Meriwether’s New Girl

Roommates. Lovers. Idiots.

• Cody Silverthorn
Brief Overview:

- Relational staircase model
- Dialectical tensions
- Portrayals of stereotypes
- Symbolic interactionism
- Standpoint theory
- Conclusion
Why I chose New Girl:

- Emotional connection created through the correlation with an optimal, down-to-earth version of an average citizens living in contemporary Los Angeles.
  - Resembles traits of uses and gratifications theory
    - Proposed as the intellectual or emotional need that pleases the viewers while occupied with a form of media
  - Viewer’s depiction of reality vs. fiction is brought to the surface
Cont’d:

- Elizabeth Meriwether, writer of *New Girl*, uniquely incorporates satire, romantic comedy, and interconnected friends who seemingly experience every relational delight and misfortune altogether.
Relational Staircase Model:

- Nick & Jess
  - Better known as the flourishing and depreciating stages of development in a relationship (Guerrero et al., 2014)
  - Jess & Nick went from intro→ bonding→ down to avoiding, but never terminating
Dialectical Tensions:

- **Nick & Jess**
  - Led to relationship’s termination:
    - Masculine (Nick) portrayed lack of connectedness
    - Feminine (Jess) portrayed desire for autonomy and dialogue
  - Kept relationship, as a whole, alive:
    - Masculine wanting more dialogue
    - Feminine wanting to be more active
Portrayals of Stereotypes:

- **Schmidt** - overcompensated for rough past and lack of confidence led to his androgynous, heterosexual, narcissistic, breadwinner mentality (Wood, 2015)

- **Cece** - grew up feminine, used to receiving attention based off of her looks, eventually proclaimed the label as a ditsy sex object (Wood, 2015)
  
  - Characteristics contradicted Cece’s mold society bestowed on her
    
    - Ex: emotional laborer, competent, resourceful, drive for professionalism
Fiction vs. Reality:

- Schmidt & Cece
  - Unrealistic standards draw viewers toward stereotypes
    - creates relational problems
  - Albion College researchers predicted what observers witnessed on television was a template for them to incorporate into their lives (Rozenfeld, 2013)
Cont’d:

- the medium is the message (Campbell et al., 2013)
- explains how viewers consume a type of media and it influences their experience on the interpretation in which they receive it
Symbolic Interactionism

Schmidt & Cece

A form of communication that assists in the achievement of one’s own view of the world by interacting with the people that are presented to them.

Present during the conflict between Cece’s mother, devoted to her native country’s traditions and customs, and Schmidt when they told her they were getting married.

Standpoint Theory:

Schmidt & Cece

- Defined as taking gender identities, race, ethnicity, and social classes and evoking a perception onto individuals as to how they perceive the world and understand social life

- Ex: Schmidt utilizing standpoint theory to better understand Cece’s mother’s disregard for their wedding
Conclusion:

- From this presentation, the viewer should:
  - properly navigate through relational staircase model
  - Know anticipations could relate to masculine/feminine personality
  - acknowledge stereotypes embodied by characters
  - depict difference between unrealistic standards & reality
  - incorporate standpoint theory in their communication skills, producing a viewpoint towards other cultural behaviors
References:


