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INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: AMERICAN TV SERIES IN CHINA

By

Xuan Li

B.A., Zhe Jiang University of Media and Communications, 2011

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Master of Science Degree

Department of Mass Communication and Media Arts

in the Graduate School

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

August 2014

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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: AMERICAN TV SERIES IN CHINA

By

Xuan Li

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Science

in the field of Professional Media & Media Management

Approved by:

Dong Han, Chair

Graduate School

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

04/08/2014

AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

XUAN LI, for the MASTER OF SCIENCE degree in PROFESSIONAL MEDIA AND MEDIA MANAGEMENT, presented on May 29, 2014, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: Intercultural Communication: American TV series in China

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Dong Han

American TV series were first introduced into China in the 1980s and their popularity was growing in recent years. Different from South Korean TV series in previous years, the popularity of American TV series does not rely on television but via Internet. As an art of sound and image, American TV series do not only bring Chinese audiences fresh audio-visual experience, but also intercultural experiences of American culture and values. This exploratory study uses questionnaire survey and focus group to investigate Chinese audiences' attitudes towards American TV series, to analyze the influences that the American TV series may have on contemporary Chinese audiences, and to be helpful to other foreign dramas that came or will come into Chinese TV series market as well.

i

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ii

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>CHAPTER</u>	PAGE
ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ii
LIST OF TABLES	iv

CHAPTERS

	CHAPTER 1 – Introduction	. 1
	CHAPTER 2 – Literature Review	.3
	CHAPTER 3 – Research Questions	.7
	CHAPTER 4 – Methodology	.8
	CHAPTER 5 – Findings and Discussions	10
	CHAPTER 6 –Conclusion	27
REI	FERENCES	30

APPENDICES

	VEY QUESTIONNAIRE	Appendix A – A SURV
AND POPULAR ONLINE	OF MAIN WEBSITES	Appendix B – A LIST
	\$	AMERICAN TV SERIES
46		VITA

TABLES	PAGE
Table 1.1, 1.2	10
Table 2.1, 2.2	11
Table 3	12
Table 4	12
Table 5	13
Table 6	15
Table 7	16
Table 8	17
Table 9	18
Table 10	18
Table11	19
Table 12	20
Table 13	22
Table 14	23
Table 15	24
Table 16	25
Table 17	26

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

China is currently in a transitional period, leaving its door open to foreign pop cultures. With the development of personal computers and high-speed Internet, foreign cultural products such as imported TV dramas are flooding into the Chinese market through television and digital interfaces (Chamberlain, 2010). Exposure to foreign TV series has created a demanding audience in China (Fung & Ma, 2002). According to the 2013 report of CNNIC, the Chinese Internet population is the largest in the world with 591 million users and still rapidly increasing (CNNIC, 2013). Thanks to the file sharing technologies (e.g., P2PSearcher, BeyondSearcher, TSearcher, eMule, File Protocol) and web sites (e.g., http://tv.sohu.com/), Chinese people can also download the latest episodes of their favorite shows or enjoy online viewing on their personal computers. Among these foreign TV series, the American TV series are the undisputed leader in the international marketplace (Bielby & Harrington, 2005).

As an influential cultural entertainment form, the American TV series not only brings a lot of fresh audio-visual experience to the Chinese audiences, but also conveys American culture and values, which usually expresses a televisual version of modernity more intense than the current Chinese socio-scape (Fung & Ma, 2002). In these TV series, the images of the United States have been presented as a developed, democratic and free country. And the culture brought by these overseas TV series has triggered waves of American influence among Chinese audiences. In the recent years, the Chinese audiences have more choice to watch foreign TV series, thanks to the new media where they actually can break through the limitation of time and space, and connect with each other after watching every new episode. They will also show a higher enthusiasm in discussing plots or sharing comments among one another. However, there are unhealthy contents or values contained in American TV series that may have negative impacts on the audiences especially among the teenagers (Nestor, 2007). Due to this significant phenomenon, the prevalence of American TV series in China has aroused wide attentions of scholars from multiple perspectives. In such circumstances, American TV series and the audiences' viewing behaviors and attitudes are becoming very important and thus worth investigating.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Online viewing has become an important way for Chinese audiences to watch overseas TV series in this recent age. According to the iResearch Consulting Group ("Online video", 2012), there are more than 500 million Internet users in China in 2012, and watching video is their primary online activity. Barker (1997) argues that the TV series is "a narrative mode produced in a variety of countries across the globe" and "one of the most exported forms of television viewed in a large of cultural contexts" (p.75). Among these foreign TV series, the American TV series have been imported into China since 1980, which is the second year that a diplomatic relation was established between China and America (Jiang & Leung, 2012). However, comparing with Korean dramas and Japanese dramas, the popularity of American TV series does not rely on television but on the Internet. Looking at Kelly's study (2005), with the wide spread of inexpensive new technologies and enthusiastic fan-sub groups, Chinese audiences now have more access to foreign TV dramas. Peng (2005) explains this phenomenon further in his research. He states that since the convergence of the Internet and television, today's TV viewing experience are becoming richer than before, and the audiences can be "classified into several categories according to the kind of activity in which they are engaged and the level of their involvement" (P.18). According to his viewpoints, there are two levels of involvements, which are the

primary and secondary levels. The primary level shows that watching television is no longer a passive acceptance behavior. This is because technology has advanced in our modern era. Television and internet-accessible computer would be able to assist audiences to search and appreciate their desired TV shows and programs. These include broadcasting schedule, spoilers, insider information and gossip. Next, the secondary level shows that the Internet allows the audiences to create their self-interest platforms, which commonly include the fan communities and web sites. These platforms would then allow various fan-generated content such as reviews, critiques and fan artworks. "Viewers set up special forums online to study English dialogue, discuss plots and debate future developments. The popular '1000fr' forum has over 420,000 registered users, while more than 400 million browsers have passed through the 'YDY' forum" (Wang, 2008). This passion continued from online interactivity to offline activities. Added to this, the plot of Prison Break also has been a very popular one as obsessed fans begin to author fan fiction of it. Shanghai Translation Publishing House propelled this fervor by enhancing a "Chinese Novels for Prison Break" writing promotion (Li, Yea-Wen& Nakazawa, 2013, P.65).

By analyzing on the characteristics of the audiences watching foreign programs, Mills (1985) finds that the overseas programs will be more attractive to those young people who are more familiar with foreign languages or cultures. There are also some scholars who propose relative concepts to this phenomenon. Straubhaar (2008) illustrates the success of cultural intercommunion by using the concepts of "cultural proximity" and "cultural appropriateness." Shu (2009) also acclaims in her study that the development of globalization, the improvement of domestic economy and the enhancement of the Chinese aesthetic level have all contributed to lay a solid foundation of cross-cultural communication in China. She also points out that American TV series are presenting a hero complex, which is in accord with the pursuit of young Chinese people. Here we can see that the successful spreading of American TV series in China cannot be realized without the transition of Chinese contemporary society and culture.

Wen (2007) examines the changes brought by the integration of TV and networks, especially on the audiences' viewing behavior. Through the case study of the American TV series "*Prison Break*", she finds that the audiences will have more freedom under the new media environment. The intervention of technology makes more audiences break through the limitation of time and space. They can not only connect with each other, but also establish a sense of identity with other individuals through showing themselves and sharing common interests.

Li (2009) adopts a focus group method, trying to study different situations when Chinese teenagers are accepting the American sitcom *"Friends"*. This research reveals the aesthetic and critical level of Chinese teenagers in interpreting exotic cultural information. According to Huang (2012), the teenagers' basic understanding of society, their mastery of rules, their formation of the outlooks on life and values, more than 90% come from the new media. Here we can see that teenagers are the most easily influenced group. In such

circumstances, this research is becoming necessary and interesting, because teenagers are the present and future generation users of media.

In short, the prevalence of American TV series has become an amazing phenomenon that cannot be ignored. A large number of Chinese audiences watching American TV series online in fact represent a rise in a new type of social group. Thus, there will be certain theoretical and practical significances to investigate how the American TV series influences Chinese audiences at this stage.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The core objective of this case study is to gain an understanding of the intercultural communication of American TV series in China. Here I want to explore the following questions:

(1) What is the relationship between the audiences' socio-demographic information and their motivations or reasons for watching American TV series?(2) How do the Chinese audiences view American TV series? How do these hit TV series influence their lives and values?

Through answering these questions, I want to explore the target audiences' viewing behaviors and attitudes in the network environment. I hope by doing this research, I can not only detect the influences that popular American TV series may have on contemporary Chinese audiences, but also provide information that can be used for future research that studies foreign dramas which came or will come into Chinese TV series market as well.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

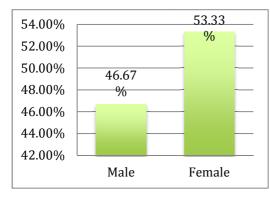
As discussed earlier, this research project will be concentrated on the intercultural communication of American TV series in China. In order to get a better understanding, this project will use a quantitative approach on the audiences' opinions through web-based survey. Data were collected through an online questionnaire (Appendix A), and the statistical analysis was offered by *Wenjuanxing* research suite. During the 12 days of data collection, a link to the survey was posted on Renren.com – the first Facebook-type and top social network site (SNS) in China, and on China's top 10 popular social networking platforms such as Sina micro-blog, WeChat friends' circle, QQ space and so on. The invitations posted on these websites explicitly informed potential participants that it was a study about the overall Chinese audiences' television watching habits and attitudes towards the American TV series.

People who agreed to participate in this study received the link directing them to a web page of the survey via private messages. After reading the informed consent document at the beginning of the survey, they filled out a questionnaire (see Appendix A) which included basic demographic questions such as gender, age, occupation, education level, and some specific questions relating to their own viewing experience and personal taste, such as their major accesses to American TV series, favorite genre, daily watching time, and viewing motivations. It also asked the audiences' opinions about American TV series, including their attitudes towards soundtrack version, the frequency of using social network. Moreover, this survey also investigated people's perceptions on how they view America, and the influences that American TV series might have on the Chinese audiences from various aspects. Through these questions, I want to explore how the American TV series influence the audiences' daily lives and values.

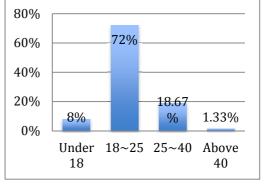
CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The survey was conducted for two weeks from Apr 9 to Apr 20, 2014. Of the 80 total responses collected, 75 were valid. First, the participants answered questions concerning their gender, age, education level and profession. The following data analysis was offered by *Wenjuanxing* research system. In all, the sample for the current study consisted of 35 males (46.67%) and 40 females (53.33%), there was not a significant gender skew. The majority of the participants (62.86%) were between 18~25 years old, and 14 participants (18.67%) belonged to the 25~40 years old, and 6 participants (8%) were younger than 18 years old age group. Only 1 participant was in the above 40 years old group. Thus, we can clearly find that the American TV series are most attractive for young adults.









Over half of (72%) of the respondents were students. Of these, 41 participants (54.67%) specifically mentioned they were undergraduate students, 17 participants (22.67%) were graduate students and 5 participants (6.67%) were

doctor and above. Other professional occupations included 6 white-collars (8%), 6 currently unemployed (8%), 3 research/IT personnel (4%), 2 workers (2.67%), 2 teachers (2.67%), a manager and a journalist. Taken together, through the two tables we may draw a conclusion that the American TV fans in China are largely comprised of young people, mostly university students and white-collar workers, with a high level of education and high income, owning more media and cultural resources, therefore their viewing interests and strengths are more concentrated.

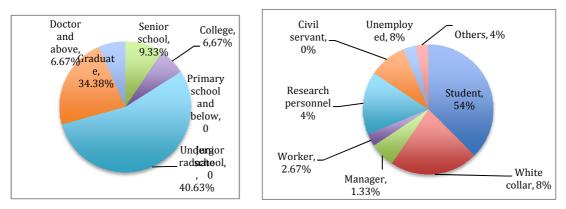


Table 2.1 Highest level of Education



All participants were valid fans of American television shows. Approximately 96% (72 out of 75) participants said they watched U.S. TV shows through downloading from the Internet and online watching, As for the rest, only 2.67% (2 out of 75) of the audiences chose television as their most frequently used way of viewing American TV shows and 1 participant chose renting DVD. From the table 3, we can clearly see that the percentage of the online viewing was obviously much bigger than the other channels, and had indisputably become the main way of watching American TV series for Chinese audiences.

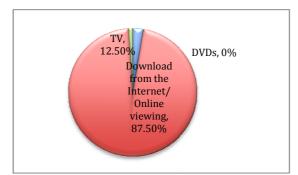


Table 3. The component ratio of the media use of American TV drama

When asking "how many hours do you spend on watching American 3.13% of TV series per week", among the total 75 people, only 2 people (2.67%) would like to spend more than 10 hours watching American TV series. There were 16% of the audiences who claimed they would spend 5~10 hours watching. There were 56% of the audiences who chose 1~5 hours and 21.33% of the audiences chose less than one hour. Here we can tell that most audiences will not spend a lot of time on watching TV, so that their normal work and life will not be affected.

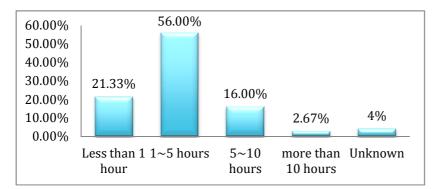


Table 4. Time spent on watching American TV series per week

From the table 5, we can see that there were 40 participants (53.33%) watching American TV series in order to "learning English", 36 participants (48%) were for "cope with stress from work or study", and 35 participants (46.67%) chose "looking for the audio-visual enjoyments". There were approximately 44%

of the audiences (33 out of 75) claimed they watch American TV shows just for killing time and 32 participants (42.67%) said they were for learning American culture. There were also 40% of people (30 out of 75) claimed that they appreciated the plots, production, actors, characters and costume in American TV shows. As for the rest, 30.67% of people (23 out of 75) said they were recommended by friends, relatives, collogues, classmates and so on, while 13.33% of audiences (10 out of 75) were recommended by websites, like online communities, BBS, post bar, blog and so on, while. There were 18.67% of the audiences thought watching TV series had already become a part of their lives and was an accustomed behavior, and 6.67% of people just for adding more topics to communicate with others. Only 1 person (1.3%) said sometimes he watched the U.S TV shows for relieving stress from the real world. Therefore we may state that more and more Chinese audiences are putting a focus on information acquisition and knowledge learning, and more emphasizing practicability when spending time watching these TV dramas. (Note: This is a multiple-choice question, so the sum total of the proportion is more than 100%.)

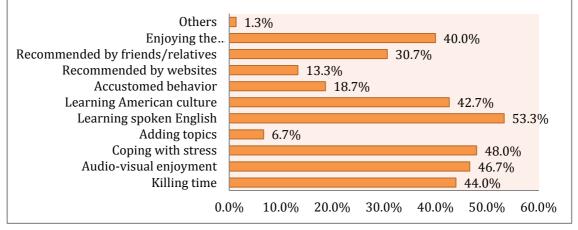


Table 5. Motivations or reasons to see the American TV series

From the table 6, we can see that among various genres of American TV series, the most popular was sitcom, 60% of people chose "sitcom" as their No.1 most attractive genre, such as "Friends" and "The Big Bang Theory"; Then followed the "police drama", which accounted for 57.33%, such as "CSI", "24 Hours", "Bones" and "Lie to Me"; The third most attractive genre was "sci-fi" that accounted for 28.13%, such as "Hero" and "Kyle XY"; The next most attractive genre was "teen and comedy drama" which accounted for 28%, such as "Gossip Girl", "Sex and the City" and "Desperate Housewives" and another 28% of audiences preferred "vampire dramas", such as "True Blood" and "The Vampire Diaries"; There were also 17.33% of people voted for "reality show", such as "American Idol" and "The Amazing Race";; The next genre was "medical drama" which accounted for 13.33%, such as "Grey's Anatomy" and "House"; There were 8% of participants said they like "legal drama", such as "Law & Order" and "Eli Stone", and another 8% of audiences chose Animations, such as "The Simpsons" and "Puss in Boots"; Only 3 participants said they preferred "disaster drama" more and 1 person comment he had no idea of the genres, just watching for fun. Here we can tell the vast majority of the audiences have obvious requirements and preferences for the genre of the American TV series, and their preferences are relatively concentrated. According to the previous analysis, most people watch American TV series for improving English level and relieving stress, therefore it's not difficult to explain why so many audiences would prefer sitcoms here. Not only because sitcoms can bring us a lot of fun and help us to escape

from pressures, but also because this format is based on situations that could arise in everyday life. Also, one episode is usually not longer than 25-30 minutes (Stafford, 2004), and will not seriously affect people's normal life (Note: This is a multiple-choice question, so the sum total of the proportion is more than 100%).

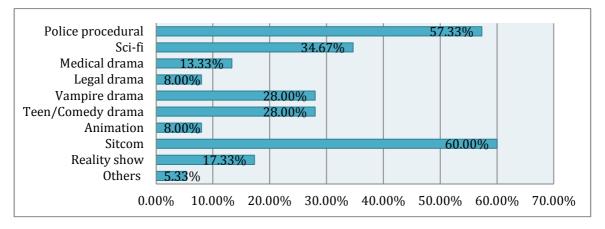


Table 6. The most popular genre of American TV series

As for the table 7, I aimed to investigate the audiences' opinions on the soundtracks added to the original American TV series. The reason why I design this question is that I find that currently, the hot American TV series showing on Chinese main video websites are all equipped with Chinese or bilingual subtitles based on the original versions. In addition, nowadays most Chinese audiences, especially the university students have received higher education and have certain ability of English skills, therefore English is no longer a barrier for most of them when watching foreign dramas. When asking, "do you agree that a soundtrack version is necessary", there were 37.33% of the audiences chose "disagree", and 33.33% of people chose "strongly disagree", only 21.33% of people said they "neither agree nor disagree". It is clear that the vast majority of

the audiences prefer the English original TV dramas, rather than the Chinese dubbing versions after the post-processing.

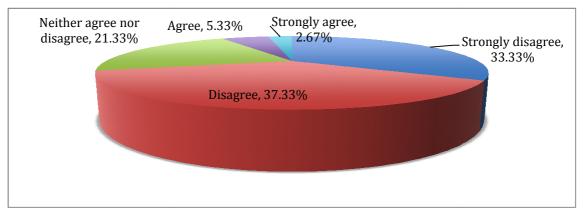


Table 7. Do you agree that a soundtrack version is necessary?

From the table 8, we can see that 50.67% of the audiences chose they "sometimes" share feelings or comments after watching an American TV series in social network, such as micro-blog, post bar, BBS, QQ space, etc. And 38.67% of the audiences chose "often", only 10.67% of the audiences chose "never". Here we can draw a conclusion that under the new media environment, most people will have a certain degree of communication through social network. They are no longer the traditional image of the passive audiences, but more self-directed selectors and participants. In addition, many websites also provide various services, such as reviews and rating system, TV and film recommendations, ranking list, chatting rooms and so on. All these have quickly spread the American TV series through network in a way that is totally different from traditional ones.

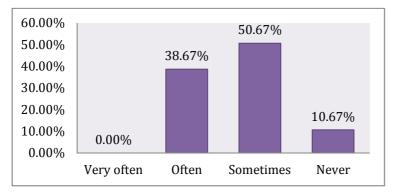


Table 8. The usage of social media after watching an American TV series

When asking "will you keep up following your favorite American TV series when the new seasons or episodes haven't been released yet", there are 60% of the audiences choose "yes, but I won't be too worried", at the same time, there are 25.33% of the audiences acclaim that they will adhere to catch up their favorite TV shows and "search for latest news and watch the latest episode for the first time", only 8% of the audiences said they will "watch the series all at once when most episodes have been released", and the rest 6.67% of the audiences choose "just looking for some temporal freshness and excitement". Thus, we can see that watching TV shows has already become a kind of lifestyle to the Chinese audiences, but they will not spend much time in watching TV dramas. What's more, with the popularity of Internet, their viewing tastes are also becoming diversified (see table 10). Not only just limited by American TV series, there are 44% of the audiences say they will "sometimes" watch other TV series like domestic series or Korean dramas besides the American TV series, while 36% of the audiences choose "often" and 13.3% of the audiences choose "very often", only 6.67% of the audiences say they "never" watch other TV series.

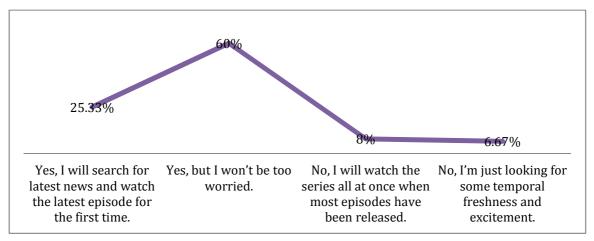


Table 9. Will you keep up following your favorite American TV series when the new seasons or episodes haven't been released yet?

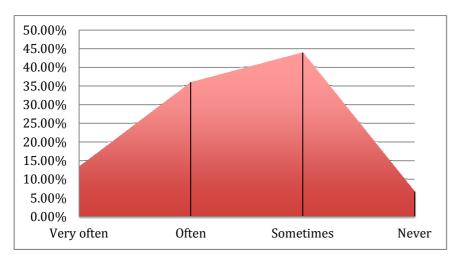


Table 10. Besides the American TV series, will you also watch other TV series like domestic series or Korean drama?

Through table 11, we see that most audiences learn about American culture through "watching the U.S. dramas" (40%), and some of them are via "introductory articles from the network, newspapers, books or magazines" (32%). For the rest of them, there are 9.33% of the audiences choose "news reports from television or radio", and 5.33% of them voted for "learning from school classes". While, we also get other answers through the online questionnaire (13.33%), such as "CCTV Channel 10 English programs", "come to America" or "make friends with Americans". Therefore, we can see for most Chinese audiences, watching TV dramas will be the most direct and convenient way to learn about American culture.

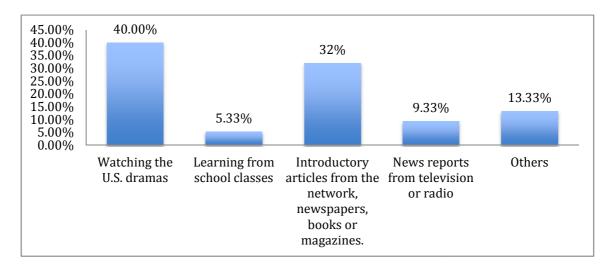


Table 11. What's your primary way of learning about American culture?

From the following table 12, we can clearly see the audiences' attitudes towards the "negative" elements that appear in the American television culture. There were 84.38% of the audiences thought it was "no wonder, since America is an open country", 12.5% of the audiences chose "I can understand, but I will selectively accept", only 3.13% of the audiences claimed they "really appreciate the American culture, no matter positive or negative". No one chose "totally unacceptable". Therefore, we can see that more and more Chinese audiences now have a tolerant attitude toward American multi-culture, and some of them are becoming sensible enough to absorb the essence and resist the dark side when confronted with a different culture.

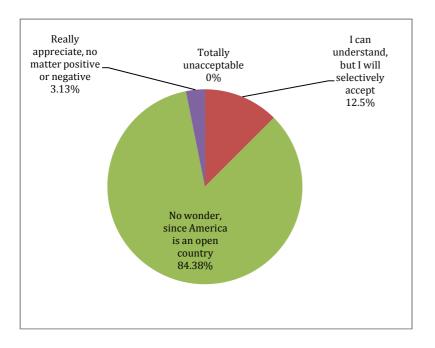


Table 12. Attitude towards "negative" elements in the American television culture

Collectivism and individualism are the important embodiment of the cultural value differences between China and the United States. Chinese society emphasizes collectivism values, and this is mainly because the influence of Confucianism and Taoism. On the Chinese way of thinking, the main features such as dialectical thinking and overall thinking, usually emphasizing the relations between personal and the society, and advocating to build such a socialist society, which may including collective interests above personal interests, or family honor higher than personal honor. In the guidance of such kind of values, a series of Chinese hit dramas such as "*Qiao jia da yuan*", "Shi bing tu ji", "Chuang guan dong" and so on, all reflect the spirit of Chinese culture of, and thus won a large amount of audience. However, compared with China's excessive emphasis on collective interests, the United States is focusing more on the values such as individual struggle, personal freedom, and individual success. In other words, the

American society advocate people should improve their social status through personal efforts, and finally achieve self-worth. In the popular American TV shows such as "Gossip girl" and "Desperate housewives", we can see these cultural conceptions. It is through these values which present a different foreign life picture that attract a lot of Chinese viewers. Therefore, when asking, "what do you think are the values regarding money as reflected in American television cultures?" There are 76% participants choose "free competition", the next goes to "hedonism" (54.67%), then following "money above everything" (30.67%) and "hard working" (26.67%). For the rest choices, such as "make great fortune overnight"(16%), "industrious and thrifty"(6.67%) both account for small proportions, only "reap without sowing" get none votes. Through the data, we may draw a conclusion that that Chinese audiences experience the culture shock more from the aspects of "free competition", "hedonism" and "money above all" reflected in the American TV series. Actually, the U.S. TV shows usually have strong commercial and entertainment atmosphere. For example, in the American TV plays "Gossip girl", we can see the wide variety of fashion goods and the luxury material life in the upper class of the United States, which often combine with the typical elements such as individual character and sexual liberation, etc. The protagonists usually need to dress up to attend various objective party, such as cocktail party, dancing party, dinner party and so on, and the ubiquitous limousines such as Hummer, BMW, Cadillac successively appear in the drama, which all construct a carnival atmosphere and actually exaggerate the real life of American. This kind of materialism in fact makes an illusion to the overseas audience that hedonism is the normalcy of American life. In particular, the hazard of materialism and hedonism will easily influence the teenagers who have weak ability of self -judgment, making them form blind admiration and esteem in American hedonistic lifestyle, furthermore form the wrong outlook and attitudes towards life.

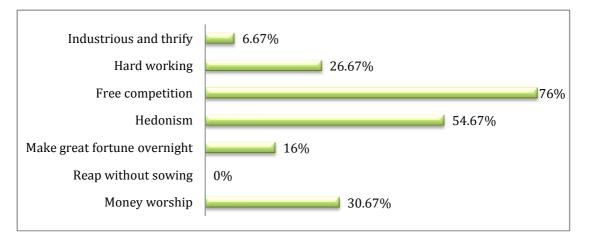


Table 13. What do you think are the values regarding money as reflected in American television cultures?

Through the investigation of professional view (see table 14), there were 72% of the participants thought the American television mainly reflected "personal development opportunities", while 57.33% of them thought the core value was "social reputation and fame". For the rest, 25.33% of the audiences considered "working conditions" accounted for a larger proportion and 22.67% of them voted for "altruism". Only "dedication and compliance with the rules" (12%) and "occupational stability" (6.67%) relatively occupied smaller portion.

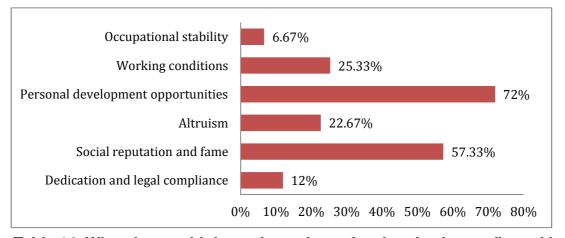


Table 14. What do you think are the main professional values reflected in theAmerican television?

With shallow social experience and limited cognitive level, some college students are easier to get influenced by the famous branded goods or hedonistic lifestyle in the American dramas. Besides, since the teenagers have no independent economic source, the gap between the TV and the real life will make them more inclined to get close and imitate this lifestyle. And this will eventually induce their desire for material enjoyment, and superficial understanding to the meaning of life and value. Through table 15, we can see that 44% of the participants claimed they "never" imitate the consumption and entertainment style in the American television series, and 38.67% of them choose "seldom". Only 21.33% of the audiences said they will "occasionally" doing so, and very few of them show they "often" imitate the lifestyle in the American dramas. Thus we can draw a conclusion that most young professionals can consider the lifestyle in the American dramas in a rational way, and will not get confused with their daily lifer, however, it should be noted that there are still some of them get influenced by the lifestyle in the U.S drams to a certain extent, and need us to take some

countermeasures such as strengthen the education on the students' views on the value towards life, or guiding college students to form correct view of value.

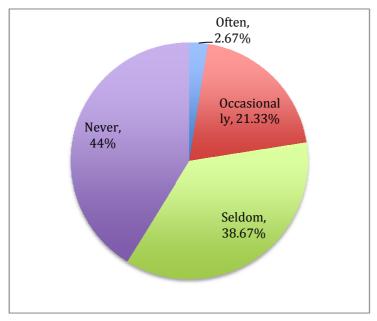


Table 15. Would you imitate the consumption and entertainment style in the American television series?

In the survey, when asking, "Do you think the optimistic, strong and brave spirit reflected in some American inspirational TV series can have positive influences on your values", there were 61.33% of the participants think they may "feel inspired only when watching dramas", while 40% of them said "yes, they can help me correctly understand sufferings and have a positive attitude to frustrations", only 4% of the audiences voted for "no, all the characters are fabricated and have no real significance." We can clearly see that some outstanding inspiring TV dramas can play a positive role in helping teenagers to stet up a positive outlook on life to a certain extent. And thus we can say that the American dramas in fact have multiple affects to the young adults in our country, which may includes both positive aspects and negative aspects, and need us to

have a comprehensive and dialectical attitude to the overseas introduced dramas,

and to become sensible enough to absorb its essence and resist its dark side.

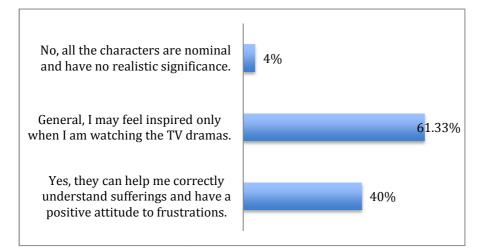


Table 16. Do you think the optimistic, strong and brave spirit reflected in some American inspirational TV series can have positive influences on your values?

According to this table, from the single column, there were approximately 21.33% of the participants (16 out of 75) thought the American TV series had a lot of influences on their "attitude to graphic scenes", the next went to the "attitude towards marriage/love" by 18.67% (14 out of 75), but basically had no influences on the attitudes to "politics" by the proportion of 25.33% (19 out of 75). For other aspects, the American television culture also had some influences on the attitudes to "interpersonal communication" (50.67%), "attitude towards friends" (48%), and had small impacts on their attitude toward "consuming concept" (50.67%). Overall, from the synthesis voting results (combine the results of "a lot" and "somewhat"), we can see that the influences of American TV series were most concentrated on "interpersonal communication" (64%) and "fashion attitude" (48%). Therefore, we may draw a conclusion that more and more Chinese audiences are adopting the

Western lifestyle, and are unwittingly changing their way of interacting with people

in real life.

Attitude \ Extent	A lot	Somewhat	Rarely	Not at all
Attitude toward politics	6(8%)	18(24%)	32(42.67%)	19(25.33%)
Attitude toward study/work	6(8%)	33(44%)	28(37.33%)	8(10.67%)
Interpersonal	10(13.33%)	38(50.67%)	19(25.33%)	8(10.67%)
communication				
Leisure lifestyle	8(10.67%)	36(48%)	23(30.67%)	8(10.67%)
Attitude toward family	7(9.33%)	25(33.33%)	30(40%)	13(17.33%)
Attitude toward friends	5(6.67%)	36(48%)	26(34.67%)	8(10.67%)
Attitude toward marriage/	14(18.67%)	28(37.33%)	26(34.67%)	7(9.33%)
love				
Attitude toward graphic	16(21.33%)	24(32%)	26(34.67%)	9(12%)
scenes				
Consuming concept	4(5.33%)	24(32%)	38 (50.67%)	9(12%)
Fashion attitude	9(12%)	39(52%)	20(26.67%)	7(9.33%)

Table 17. The extent of influences that American TV series may have on Chinese audiences

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Since the 1980s, when the American TV series was first introduced into China (Jiang & Leung, 2012), there have been various American TV series such as *"Gossip Girls", "The Big Bang Theory", "24 Hours", "Lost"* and so forth that rushed into China at an amazing rate through various channels-watching online, downloading from the Internet or transmitting by DVD (Appendix B). Through new media, American TV series are transmitted rapidly and widely among the Chinese audiences.

From the data analysis, we can clearly see that the American television media images have entered into the daily life of Chinese audiences and have certain influences on their lifestyles and attitudes. In particular, as a product of western culture, the American TV series are most attractive and influential to young adults. With higher education and higher incomes, the younger generations of Chinese are showing better-diversified value orientations, more curiosity and higher acceptance of the exotic pop culture, which have been shown in the following aspects. Firstly, viewing TV series can also serve as a means of gaining knowledge and social recognition rather than treating it like a kind of recreational activity. Viewers are motivated to learn the language, fashion and culture of the foreign country. Watching foreign TV dramas has become a way for Chinese viewers to enhance their ability to "modernize" their lifestyles. In particular, the more viewers seek learning, the more American dramas they watch. Secondly, the audiences are becoming more self-directed selectors and participants under the new media environment. They have more obvious requirements and preferences for the genre of the American TV series, and want to be more engaged in the information transmission process - giving their feedback, and resonating with others. Thirdly, the data showed that the increasing number of Chinese audiences now has a tolerance attitude toward American multi-culture and are unwittingly changing their way and habit to interact with each other in a western lifestyle. Though the survey we can see that most young adults hold a pastime or learning attitude when watching the U.S dramas. They will pay a high degree of attention to the characters' decoration, lifestyle, and they can make their own judgment or have relatively mature ideas in money, love, friendship and so on. In fact, some of them are even becoming sensible enough to accept the method on how foreign culture interact or when confronted directly. They have a rational attitude, and not fully eroded by the negative values such as "hedonism", or "money is supreme". Most of them can distinguish the reality and the TV dramas.

Through the above findings, this can be said that the network has promoted the popularity of American TV dramas, and has given birth to the growth of the American TV fans at this historic moment. Compare with the traditional TV series fans, the new rising fans group of American TV series are quite different from before in the way of searching, watching and discussing TV shows. In addition, most of these audiences are young and high educated, therefore, their choices and preferences will have a certain influences on the future direction of the Chinese entertainment and consumption culture. Since there is no audience rating system in China's TV drama market (Fung & Ma, 2002), various negative contents in American TV series such as graphical contents and violence scenes may become an attractive factor and also create problems for Chinese audiences, because these scenes are censored in the Chinese domestic TV dramas. Further research could be concentrated on the impacts on Chinese TV industry brought by foreign TV cultures. Plus, discovering what media practitioners should do to revitalize our domestic TV industry and to strengthen the media literacy education among young Chinese audiences would be a good topic for future research.

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APPENDICES

Cover Letter

Dear Respondent/participant:

I am a graduate student seeking my Master's degree in the Department of Mass Communication & Mass Media at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

The purpose of the enclosed survey is to gather information about the influences that the intercultural communication of American TV series that may bring to the Chinese audiences. In addition, there are a few questions that ask your opinion towards American TV series.

The survey will take 10 to 15 minutes to complete. All your responses will be kept confidential within reasonable limits. No personal information will be used, and only the cumulative data will be used for analysis. Completion and submission of this survey indicate voluntary consent to participate in this study. Only people directly involved with this project will have access to the surveys.

Questions about this study can be directed to me or to my supervising professor, Dr. Dong Han, School of Journalism, SIUC, Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone +1 (618) 536-3361.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in this research.

Name	Xuan Li		
Phone number	+1 (618) 559-8654		
E-mail (optional):	<u>xuanli@siu.edu</u>		

This project has been reviewed and approved by the SIUC Human Subjects Committee. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Committee Chairperson, Office of Sponsored Projects Administration, SIUC, Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone (618) 453-4533. E-mail: <u>siuhsc@siu.edu</u>

Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS

Please tick the appropriate choice or complete the answer. There is no right or wrong answer. Please choose the answer that most represents your opinion.

Part 1. Background questions

1.Gender :

- A. Male
- B. Female
- 2. Your Age (years):
- A. Under 18 years
- B.18-25 years
- C.25-40 years
- D. Above 40 years

3. Highest level of Education :

- A. Elementary school or no formal education
- B. Junior high school
- C. Senior high school
- D. Associate degree
- E. Bachelor
- F. Master
- G. Doctorate

4. Your Profession:

- A. Student
- B. White collar
- C. Manager
- D. Worker
- E. Research personnel
- F. Civil servant
- G. Unemployed
- H. Others (specify)_____

Part 2. Multiple Choices

5. What's your favorite way to watch American TV shows?

- A. TV
- B. Download from the Internet or online viewing
- C. DVDs
- D. Others (specify)

6. How many hours do you spend on watching American TV series per week?

- A. Less than 1 hour
- B. 1~5 hours
- C. 5~10 hours
- D. More than 10 hours
- E. Don't know

7. Motivations or reasons to see the American TV series:

- A. Killing time
- B. Audio-visual enjoyment
- C. Coping with stress
- D. Topics to communicate with others
- E. Learning English
- F. Learning American culture
- G. Out of habit
- H. Recommended by Websites, like online community, BBS, post bar, blog, etc.
- I. Recommended by friends, relatives, collogues, classmates, etc.
- J. Enjoying the plots, production, actors, characters and costume
- K. Others (specify)_

8. Which genre do you think is attractive for you?

(The classification of the following series in each column is according to Wikipedia and is for reference only)

Please rank the top three as 1, 2 or 3.

No.1 being the most favorite genre:

Genre	Rank Number
Police procedural: "CSI", "24 Hours", "Bones", "Lie to Me"	
Sci-fi: <i>"Hero", "Kyle XY</i> "	
Medical drama: "Grey's Anatomy", "House"	
Legal drama: "Law & Order", "Eli Stone"	
Vampire drama: "True Blood", "The Vampire Diaries"	
Teen and Comedy drama: "Gossip Girl", "Sex and the City", "Desperate Housewives"	

Animation: <i>"The Simpsons", "Puss in Boots"</i>	
Sitcom: "Friends", "The Big Bang Theory"	
Reality show: "American Idol", "The Amazing Race"	
Others (specify)	

- 9. Do you agree that Chinese dubbing is necessary?
- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Neither agree nor disagree
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly disagree

10. After watching an American TV series, will you share you feelings or comments in social network? Such as micro-blog, post bar, BBS, QQ space, etc.

- A. Very often
- B. Often
- C. Sometimes
- D. Never

11. Will you keep up following your favorite American TV series when the new seasons or episodes haven't been released yet?

- A. Yes, I will search for latest news
- B. Yes, but I won't be too worried.
- C. No, I will watch the series all at once when most episodes have been released.
- D. No, I just watch them when I can.

12. Besides the American TV series, will you also watch other TV series like domestic series or dramas from Korea, Japan, or Thailand?

- A. Very often
- B. Often
- C. Sometimes
- D. Never

13. What's your primary way of learning about American culture?

- A. Watching the American TV series.
- B. Learning from school classes.
- C. Articles from the network, newspapers, books or magazines.
- D. News reports from television or radio.
- E. Others (specify)____

14. How do you see the "negative" elements in the American television culture? (Money fetishism, hedonism, sex, violence, etc.)

- A. Totally unacceptable
- B. I can understand, but I cannot accept.

C. Not surprisingly. America is an open country, and we should have a tolerant attitude to their culture.

D. I appreciate the American culture very much, no matter positive or negative

E. Others (specify)

15. From the following options, what do you think are the values regarding money as reflected in American television cultures?

- A. Money above everything
- B. Reap without sowing
- C. Make great fortune overnight
- D. Hedonism
- E. Free competition
- F. Hard working
- G. Industrious and thrifty

16. From the following options, what do you think are the main professional values reflected in the American television?

- A. Dedication and compliance with the rules
- B. Social reputation and fame
- C. Altruism
- D. Personal development opportunities
- E. Working conditions
- F. Occupational stability

17. Would you imitate the consumption and entertainment style in the American television series?

- A. Often
- B. Occasionally
- C. Seldom
- D. Never

18. Do you think the optimistic, strong and brave spirit reflected in some American inspirational TV series can have positive influences on your values?

A. Yes, they can help me correctly understand sufferings and have a positive attitude to frustrations.

B. General, I may feel inspired only when I am watching the TV dramas.

C. No, all the characters are fabricated and have no real significance.

19. Do American TV series influence you in any of the following aspects? Check all that apply.

	A lot	Somewhat	Rarely	Not at all
Attitude to politics				
Attitude to study/work				
Interpersonal communication				
Leisure lifestyle				
Attitude to family				
Attitude to friends				
Attitude to marriage and love				
Attitude to sex				
Consumption ideas				
Fashion/clothing				
Others (specify)				

Thank you for your participation. If you need any further information please free to contact me at xuanli@siu.edu

A List of main websites and popular online American TV series

1. China's main American TV websites and forums

(Source from: http://blog.renren.com/share/246784296/4327690225)

- 1. YDY (伊甸园国外连续剧交流站): http://www.sfileydy.com/bbs/index.php
- 2. YYeTS (美剧论坛): http://www.yyets.net/
- 3. FR (馨灵风软影视论坛): http://www.1000fr.net/
- 4. PLX (破烂熊乐园): http://www.ragbear.com/
- 5. F6 美剧总部: http://www.friends6.com/forum/
- 6. 5286 字幕乐园:http://Subland.5286.Cn/index.php
- 7.飞翔网科幻论坛: http://bbs.flyine.net/forum-262-1.html
- 8. 我爱娱乐网美剧论坛: http://meiju.5ifun.com/
- 9. ZAZ 猪爱猪分享社区:http://bbs.pigZpig.eom/
- 10. 天天美剧: http://www.ttmeiju.com/
- 11. 火星 360: http://huo360.com/
- 12. 天涯小筑: http://tvfantasy.net/
- 13. MJ 美剧论坛:http://www.meijubbs.com/forum.php
- 14. 新浪美剧论坛:http://club.ent.sina.com.cn/forum-13-1.html
- 15. 美剧窝:http://www.meijuwo.com/
- 16. 看美剧:http://www.meijuwo.com/
- 17. 优酷美剧专区: http://tv.youku.com/us/index
- 18. BT 美剧: http://www.btmeiju.com/
- 19. 腾讯视频美剧专区:http://v.qq.com/topic/2012/us.html

20. 美剧啦: http://www.meiju.la/

2. Popular online American TV series in recent years

- (Source from: http://meiju.biz/mj/view-81.html)
- 1.《老友记》(《friends》)
- 2.《法律与秩序》(《Law & Order》)
- 3.《吉尔莫女孩》(《Gilmore Girls》)
- 4.《雪山镇》(《Ever wood》)
- 5.《迷失》(《Lost》)
- 6.《太空堡垒卡拉狄加》(《Battle star Galactica》)
- 7.《犯罪现场》(《CSI》)
- 8.《黑道家族》(《The Sopranos》)
- 9.《24 小时》(《24Hours》)
- 10.《越狱》(《Prison Break》)
- 11.《绝望主妇》(《Desperate Housewives》)
- 12.《邪恶力量》(《Supernatural》)
- 13.《紧急救援》(《Saved》)
- 14.《罪案终结》(《The Closer》)
- 15.《X 档案》(《The X Files》)
- 16.《美眉校探》(《Veronica Mars》)
- 17.《橘子郡男孩》(《THE O.C》)
- 18.《实习医生格蕾》(《Grey's Anatomy》)
- 19.《核爆危机》又译《小镇危机》(《Jericho》))

- 20.《罗马》(《Rome》)
- 21. 《The 4400》 (《The 4400》)
- 22.《兄弟连》(《Band of Brothers》)
- 23.《超能英雄》(《Heroes》)
- 24.《欲望都市》(《Sex and the City》)
- 25.《斯蒂芬·金的王国医院》(《Stephen King's Kingdom Hospital》)
- 26.《灵异妙探》(《Psych》)
- 27.《西部风云》(《Into the west》)
- 28.《超人前传》(《Small ville》)
- 29.《远古入侵》(《Primeval》)
- 30.《金牌律师》(《Justice》)
- 31.《识骨寻踪》(《Bones》)
- 32.《人间蒸发》(《Vanished》)
- 33.《六度空间》又名《命运锁链》(《Six Degrees》)
- 34.《犯罪心理》(《Criminal Minds》)
- 35.《豪斯医生》(《House. M.D》)
- 36.《三年二班》(《The Class》)
- 37.《嗜血判官》(《Dexter》)
- 38.《律政狂鲨》(《Shark》)
- 39.《美国偶像》(《American idol》)
- 40.《灵媒辑凶》(《Medium》)
- 41.《恐怖大师》(《Masters of Horror》)

- 42.《天赐凯尔/神秘男孩》(《Kyle XY》)
- 43.《篮球兄弟》(《One Tree Hill》
- 44.《星际之门:SG1》(《Star Gate SG1》)
- 45.《星际之门:亚特兰蒂斯 (Star gate Atlantis)》
- 46.《星际之门:宇宙(Star gate Universe)》
- 47.《今日大喜》(《Big Day》)
- 48.《表面之下》(《Surface》)
- 49.《小镇大事》(《Eureka》)
- 50.《流言》(《Dirt》)
- 51.《危机四伏》(《Sleeper Cell》)
- 52.《谈判先锋》(《Standoff》)
- 54.《鬼语者》(《Ghost Whisperer》)
- 55.《成长的烦恼》(《Growing Pains》)
- 56.《秘密行动组》(《The Unit》)
- 57.《末世黑天使》(《Dark Angel》)
- 58.《捉鬼者巴菲》(《Buffy the Vampire Slayer》)
- 59.《伪装者》(《The Pretender》)
- 60.《以防万一》(《In Case of Emergency》)
- 61.《丑女贝蒂》(《Ugly Betty》)
- 62.《海军罪案调查处》(《NCIS》)
- 63.《神探阿蒙》(《Monk》)
- 64.《兄妹》(《Brothers and Sisters》)

- 65.《绑架》(《Kidnapped》)
- 66.《波士顿法律》(《Boston Legal》)
- 67.《秘密部队》(《The Unit》)
- 68.《老爸老妈的浪漫史》(《How I Met Your Mother》)
- 69.《俏妈新上路》 (《The New Adventures of Old Christine》)
- 70.《情归何处》(《Men In Trees》)
- 71.《爱你到死》(《Till Death》))
- 72.《加里森敢死队》(《Garrison's Gorillas》)
- 73.《数字追凶》(《Numb3rs》)
- 74.《百慕大三角》(《The Triangle》)
- 75.《偷天盗影》(《Heist》)
- 76.《星际迷航》(《Star Trek》)
- 77.《度日如年》(《Day Break》)
- 78.《日落大道 60 号》(《Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip》)
- 79.《正南方》(《Due South 》)
- 80.《家庭战争》(《The War At Home》)
- 81.《人人都爱雷蒙德》(《Everybody Loves Raymond 》)
- 82.《白宫风云》(《The West Wing》)
- 83.《甜心俏佳人》(《Ally McBeal》)
- 84.《双面女谍》(《Alias》)
- 85.《急诊室的故事》(《ER》)
- 86.《费莉希蒂》(《Felicity》)

- 87.《母女情深》(《Gilmore Girls》)
- 88.《愚人善事》(《My Name Is Earl》)
- 89.《同志亦凡人》(《Queer as Folk》)
- 90.《六尺之下》(《Six Feet Under》)
- 91.《南方公园》(《South Park》)
- 92.《生活大爆炸》(《The Bigbang Theory》)
- 93.《别对我撒谎》(《Lie To Me》)
- 94.《未来闪影》(《Flash Forward》)
- 95.《霹雳游侠》(《Knight Rider》)
- 96.《终结者外传》(《Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles》)
- 97.《吸血鬼日记》(《The Vampire Diaries》)
- 98.《办公室》(《the office》)
- 99.《我为喜剧狂》(《30rock》)
- 100.《好汉两个半》(《two and a half man》)
- 101.《摩登家庭》(《modern family》)
- 102.《超市特工》(《Chuck》)
- 103. 《超感神探》(《Mentalist》)
- 104.《末日英豪》(《Early Edition》)
- 105.《行尸走肉》(《The Walking Dead》)
- 106.《尼基塔》(《NIKITA》)
- 107.《危机边缘》(《fringe》)
- 108.《权力的游戏》(《Game Of Thrones》)

- 109.《绯闻女孩》(《Gossip Girl》)
- 110.《美少女的谎言》(《Pretty Little Liars》)
- 111.《斯巴达克斯》(《Spartacus》)
- 112.《大西洋帝国》(《Boardwalk Empire》)
- 113.《欢乐合唱团》(《Glee》)
- 114.《灵书妙探》(《Castle》)
- 115.《客户名单》(《The Client List 》)
- 116.《绿箭侠》(《Arrow》)

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