap states that women make about \$0.76 to \$1.00 of what a man makes for the same amount of work (Stenzel, 2001). Thus, individuals who are not traditional males (i.e., not just male but those in the gay/lesbian/bisexual/transvestite community) can be seen as, to some extent,

disenfranchised. The current study justifies the use of deprecating humor by disenfranchised individuals because it is reflective of society. These individuals persevere despite having disadvantages and not possessing power and prestige. Having power gives the male an upper hand to make more money, and in relation to that, having money creates a power differential between disenfranchised individuals and males, which in turn creates inferior and superior positions (Brannon, 2005). The superiority theory (Berger & Wildavsky, 1994) states that there are similar inferior and superior positions within humor. Humor involves a sense of superiority that those who laugh experience towards those they laugh. Whenever a person is belittled, those who laugh do so because, in that moment, they have a sense of superiority. This act of belittling is an act of power and can even be seen as an expression of aggression. Juni and Katz (2001) suggest that aggression is the basis of self-deprecatory humor. In this sense, aggression is in response to oppression and is self-imposed to deflect further hurt by others. This is illustrated by the adage, "You'd rather have them laugh with you than laugh at you." This type of thinking dominates American society as a whole and encourages disenfranchised individuals to use self-deprecatory humor since it safely perpetuates their "lesser than" status.

Freud's (1964) implicit disparaging of women in his psychoanalytic theory has been well documented. Freud's assumption that women long for a penis and have weak superegos perpetuated and justified women's inferior social position (Krausz, 1994; Brannon, 2005). There have since been many critiques of this inadequate depiction of women (Brannon, 2005; Engler, 2006). Two important feminist psychologists who sought to redress Freud were Horney and Kaschak. Horney's (1967) theory insists that female's feelings of inferiority are instilled and upheld by the masculine bias in society, illustrated by the wage gap mentioned previously. Kaschak (1992) adds a perspective that is more focused on society's role in shaping inferiority,

postulating that men grow and develop in societies that give them power in the household and in the workplace; women grow and develop in these societies where they are viewed as subservient and as males' possessions. Because women grow up in a position of inferiority, a style of self-deprecatory humor might emerge as a defense to combat against male superiority.

Women face economic, spiritual, physical, emotional and social disadvantages in comparison to men in our culture. Although women are normally equals of men, there are still large disparities in theory and practice of this supposed equality. Sex differences are easy to point out, but difficult to explain. Whereas males typically socialize in groups, females are more likely to have closer, one-on-one relationships with other women (Benenson, Maiese, Dolenszky, E., Dolenszky, N., Sinclair, & Simpson, 2002). To maintain this closeness, many females will utilize deprecating humor to maintain dyadic female relationships, in which they are apt to put themselves down in order to ease or comfort those around them (Benenson et. al., 2002). Females tend to put up a defensive wall that calls attention to their flaws and lack of social power before any other person can poke fun at them for the same things (Benenson et. al., 2002). In dyadic relationships, this sort of defense mechanism also serves as a sign of shared perspective, allowing the other person present to feel less likely to be judged; because, if someone is willing to judge themselves, then they are less likely to point out the other persons' flaws (Benenson et. al., 2002). This research is vital in understanding how people relate to one another, specifically how one person is able to convey his/her reality to another individual. We judge people because we feel like there is something about us that makes us different, better, or more 'normal'. We also use others' portrayals of reality as a means to check or validate our own. Commonly we (children especially) check our reality by modeling others' behavior and language use (Bandura, 1977). In an era of latchkey kids and families in which parents must work long hours away from

the house, the television serves as a prime modeling agent for behavior, appropriate language, and humor use.

Watching television is a way to both escape from physical reality and learn social actions. People may or may not admit to imitating behaviors they are exposed to on television, but as we mentioned previously, there is modeling occurring constantly. Bandura (1977) discusses how people learn acceptable and unacceptable behaviors by imitating others and observing reactions to these social actions. One of the mediums that provides a variety of social behaviors within a variety of social situations is television. Through watching television, people can see how to behave correctly (or incorrectly) at a fancy cocktail party or while having a sleepover with friends. Not only are physical behaviors mimicked, but language and conversation styles can be imitated as well. Television shows rely on conversation to convey their message and likeness to the real world. Many shows on television deal with situations that everyday people are exposed to, such as grocery shopping, making dinner, watching television, and working. These shows are relatable to people's lives, making them more enjoyable to watch.

However, not all aspects of television are positive. Studies have been done that discuss the linkages between violence on television and crimes committed by those who may or may not have been influenced by that violence (Geen & Thomas, 1986; Callahan, 1996). Since findings in this area have been suggested, the current researchers sought to unveil another potentially modeled behavior: gender inequality perpetuated through conversation. Present day society breeds and perpetuates inequality. Because our society is made up of those in "superior" positions and "inferior" positions that substantiate (enact) the inequality, there might be differences in usage of deprecatory humor. Television is one medium that allows reality to be both reflected and later affected. Thus, the researchers believe that by studying the content of

television shows, particularly the discourse that takes place on these shows, we can obtain a better grasp on who is using deprecatory language and to whom it is targeted.

The use of deprecatory humor has been and may be seen in American society as both a defense and a way to ease the uncertainties of social interaction. The present study developed a coding scheme that illustrates gender differences in the use of deprecating remarks. It was expected that women would be targets of this type of humor more than men. The coding scheme was applied to two American sitcoms to evaluate gender differences. It was hypothesized that there may be gender differences in speakers' use of deprecating humor. Additionally, we hypothesize that more deprecating humor will target women rather than men. This is based on previous research that suggests both men and women would prefer to listen to females be deprecated than males (Moore, Griffiths, & Payne, 1987). This study looked at the positional theory of humor, which suggests that men and women have a preference for female-disparaging humor rather than male-disparaging humor. In their study participants rated sexist and non-sexist jokes. They found that sexist jokes targeting women were preferred over any other combination of jokes.

The current study explored humor use in a new way. By developing a coding scheme that can specify frequency of gender-specific humor, the researchers demonstrate that there is still inequality present in society. Through this type of humor, disenfranchised individuals (i.e., women) may be given a "voice" in American society, but only to the extent that they acknowledge their own inferiority. The researchers aim to show that, by incorporating this type of humor into popular television sitcoms, inequality not only exists, but it is perpetuated in shows that influence younger generations.

Method

Exploring the gender differences in deprecatory humor use involved the intricate development of an original coding scheme and application of this coding scheme to Season One episodes of *Everybody Loves Raymond* and *Roseanne*. The current researchers developed a coding scheme that can be used to code for both speaker and subject of deprecatory utterances.

Coding Scheme

Researchers developed a coding scheme (see Appendix A) that sufficiently coded each utterance (operationally defined as a spoken, uninterrupted word or phrase by one character) made during scenes in which the main character was present. After pilot application and clarifying discussions, the final coding sheet (see Appendix B) included seven columns used to code each utterance. Each row captured a unique utterance. The time was recorded every twenty utterances and every time there was a deprecating utterance. This was simply for convenience; in case there were any discrepancies, the utterance could be referred back to quickly rather than fast-forwarding through the episode. Each utterance was coded for “Gender of Speaker,” which focused on recording the gender of the person saying the utterance. There were two options for marking this column, male (M) or female (F). This was important to record because the purpose of this study was to see if there were gender differences in who was saying deprecating utterances. A code was marked for every utterance. “Subject of Comment,” was rated for every utterance to see if women were being deprecated more often than men. We defined the subject of comment as an individual or group of individuals that is the focus of the utterance. This column was filled in for every utterance. The coder had four options: male (M), female (F), group (G), or non-gendered (N). An utterance was coded for group if there were more than one gender as the subject of the comment. An utterance was coded as non-gendered if the gender of the subject of the comment could not be determined (i.e., toasters, houses, horses, etc.). The “Deprecating” column could only be checked if the “Subject of Comment” column was gendered (M or F). The sixth column, titled “Self-deprecating” could only be marked if the

aforementioned criteria were met for the utterance to be counted as deprecating and if the subject of the deprecating utterance was the speaker or someone who was the same gender as the speaker. “Content,” was only coded if the utterance was deprecating (the coder would write a one- to three-word phrase that would serve as a reference back to the utterance).

Application of coding scheme

The coding scheme (Appendix A) was applied to data from each episode of Season One of two situational family sitcoms. Researchers coded episodes from Season Two of *Roseanne* to practice using the coding scheme. These episodes were used to refine the columns of the coding sheet and to check initial rater agreement and so were not included in the final data set. Once researchers finalized the coding scheme, they tested four random episodes to ensure inter-rater reliability. Researchers each coded twenty-six episodes, allowing for an overlap of eight episodes, all used to test for inter-rater reliability (see Data Analysis). All scenes in which the main character was present were coded. Scenes in which characters were singing or when more than five characters were talking in unison were not coded, since it was impossible to accurately identify speakers and targets in these scenes.

Data

The researchers viewed a total of 45 episodes of two televised American situation comedies: *Everybody Loves Raymond* (1996) and *Roseanne* (1988). A total of twenty-two episodes from each series comprised our data. There was one episode that could not be coded: “Canoga Times,” episode number eleven from *Roseanne* was not included in the final data because it was a musical episode. We attained inter-rater reliability (see Data Analysis section) and then divided up the remaining data and coded separately. Each researcher coded twenty-six total episodes. An example of a coded page of data can be found in Appendix C.

Everybody Loves Raymond (ELR), a popular American sitcom from 1996-2005, features real-life stand-up comedian Ray Romano. Another popular American sitcom is *Roseanne*, which aired 1988-1997, and features real-life stand-up comedienne Roseanne Barr. Each of these sitcoms was in the top ten of the Nielsen ratings during the majority of their nine-year span on television (Nielsen Media Research, 1995). Season one of each of these sitcoms will be analyzed because later seasons would require more knowledge of the characters in order to understand the deprecating humor. *Roseanne* and *Everybody Loves Raymond* were chosen for this study because they are similar and gave a basis for a gender study (a male main character in *Everybody Loves Raymond* and a female main character in *Roseanne*). Both sitcoms still air reruns, which we take to indicate, that they continue to adequately reflect society today. The fact that they are still airing and that they are still well known indicates that people continue to relate to the situations depicted in these sitcoms.

Additionally, the family set-up for these two sitcoms is nearly identical: husband and wife live in a middle-class home with three children; an overbearing mother/mother-in-law; there is one sibling who lives outside the home and is the butt of jokes. Because of these similarities, the two shows provide comparable settings for conversational wit, differing mainly by the gender of the main character. These similarities are important because they control for many situational aspects of interpersonal interaction.

Apparatus

A television and a digital videodisc (DVD) player were used to view the forty-four episodes of the shows' first seasons. Utterances were recorded on coding sheets (See Appendix B).

Data Analysis

Once the coding was finished, researchers worked to obtain inter-rater reliability. The researchers randomly selected four episodes (two from *Everybody Loves Raymond* and *Roseanne*). Researchers coded these four episodes separately and then calculated inter-rater reliability, which was quite high ($K = .97$). We conducted a test of inter-rater reliability after coding the data sets separately in order to ensure that coding remained similar throughout all episodes. We did this by randomly choosing four more episodes (two from *Everybody Loves Raymond* and *Roseanne*). Inter-rater reliability was calculated once more and has remained high ($K = .97$). The researchers achieved one hundred percent agreement for the following columns: Number of Utterances, Gender of Speaker, Deprecating, and Self-deprecating. The only discrepancy related to the coding sheet in the Subject of Comment column, where the percent agreement ranged from 0.96 to 0.98 (see Table 1).

Researchers coded a total of 10,032 utterances (*Roseanne*: 5,340 utterances; *Everybody Loves Raymond*: 4,692 utterances). Of these, 1,547 utterances had gendered subjects ($n = 867$ male utterances; $n = 680$ female utterances) (see Figure 2). There were 88 total deprecating utterances, which are defined as utterances that have a gendered target who is being disparaged or belittled (see Figure 2). There were a total of 15 self-deprecating utterances (5 males; 10 females), defined as utterances disparaging the speaker or someone of the same gender as the speaker (see Figure 2).

Chi-square tests were performed on gender of speaker and number of deprecating utterances, which supported the first hypothesis. Gender differences were indeed found in speakers' differential use of deprecating language. Specifically, there were significantly more deprecating utterances said by women than by men ($X^2 = 4.355, p < 0.05$) (see Figure 1). Chi-square tests were further conducted on gender of speaker and gender of subject to test the second

hypothesis. It had been expected that women would be targets of deprecating utterances more than men, however, this was not confirmed ($X^2 = 0.369, p = .544$) (see Figure 2). While women were twice as likely as men to be deprecated the numbers were too small to confirm this was an authentic effect. Additionally, researchers ran another Chi-square test for self-deprecating utterances and gender of speaker and found that this finding was not statistically significant ($X^2 = 0.622, p = 0.43$) (see Figure 3).

Discussion

There has been a gap in the existing literature in regards to speakers' gender and deprecating humor use. There was no previous research examining gender differences in the use of deprecating humor. In support of our first hypothesis, we did find that there was a gender difference in speakers' use of deprecating humor. We found that females did say significantly more deprecating utterances than males (see Figure 1). We believe this may be because women are expressing a version of their sense of reality. They use belittling language, which implies that they may be personally experiencing feelings of disparagement. Levine (1976) found that female stand-up comediennees used more self-deprecating jokes than male stand-up comedians. While this is relevant to the question of which gender may use this type of humor more than the other, stand-up comedic routines are only semi-reflective of real-life conversations. Most of the material is focused on getting a laugh, and the one way to get a laugh is to poke fun at oneself.

In regards to our second hypothesis, we did not have significant results. However, an interesting discovery that the current study revealed is that a higher percentage of women make deprecating utterances targeted towards women than those made by men, targeted towards women (see Figure 2). Although this finding was not statistically significant, its presence indicates that a larger sample of self-deprecating utterances could yet confirm this second

hypothesis. Along the same lines, the current research found that women made twice as many self-deprecating remarks as men (there were 10 female self-deprecating utterances vs. 5 male self-deprecating utterances) (see *Figure 3*). Why would women be more inclined to disparage themselves than men? Moore et al. (1987) found that sexist jokes targeting women were preferred over any other combination of jokes. This is because society holds women in a position of inferiority, one that is easy to target and easy to disparage.

The researcher's choice of television shows used for this study appears, on the exterior, to provide comedy based on family situations and crude humor. We did find that in the case of utterances with gendered subject of comment (1,547), women were talked about more often. Additionally, when we looked at the percentage of the utterances that were deprecating, we found that when women were talking about women, 7% of this time they were deprecating themselves. What can we infer from this? Although the utterances that occur are few, women are still putting themselves down more than men, in the big picture. We believe that with more episodes and more data, perhaps from different television series' or additional seasons of these two sitcoms, this percentage may increase. Furthermore, we expected to find many more deprecating utterances than were actually found in the data. As reported in the Data Analysis section, only 88 out of 10,032 (approximately 0.88%) utterances were deprecating. As a reminder, this was over a total of 44 episodes. Each episode was twenty to twenty-three minutes long. While there was a range of zero to five deprecating utterances within the episodes, the total number of deprecating remarks is small in comparison to non-deprecating remarks. We believe our second hypothesis was not supported due in part to the unexpected miniscule amount of deprecating that occurred. The biggest setback of our study fell in our not foreseeing how much characters in the sitcoms talked about non-gendered/non-human subjects. In this way,

much time was spent coding data unrelated to deprecating humor. Now that this baseline has been established, future studies could apply the scheme selectively to *only* recording deprecating and self-deprecating utterances to compare male vs. female across more episodes. Future research should focus on how to alleviate this issue, perhaps with a change in the coding sheet or definition of “Subject of Comment.”

The current study is important to further the limited research available in this area. We dove into a section of research that others have not yet explored. Through this study, we have tied together media’s role in influencing and reflecting what we might assume are social norms. We have pointed out how the media portrays disadvantaged or disenfranchised groups, specifically women, as inferior. This is important to note because people of all ages are affected by media portrayals. The most easily swayed group is children, those who are influenced by older, wiser figures and who learn by example. It does no good for parents to tell their female children that they can be anything they want to be when they grow up, and have the rest of the world tell them that no matter what they do, they will always be inferior by society’s standards. Children watch approximately 2.5 hours of television per day (Coon & Tucker, 2002). Some people may not feel as though 2.5 hours of television is a lot for children to be watching each day; however, this adds up to 17.5 hours of television a week—nearing one full day of television each week. The amount of social interactions available for a child to imitate or mimic during these hours is great. The question remains—what are you teaching your child and what is society teaching your child?

Some feel that, due to a rise in the number of hours parents work, the television has become more of a social influence, teaching children what sort of language, behaviors, and types of humor use are acceptable. Most parents would not hesitate to let their children watch the two

television series that we chose for this study, although *Roseanne* tended to deal with matters relating more to pre-teen/teenage issues than *Everybody Loves Raymond*. Still, these shows are available for children to view, influencing a new generation through re-runs and reinforcing pre-existing ideas held by adults. We hope that by shedding light on this continuous circle of inequality, individuals will step up and attempt to stop it, whether it is by not supporting shows that feature this type of language or by counter-acting it through spending more time with children and using less deprecating language in our everyday conversations. By applying our reliable coding scheme to other television shows, specifically cartoons and other genres that society has deemed “child-safe,” we hope that future research can uncover and stop the spread of negative messages that our children receive. There is much more about deprecating humor use that is still buried in murky waters. For instance, we need to know why people feel the urge to put themselves down and why people feel the need to put other people down. We should strive to understand what part deprecating and self-deprecating language plays in conversation. Future researchers have a mountain of data to sift through that may hold the answers to these questions. We, as researchers, have done our part by putting this information on the table; what you, the reader, decide to do with it is in your hands.

References

- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Benenson, J. F., Maiese, R., Dolensky, E., Dolensky, N., Sinclair, N., & Simpson, A. (2002). Group size regulates self-assertive versus self-deprecating responses to interpersonal competition. *Child Development, 73*(6), 1818-1829.
- Berger, A. A. & Wildavsky, A. (1994). Who laughs at what. *Society, 31*(6), 82-86.
- Brannon, L. (2005). *Gender: Psychological Perspectives* (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Callahan, S. (1996). What we see, we do. *Commonweal, 123*(1), 6-8.
- Coon, K. A. & Tucker, K. O. (2002) Television and children's consumption patterns: A review of the literature. *Minerva Pediatrica, 54*, 423-436.
- Engler, B. (2006). *Personality Theories* (7th ed.). New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Everybody Loves Raymond* [DVD]. (2004). United States: HBO.
- Ford, T. E., Wentzel, E.R., & Lorion, J. (2001). Effects of exposure to sexist humor on perceptions of normative tolerance of sexism. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 31*(6), 677-691.
- Freud, S. (1964). Femininity. In James Strachey (Ed. and Trans.), *New introductory lectures on psychoanalysis* (p. 112 – 135). New York: Norton. (Original work published 1933).
- Geen, R. G. & Thomas, S. L. (1986). The immediate effects of media violence on behavior. *Journal of Social Issues, 42*(3), 7-27.
- Gill, R. (1993) Ideology, gender and popular radio: A discourse analytic approach. *Innovation in Social Sciences Research, 6*(3), 323-339.
- Goldstein, J. H. (1976). Theoretical notes on humor. *Journal of Communication, 26*(3), 104-112.

- Horney, K. (1967). The dread of a woman: Observations on a specific difference in the dread felt by men and by women respectively for the opposite sex. In Harold Kelman (Ed.), *Feminine Psychology* (pp. 133-146). New York: Norton. (Original work published 1932).
- Juni, S. & Katz, B. (2001). Self-effacing wit as a response to oppression: Dynamics in ethnic humor. *Journal of General Psychology, 128*(2), 119-142.
- Kaschak, E. (1992). *Engendered lives*. New York: Basic Books.
- Kleinman, S. (2002). Essay: Why sexist language matters. *Qualitative Sociology, 25*(2), 299-304.
- Krausz, E. O. (1994). Freud's devaluation of women. *Journal of Adlerian Theory, Research & Practice, 50*(3), 298-313.
- Lengbeyer, L. (2005). Humor, context, and divided cognition. *Social Theory & Practice, 31*(3), 309-336.
- Levine, J. B. (1976). The feminine routine. *Journal of Communication, 26*(3), 173-175.
- Moore, T. E., Griffiths, K., & Payne, B. (1987). Gender, attitudes towards women, and the appreciation of sexist humor. *Sex Roles, 16*(9-10), 521-531.
- VNU Media Measurement & Information (2005, May 12). *Nielsen Media Research Takes an In-Depth Look at Everybody Loves Raymond*. Retrieved March 15, 2007, from http://www.nielsenmedia.com/monitor-plus/in_the_news/releases/EverybodyLovesRaymondFinale05-12-05.htm
- Roseanne* [DVD]. (2005). United States: Anchor Bay Entertainment, Inc.
- Stenzel, T. F. (2001). Why is there a gender wage gap and how can we fix it? *Employee Rights Quarterly, 2*(2), 1.

Webster's new world college dictionary (4th ed.). (2001). Foster City, CA: IDG Books

Worldwide, Inc.

Wyer, R. S. & Collins, J. E. (1994). A theory of humor elicitation. *Psychological Review*,

99(4), 663-688.

Table 1.

Cohen's Kappa for Subject of Comment: Pre and Post Inter-rater Reliability

Series and Episode Number	Inter-rater Reliability (Pre)	Series and Episode Number	Inter-rater Reliability (Post)
<i>Everybody Loves Raymond</i> #20	.96	<i>Everybody Loves Raymond</i> #18	.96
<i>Roseanne</i> #19	.97	<i>Everybody Loves Raymond</i> #7	.97
<i>Roseanne</i> #6	.97	<i>Roseanne</i> #4	.98
<i>Everybody Loves Raymond</i> #8	.98	<i>Roseanne</i> #13	.98

Table 2.

Gendered utterances sorted by subject.

	Male Subject	Female Subject	Subject Total
Utterance directed at	867	680	1,547
Deprecating	48	40	88
Self-deprecating	5	10	15

Figure 1. Gender differences in deprecating humor use.

$$X^2 = 4.355, p < .05$$

Percentage of Deprecating Utterances

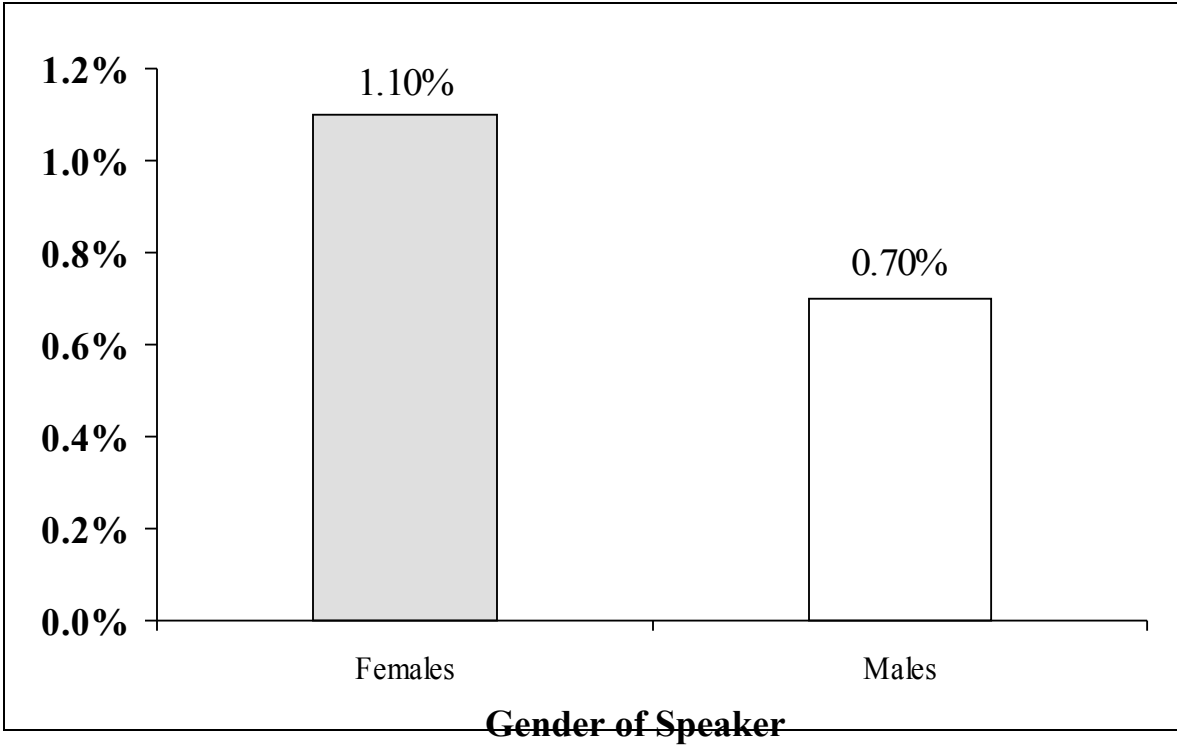


Figure 2. Gender differences in deprecated subjects of gendered utterances.

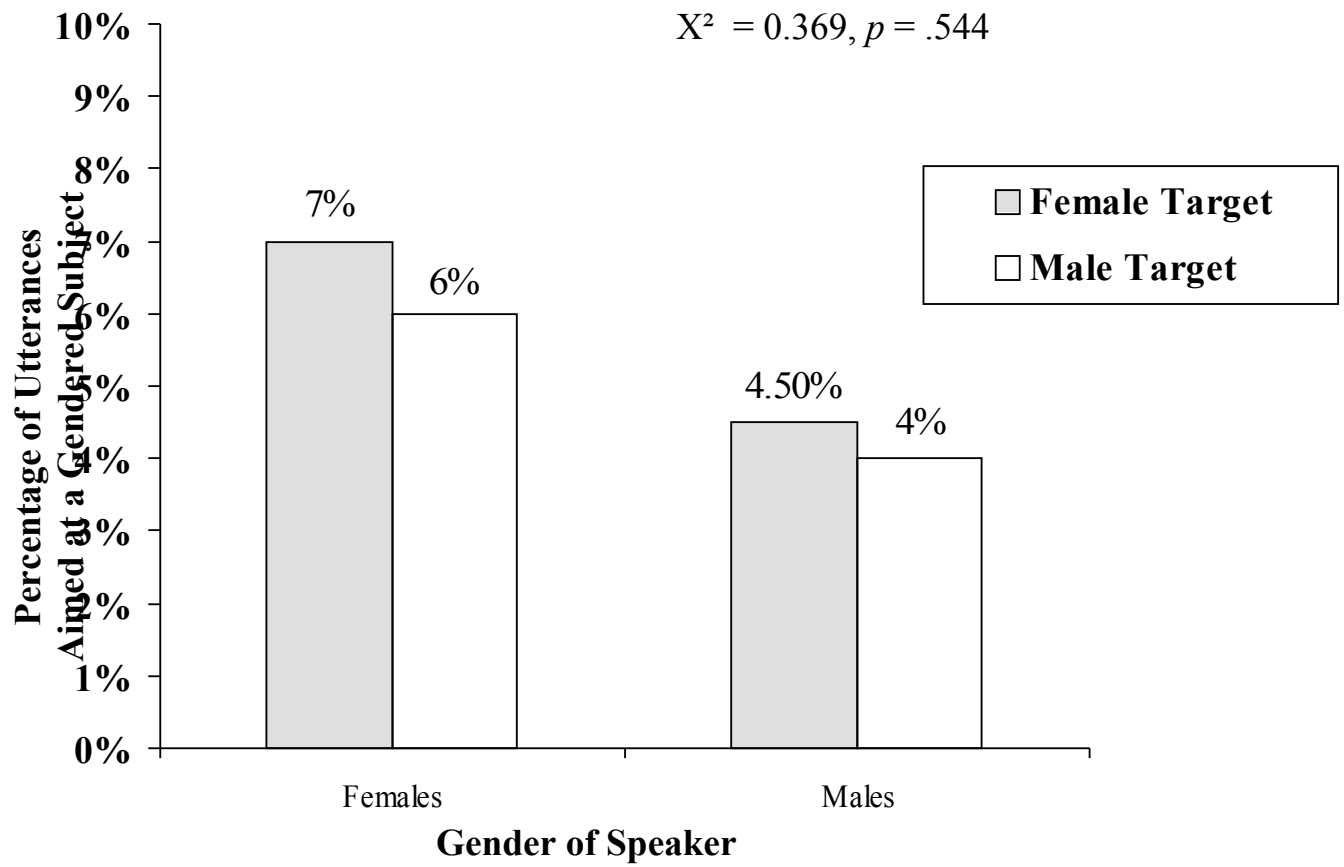
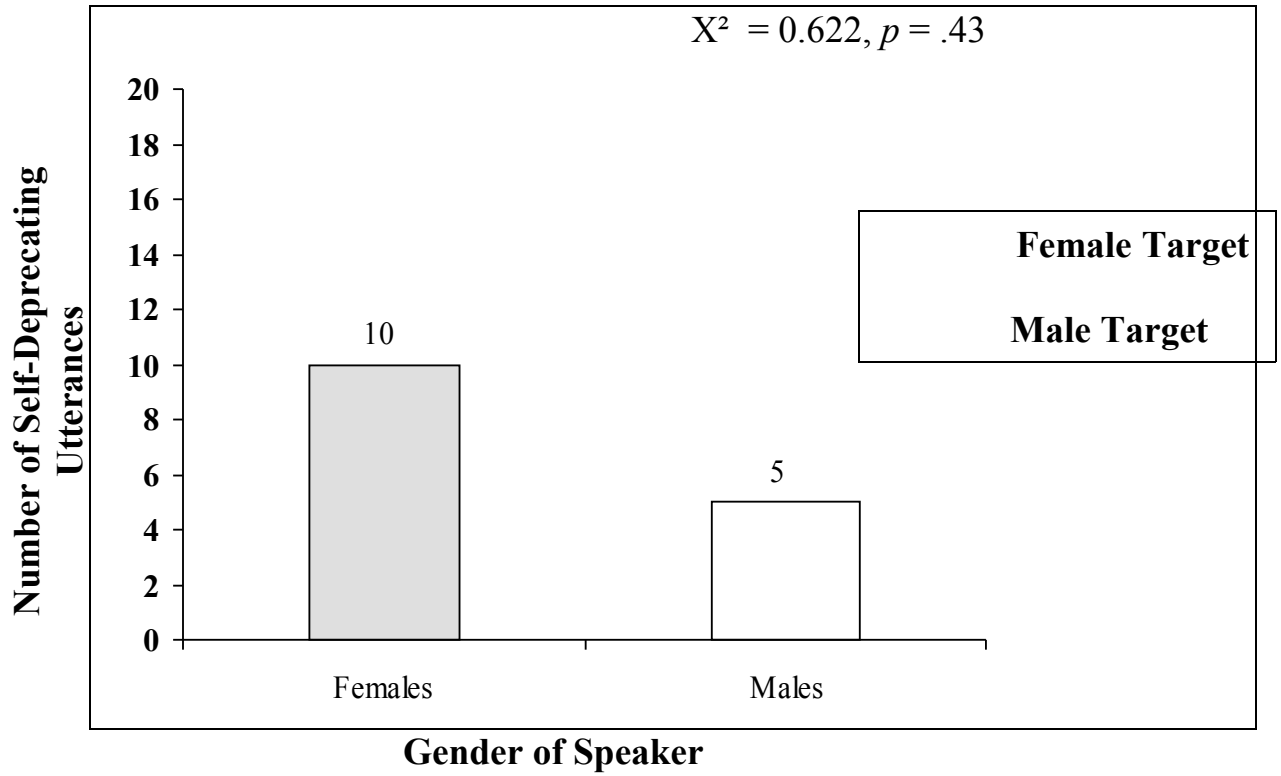


Figure 3. Gender differences in self-deprecatory utterances.



Appendix A. Data Coding Manual.

The data are utterances from Season One episodes of *Everybody Loves Raymond* or *Roseanne*. An utterance is, for the purpose of this study, defined as a spoken, uninterrupted word or phrase by one character. An utterance ends whenever another character begins to speak. An utterance does not end whenever another character makes a guttural sound (i.e., “uhhh” or “ugg”). Short injections such as “Oh!” and “Wow!” do not count as utterances. In instances in which one character’s monologue is interrupted with an injection and then continued, there should be one code: the utterance made initially. No singing will be coded. No utterances said by five or more persons in unison will be coded. Utterances are only coded if they are said in the presence of the main character (Ray or Roseanne). The top of the coding sheet has a space for the episode title and episode number, as well as which sitcom is being coded. This information can be found on the DVD case or in the main menu of the DVD.

Column 1: Time

The time is recorded every 20 utterances by indicating the minutes and seconds elapsed from the beginning of the episode on the coding sheet. The time should be recorded in case there is any discrepancy about an utterance.

Column 2: Gender of Speaker

For each utterance, the gender of the character speaking the utterance will be noted: male (M) or female (F). It is important to indicate the gender of the speaker in order to acknowledge which gender is making the deprecating utterances. Utterances in which multiple characters were speaking simultaneously were not coded because the purpose of this study was to see if there were gender differences in who was saying deprecating utterances.

Column 3: Subject of Comment

Each utterance will have a subject. The subject is defined as an individual or group of individuals that is the focus of the utterance. Non-gendered utterances will be coded with an “N” in the blank. The subject will be coded in one of four categories: male (M), female (F), group (G), or non-gendered (N). For example in the sentence “Mary went to the store to buy nails,” the coder would mark (F) because Mary is the subject of comment.

Column 4: Deprecating or not

Only if the subject of the utterance is gendered (M or F) can an utterance be deprecating. Deprecating utterances are any utterances in which subject of comment is being belittled or disparaged. Deprecating utterances will be indicated through a mark (X) on the coding sheet if such an utterance was made. An example of a deprecating utterance would be “That Bob Johnson sure is an asshole!” This is deprecating because it belittles Bob.

Column 5: Self-deprecating

Only when an utterance is marked as deprecating can it be deemed self-deprecating. Self-deprecating utterances will be indicated through a mark (X) on the coding sheet if the utterance was said by the speaker about himself/herself, or *about a person who is the same gender as the speaker*. An example of this would be Roseanne making a witticism about her mother’s girth.

Column 6: Content

As a back up for the time (Column 1), a short description will be noted for each deprecating utterance. The purpose of recording the content of the deprecating utterances is to clear up any discrepancy about how an utterance should be coded. An example of what should go in this column is “Slut” or “fat old lady,” anything representative of what the content of the deprecatory utterance was.

Appendix B. Coding Sheet.

Episode Title: _____ Episode # ___ Roseanne ELR

Utt. #	Time	Gender of speaker M/F	Subject of comment M/F/G/N	Deprecating (check if yes)	Self-deprecating (check if yes)	Content (if deprecating)
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						
22						
23						
24						
25						
26						
27						
28						
29						
30						
31						
32						
33						
34						
35						
36						
37						
38						

Appendix C. Sample Code Sheet.

Episode Title: Life & Stuff Episode # 1 **Roseanne** ELR

Utt. #	Time	Gender of speaker M/F	Subject of comment M/F/G/N	Deprecating (check if yes)	Self-deprecating (check if yes)	Content (if deprecating)
1		M	F			
2		F				
3		M				
4		F				
5		M	F			
6		F				
7		M				
8		F				
9		M				
10		F				
11		M				
12		F				
13		M				
14		F				
15		M				
16		F				
17		M				
18		F				
19		F	F			
20		F				
21		F	F			
22		M				
23		F				
24		M				
25		F				
26		M	F	X		Pig face
27		F				
28		M				
29		F				
30		F				
31		F				
32		F	F			
33		F				
34		M				
35		F				
36		M				
37		F	F			
38		F				