Humor in YouTube:
Do Perceived Realism and Homophily Change What is Funny?
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Abstract:
A study examining perceptions of Disparagement Humor and Homophily in television showed that there was a significant positive link between aggression of undergraduates and the identification with aggressive characters they saw on television (Eyal and Rubin, 2003). Research on Perceived Realism and television also shows that people who perceive the content on television as more real are more likely to be influenced by it (Busselle & Greenberg, 2000). Based on these results, this study seeks to explore the relationship between Homophily, Perceived Realism, and viewers’ judgments of humor quality in YouTube videos.

Method:
Participants:
146 total participants (32 men and 114 women) with 19-21 as the median ages. Over 97% of the participants were Caucasian. Participants were emailed a questionnaire through Facebook and the Communication and Journalism Department. Women and Men viewed different videos and then answered questions.

Procedure:

“iPod vs. Blonde”
- Viewed by Females
- A YouTube video showing the stereotypical ‘dumb blonde’ woman who thinks her iPod shuffle is a pregnancy test.

“My New Haircut”
- Viewed by Males
- A YouTube video depicting a stereotypical high testosterone male in his mid-twenties

Measures:
Perceived Realism Scale (1981) by Rubin: a scale measuring the perceptions of YouTube and real life.
- Sample Question: YouTube does show life as it really is (strongly agree to strongly disagree)
- Reliability: α = .70 (M= 13.87, SD= 2.973)

Perceived Homophily Measure (1975) by Daly: a scale measuring how like or unlike participants feel towards the individual in the video.
- Sample Question: The individual featured in the video is similar to me (strongly agree to strongly disagree)
- Reliability: α = .863 (M= 17.82, SD= 5.056)

Research Questions and Results:

RQ1: Is perceived realism of a YouTube video related to viewer perception of disparagement humor featured in the video? (NEAR SIGNIFICANCE)

ANOVA: Which of the following best describes your feelings about this video?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>15.146</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.082</td>
<td>1.744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>80.014</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>.620</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>95.160</td>
<td>143</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Means Plot: Feelings About Video x Perceived Realism

RQ2: Is perceived homophily with the actor featured in a YouTube video related to viewer perception of disparagement humor featured in the video? (NO RELAVANCE)

RQ3: Is familiarity with a YouTube video depicting disparagement humor related to the viewer’s perception of the video? (YES)

Frequency Table: Have you viewed this video before?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>84.9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ4: Do men and women vary in their perception of same-sex disparagement humor in a YouTube video? (NO RELEVANCE)