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# Adolescents and the Mass Media

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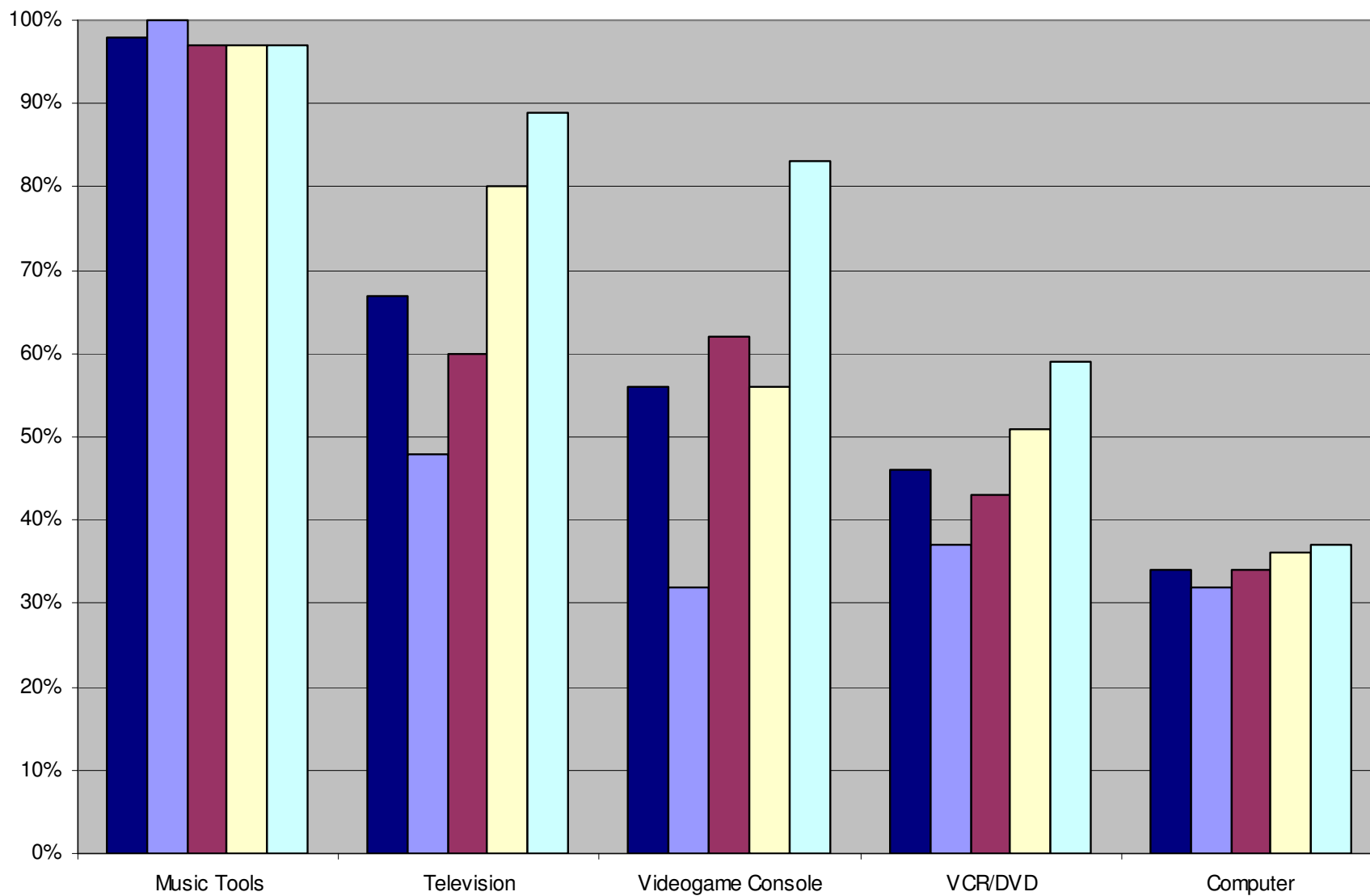
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# Lots of time spent with media

- n Teens spend **5-6 hours** a day with some form of media
- n Most amount of time with TV, but shifts to more **portable media** (music) and **teen-oriented** (movies, magazines) in mid-adolescence



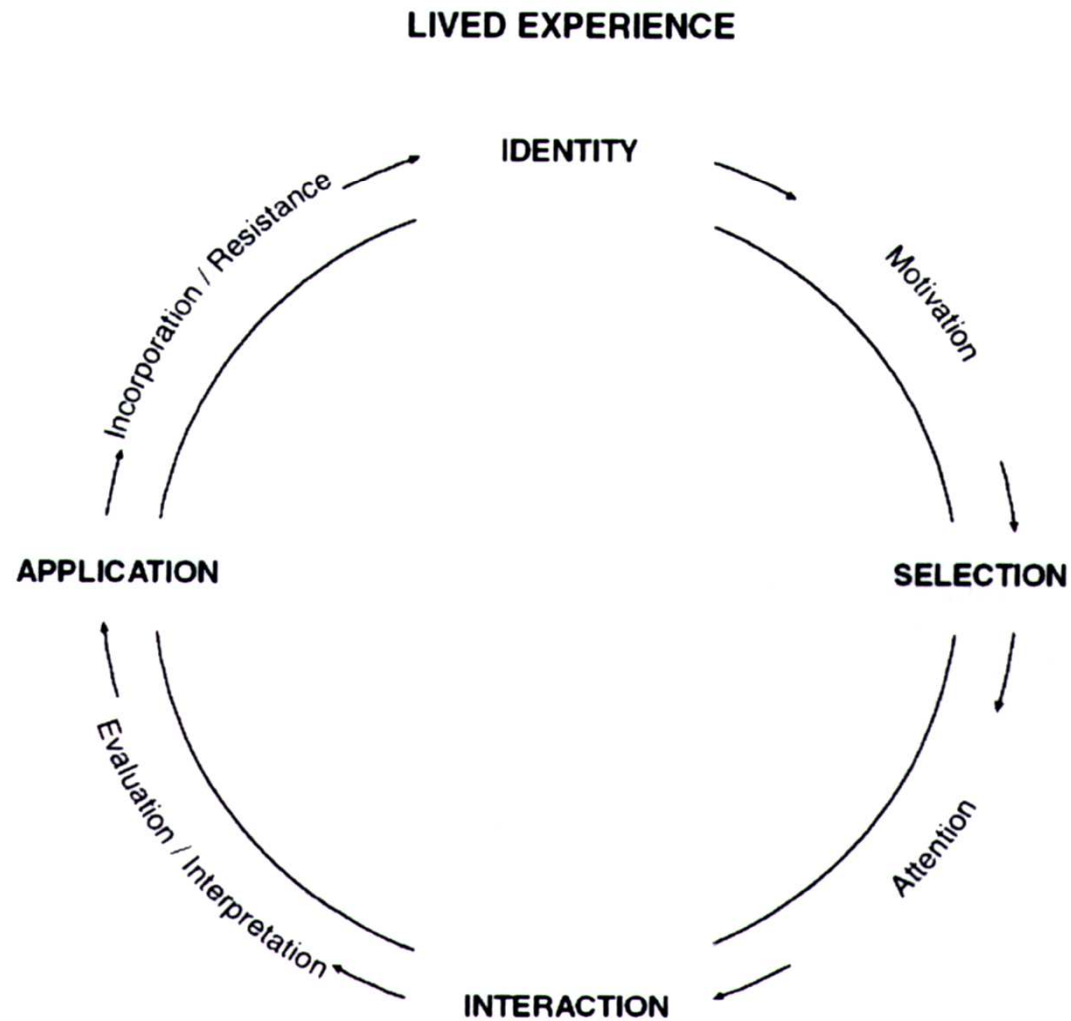
### Media Tools in Teens' Bedrooms



■ Overall ■ White Girls ■ White Boys ■ Black Girls ■ Black Boys

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# Media Practice Model

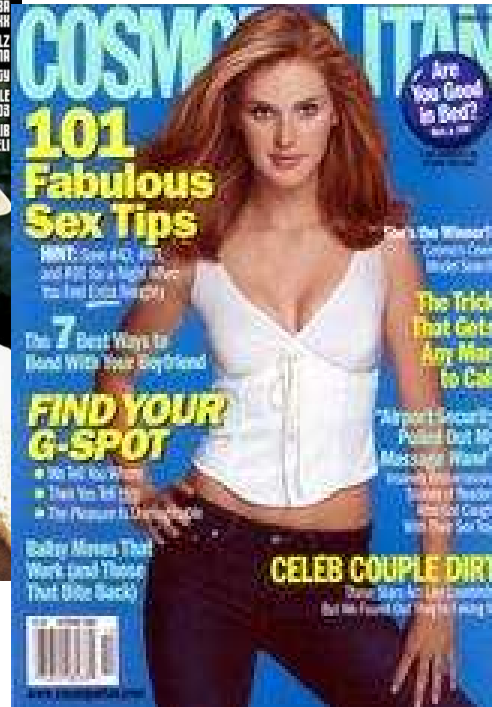
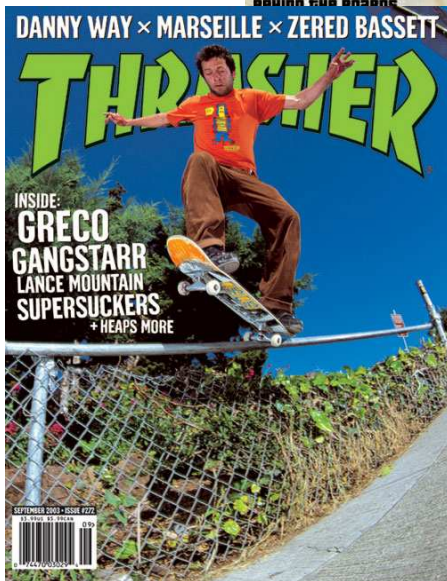
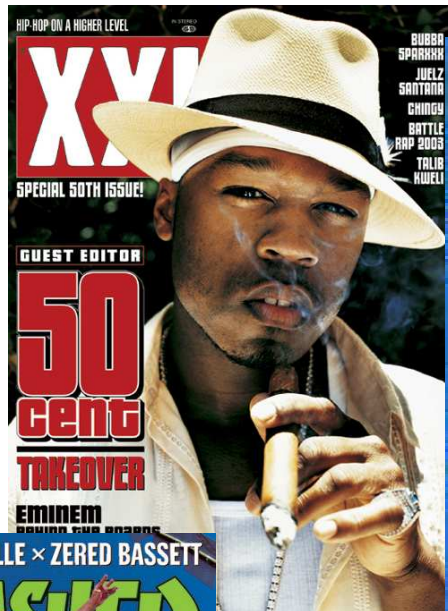


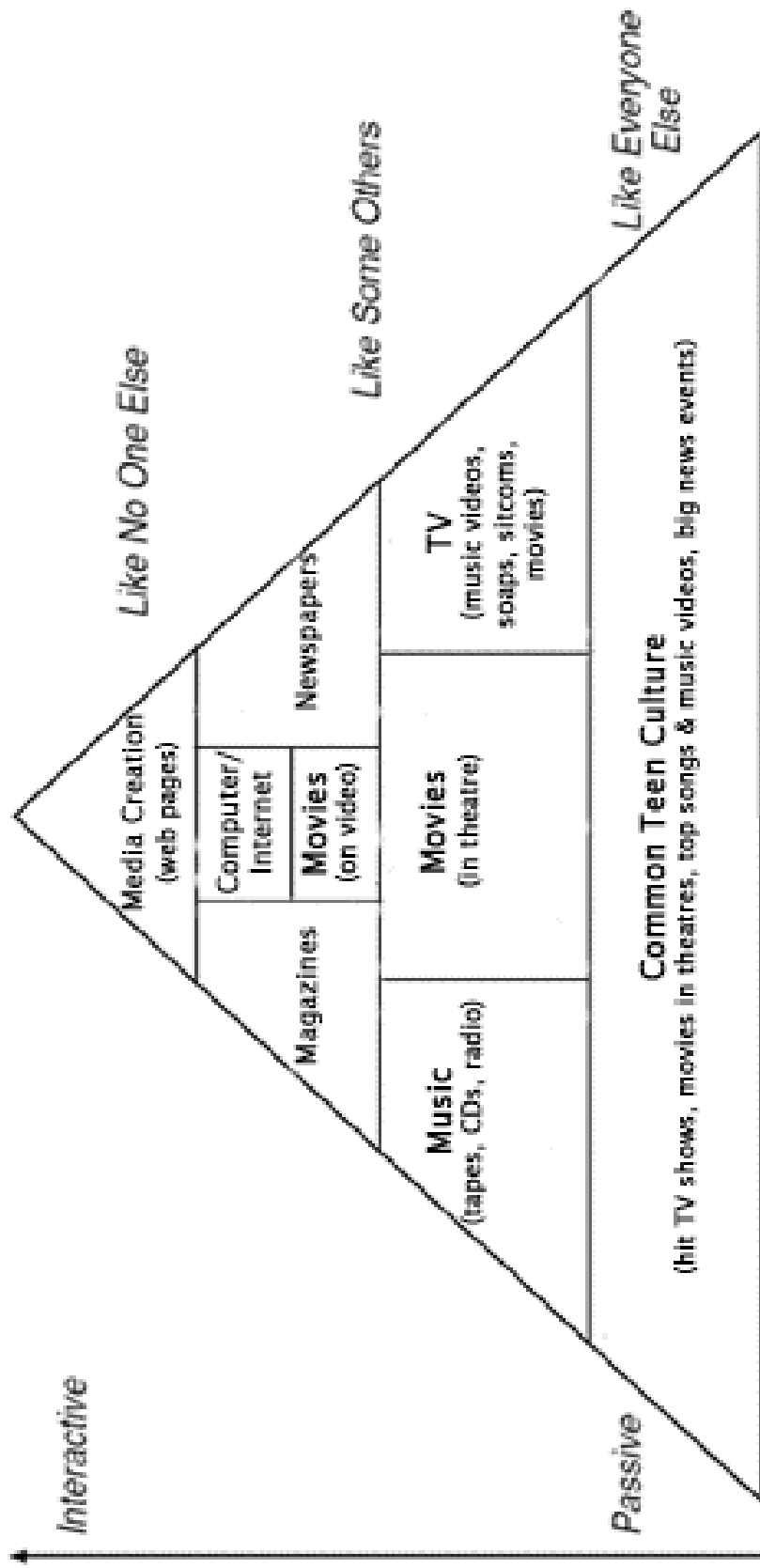
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# The Media Practice Model

- n *Identity*: Who am I and who do I want to be?
  - n *Selection*: Which media and which content satisfy my entertainment, information needs, mood?
  - n *Interpretation*: What does it mean?
  - n *Application*: How does this fit in my life?
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# Media as identity tool kits



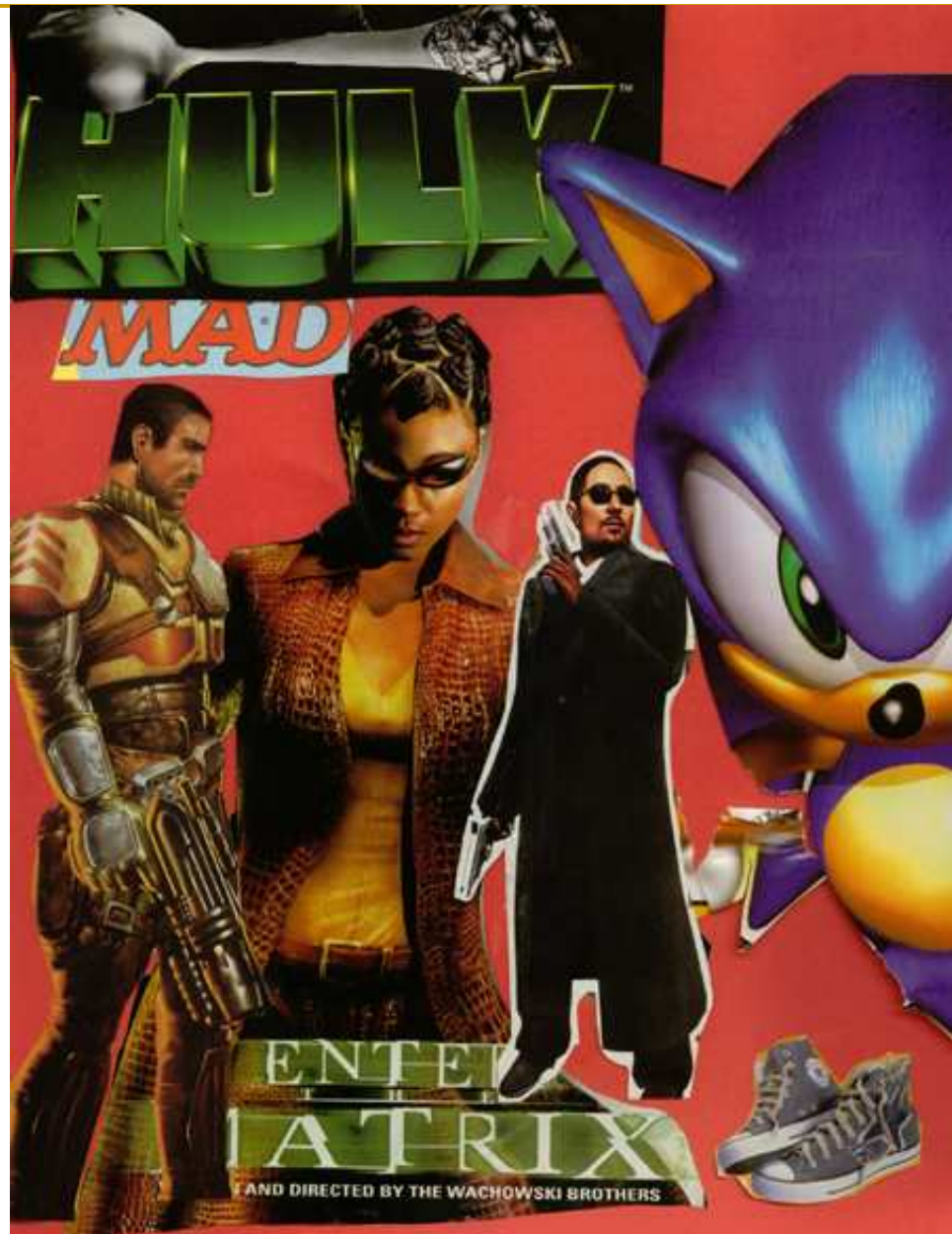


Adolescents' Media Diet Pyramid

# The “who am I?” collage of a 15-yr.-old Black girl



Who Am I?



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## Kinds of effects studied:

- n aggression/ fear/ desensitization
- n eating disorders, obesity
- n occupational choice, civic socialization
- n alcohol and tobacco use
- n sexual beliefs, behaviors



# Teens' sources of sexual information

- n Parents (uncomfortable)
- n Schools/ Religion (abstinence only)
- n Peers (learning from media?)
- n Media (by default?)

**sex-ed chapters out of health books**

content  
state law

se they won't know  
s.  
ay they are simply  
any," said Wayne  
unn High School,  
issued their copies  
Health Skills and  
is chapters 17, 20

and 21. The chapters, which were sliced out by a school volunteer and thrown away, deal with AIDS, HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases; pairing, marriage and parenting; and sexual behavior and contraception.

Terry Brinkley, who has a second-grader in the Franklin County schools, offered to cut up the books when teachers appeared reluctant to do so.

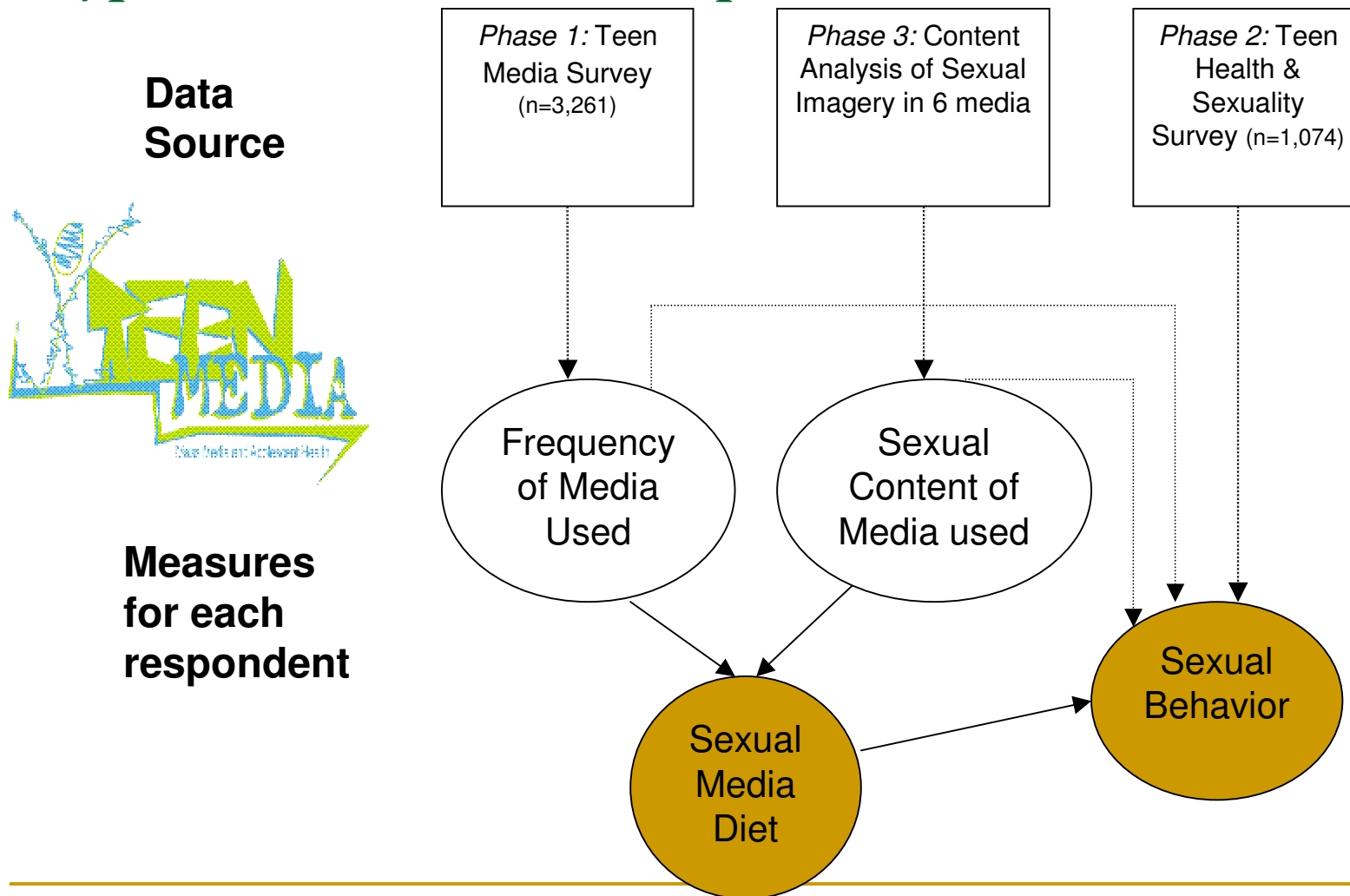
"People censor television for their children, they censor magazines for their children. What is the difference, is my question," Brink



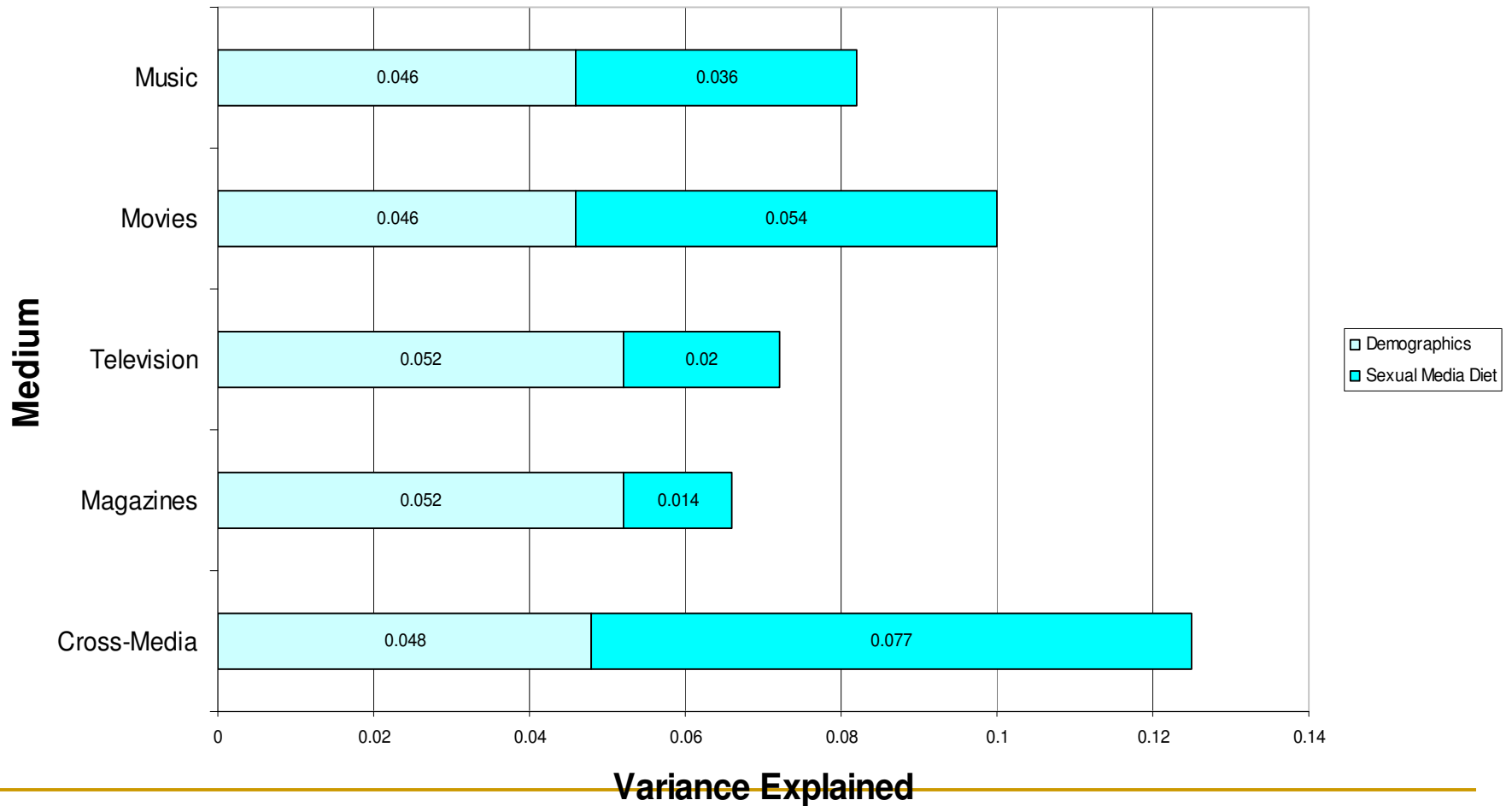
Chapters 17, 20 and 21 of this ninth-grade textbook were removed and thrown away last week by a volunteer at Bunn High School. The chapters include information on AIDS and contraception.

SEE BOOKS PAGE 16A

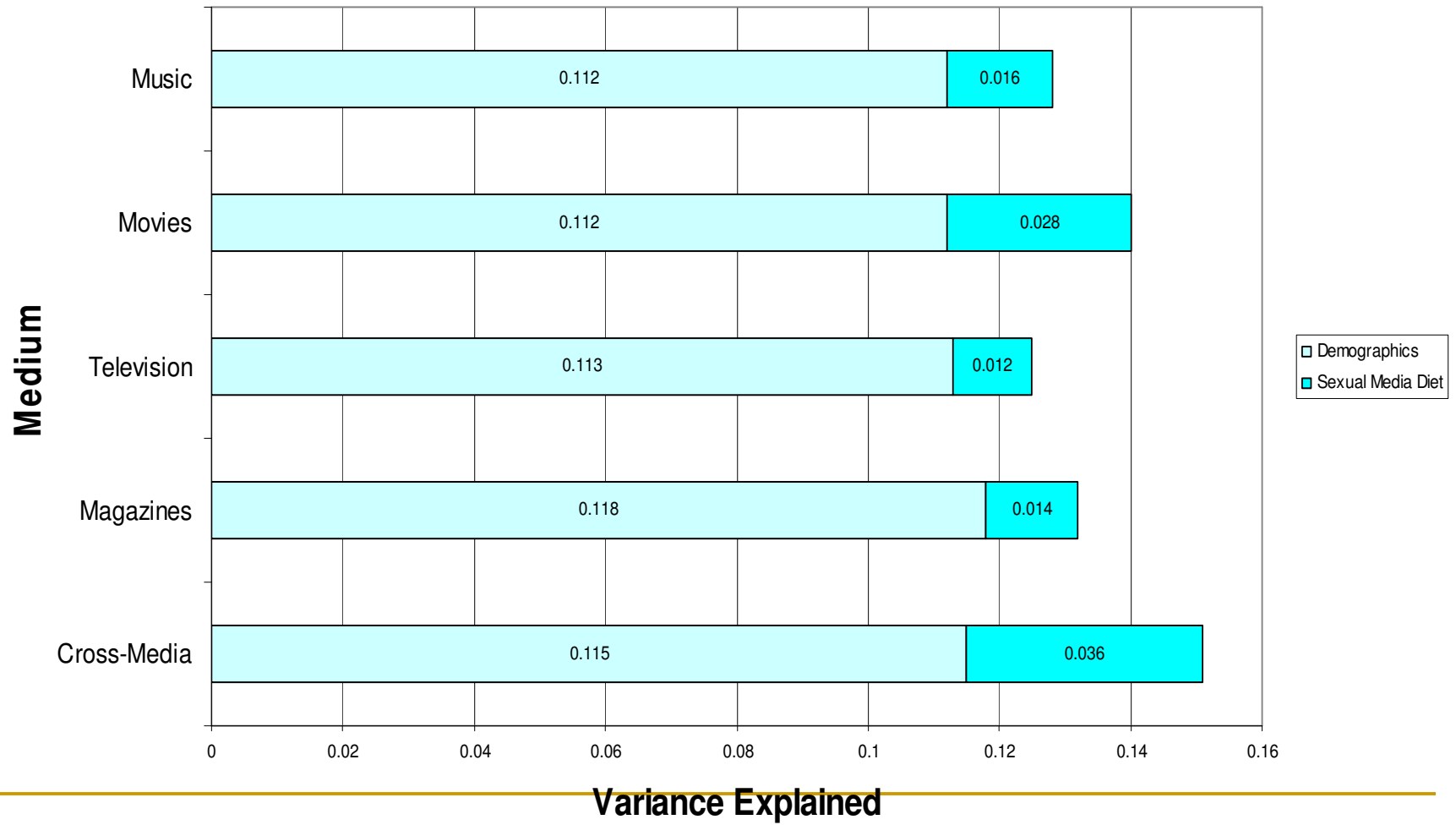
# Teen Media Study: Data Sources, Measures and Hypothesized Relationships



RQ#3: The greater the sexual media diet, the more likely *“light”* sexual activity



The greater the sexual media diet, the more likely  
*“heavy” sexual activity*



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# How does this work?

## Bi-directional process ?

- n Selection of sexual media content because salient
  - n Reinforces relevancy (urgency?)
  
  - n Provides sexual scripts, increases confidence
  - n Operates as “sexual super peer?”
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# Possible intervention: Media literacy

- n The ability to *access, understand, analyze* and *evaluate* the powerful images, words and sounds that make up our contemporary mass media culture. (Center for Media Literacy, 2002)
  - n 1. Analyze own media use (*media history*)
  - n 2. Understand, critique messages in relation to own values (*deconstruction*)
  - n 3. Engage the media (*critique, praise*)
  - n 4. Create own media (*websites, zines, music, videos*)
-

"Suddenly it feels like when it all began."



De Beers

## The Diamond Anniversary Ring.

A band of diamonds that says you'd marry her all over again.



A diamond is forever.



De Beers

## The Diamond Anniversary Ring.

A band of diamonds that says you'd marry her all over again.



A diamond is forever.

For once they've got the positions turned around to show how things really are. The woman can be on top too. A woman has as many needs as a man believe it or not advertisers. It doesn't always take a diamond either to "get in the mood." Some equality always looks good.

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## The future:

- n How do adolescents make sense of the mediated world in which they live?
  - n How do they integrate what they see, hear, read in the media with the other contexts of their lives?
  - n How can we help them use the media to live healthier, happier lives?
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