CALL-IN TALK RADIO:
A USES AND GRATIFICATIONS STUDY
OF LISTENERS, NONLISTENERS, AND CALLERS

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Communication

Summer 1998

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have had the unique experience of spending six scholastically challenging and emotionally fulfilling years at the University of Delaware. I would like to thank all of my professors and colleagues in the Department of Communication. This project could not have been completed without their help and support.

I owe special thanks to my advisor, Elizabeth M. Perse; whose commitment, encouragement, constructive criticism, and friendship has meant so much to me. I am deeply grateful for all of the opportunities she has provided and am inspired by her work. I would also like to thank Nancy Signorielli. Her confidence in my abilities has given me courage to continue my studies. I owe her a debt of gratitude for being a mentor and a friend.

Special thanks must also go to Douglas McLeod whose advice, intellectual enthusiasm, and humor has had a profound influence on my outlook on life. I must also thank John Courtright; I regard him in the highest esteem and appreciate his critical evaluation and pedagogical ability.

A special note of thanks go to Wendy Sampter, Charles Pavitt, Robin Vagenas, Myrna Hofmann, Laura Sowers, Kelly Kline, Dorothy Zeccola, and Rachel Raffile. Also,
thanks to my callers, without them this project would never have been completed.

Finally, this manuscript is dedicated to my family. It is because of the unconditional love and support from my parents, sisters, and Stephen that I am following my dreams.
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ABSTRACT

The study examined the reasons behind individual audience members’ use of call-in talk radio. It was expected that listeners of call-in talk radio would report stronger information-oriented motives and companionship motives than nonlisteners. In addition, it was predicted that listeners of call-in talk radio would report stronger endorsement of concept-oriented family communication patterns and be more argumentative than nonlisteners. Also, listeners would be more likely to perceive themselves as less mobile, less socially active, and less interpersonally interactive than nonlisteners of call-in talk radio. It was expected that call-in talk radio listeners would enjoy social experiences more than nonlisteners. Finally, it was predicted that listening to issue-oriented programs would be positively related to concept-oriented family communication patterns, whereas, listening to sports talk programs would be positively related to argumentativeness. Two hypotheses were supported; listeners of call-in talk radio reported stronger information-oriented motives for listening to the radio and reported stronger argumentativeness endorsement than nonlisteners. The study did not find support for deficit motivated assumptions of prior research. Instead, the findings suggest that radio listeners are not using this medium to fulfill a need, but rather positively, to promote an interest.
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Uses and gratifications research holds that people are active and goal oriented in selecting mass media. Researchers following the uses and gratifications perspective argue that in order to understand the effects of media content, we must understand why people use it. Accordingly, past studies have uncovered the functions of radio, television, and newspaper (Berelson, 1954; Greenberg, 1974; Levy & Windahl, 1984; Lull, 1980; Mendelsohn, 1964; Rubin, 1981a, 1983, 1984). In addition, they have studied the functions of more specific media programming such as religious television, the television program Sixty Minutes, and other news programs and soap operas (Abelman, 1987; Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rayburn, 1981; Perse, 1986; Rayburn, Palmgreen, & Acker, 1984; Rubin, 1981b; Wenner, 1982).

The purpose of this study was to examine some of the reasons behind individual audience members' use of call-in talk radio, a form of radio content that has grown in audience in recent years (Viles, 1992). This research will address three basic research questions that are yet to be completely understood: What are the reasons people have for listening to call-in talk radio? What are the differences between listeners and nonlisteners
of this format? Is listening to different call-in talk genres related to different demographic, social, and psychological dimensions?

Radio is an integral part of our lives. For many of us it serves as our wake-up call in the morning and our companion during drive time. We use radio while we work and while we play. Radio is our portable friend (Dominick, 1974). It is estimated that the average person spends more than three hours of their day tuned in to radio (National Association of Broadcasters, 1995). During the week, 197 million people will be listening to one of the 11,608 radio stations across the country (Broadcasting and Cable Yearbook, 1995).

As Altheide and Snow (1986) state, "Radio's appeal is that it serves both utilitarian or practical tasks and playful moods without immobilizing the listener" (p. 273). In addition, it has the ability to serve specialized audiences, one of these being the enormous group of call-in talk radio listeners (Altheide & Snow, 1986).

Call-in talk radio has captured the attention of radio users throughout the United States. Nearly 1,000 radio stations across the country use the talk radio format (Fineman, 1993). There are many different variations on the call-in format such as issue-oriented shows, psychology and health programs, sex talk, business and information programs, and sports shows (Rubin & Rubin, 1993). Even so, one commonality exists: People are listening.

The audience for Rush Limbaugh's conservative call-in talk show alone is 15 million strong (Fineman, 1993). If Limbaugh's issue-oriented format is not of interest, one can tune in to hear Dr. Laura Schlessinger on one of the 260 stations that air her
psychological and health program (Petrozzello, 1996). Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press (1993) in their study on call-in talk radio and United States politics found that one in six radio listeners in the United States tune to political talk radio programs regularly.

This area of study is important because of the growing inclusion of call-in talk radio in our lives. Call-in talk radio has had a definite impact in the lives of its listeners especially concerning politics (Fineman, 1993). With such a large audience, one must wonder what talk radio's appeal is.

**Uses and Gratifications**

This study is theoretically grounded in the uses and gratifications approach. This perspective, as explicated by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974), has historically taken a need-fulfillment approach. Essentially, uses and gratifications researchers believe that people have certain needs that they wish to gratify. People may fulfill these needs by the use of various communication channels, mass and interpersonal. This perspective assumes that audience members are both active and goal oriented when deciding on what form and type of mass media programming they will use. In addition, this perspective takes the position that all channels of communication compete with both one another and other sources of need fulfillment. If specific channels of communication fail to meet audience needs adequately, then viewers will actively seek alternative options (Katz et al., 1974).
Uses and gratifications researchers have conducted two main areas of research. The first is uncovering the reasons people have for using different media. Past research has shown that a viewer's motives for using mass media are important because they will influence the medium, the amount, and the content that he or she will use (Palmgreen, 1984). A second area of research is exploring social and psychological influences on these reasons. These influences affect people's motives for using mass media.

**Reasons for Using Mass Media**

Researchers have examined the reasons people give for using certain types, formats, and genres of mass media. When studying mass media one can examine a medium whether it be radio, television, newspaper, or magazine. Each type can be further subdivided into formats. For example, radio has several formats including news, country western, soft rock, and call-in talk radio. Within each format one may be able to make further distinctions within a particular genre. Call-in talk radio, for example, has five genres: issue-oriented, information-oriented, sports talk, sex talk, and health and medical (Rubin & Rubin, 1993). Researchers examining uses and gratifications can be broad and look at a specific type of mass media, be more general by studying a specific format, or may be very specific by examining a specific genre.

Much research has studied types of mass media. In an early uses and gratifications study, for example, Berelson (1954) examined the function that reading a newspaper serves for its users. He found that people deprived of their daily paper used the newspaper for information about and interpretation of public affairs, as a tool for
daily living, for respite, for social prestige, and for social contact. He suggested, though, 
"undoubtedly, different people read different parts of the newspaper for different reasons 
at different times" (p. 40), and that different motives might influence the particular 
newspaper and the content that an individual will read.

Winick (1988) studied people who were temporarily without television and 
examined the functions that this medium serves for its audience. He found that viewers 
watch television for a variety of reasons including: surveillance and information, 
relaxation and entertainment, conversation, social cement, punctuating the day and week, 
and companionship. In addition, Winick found that people actively decide to view 
television over other possible activities. In choosing to do so, the viewer, in a goal- 
oriented manner, selects a particular program or channel to fulfill a certain need.

Greenberg's (1974) study of the functions of television for young people surveyed 
726 English children ages 9 to 15 years old. He found that children viewed television to 
pass time, to forget, as a means of diversion, to learn about things and themselves, for 
arousal, for relaxation, for companionship, and as a habit. This study revealed that people 
learn at a young age that television is one source of need fulfillment. Children actively 
use this medium to gratify a variety of needs that may not be completely fulfilled by other 
means.

Other studies examining the uses of mass media have analyzed specific genres. 
McLeod and Becker (1974) studied television exposure to political campaigns. They 
found that people watch political television content for several reasons including 
surveillance, vote guidance, anticipated communication, excitement, and reinforcement.
Palmgreen et al. (1981) noted that people watch television news for such reasons as general information, decision utility, entertainment, interpersonal utility, and parasocial interaction. Rubin (1981b) observed that people watched *Sixty Minutes* for companionship, as escape, to seek information, for arousal, for entertainment, and to pass the time.

Still another genre of television content is the soap opera. Many television users are motivated to watch at least one of the many programs aired daily. Perse (1986) found that college students watched soap operas for exciting entertainment, out of habit or to pass time, to seek information, relaxation or escape, and voyeurism.

While most research has focused on factors of media use, surveillance, knowledge, escape and diversion, excitement, and interpersonal utility (Dobos & Dimmick, 1988), Rubin (1984) suggested that media use motives can be differentiated into two broad categories, instrumental and ritualistic. These two categories describe differences in the reasons for using television, the amount of time spent with it, and the content that is preferred.

Rubin (1984) found that people who view television for instrumental purposes do so to seek information. These viewers preferred to select programs such as news programs, magazine shows, and documentaries. Ritualistic viewers are more habitual and seek companionship, relaxation, arousal, and escape. These viewers preferred to view action-adventure programs and game shows. Ritualistic viewers watch the medium more and have more affinity towards television.
Throughout these studies researchers found that people cited a variety of reasons for using mass media. These reasons differed based on an individual's motives. Researchers have found that there are a collection of antecedents that influence viewer motivation and content selection.

**Antecedents to Viewer Motivation**

Uses and gratifications researchers argue that people's reasons for using mass media differ based on an individual's demographic background, social situation, and psychological character (Palmgreen, 1984).

**Demographics.**

Researchers have noted that people's demographic characteristics, such as gender, age, race, education, social class, work, and income, influence an individual's choice of and reasons for using mass media (Palmgreen, 1984). Hur and Robinson (1981), for example, in their study on British viewers' exposure to *Roots*, found that upper-class Britains were more likely to view the made-for-television movie than those categorized as working- or lower-class. Harper, Munroe, and Himmelweit (1970) also found gender differences in program choices. Boys preferred to watch sporting events and comedy programs, whereas girls selected human interest serials as their favorite type of television programming. Moreover, working class children in their sample preferred to view fantasy programs over reality shows.
Studies have also focused on the influence of demographics on the reasons adults give for using mass media. Conway and Rubin (1991) found that women were more likely to view television to pass the time than any other reason. Younger people were more likely to view television for escape and to pass time. Kippax and Murray (1980) found that radio was used by older individuals and by the less educated who listened for information, self-gratification and stimulation, and escape.

In a large-scale study that examined the demographic and psychological origins of cable television use, Donohew, Palmgreen, and Rayburn (1987) considered how age, gender, marital status, income, and education were related to 11 reasons for watching cable television: surveillance, local orientation, uncensored programs, reception, religious programming, all-day programming, family viewing, parasocial interaction, pass time, companionship, and variety. Their findings support the idea that demographic characteristics influence media use. Based on their analysis, audience members were grouped into four lifestyle categories: disengaged homemaker, outgoing activist, restrained activist, and working class climber.

The "disengaged homemaker" consisted of middle-age women who had low levels of education and income. They were ritualistic heavy viewers who used cable for social uses such as companionship, pass time, and parasocial interaction. The "outgoing activists" were the least satisfied with cable and in general found television less useful. This group actively used print media and can be characterized as single women who were educated, received a good income, and spent much of their time outdoors. The "restrained activists" were people who were older, educated, married, and had a higher
income. They used cable television to acquire information and can be characterized as strong instrumental users of mass media. The "working class climbers" were older, married, had lower levels of income and education, and used cable for a variety of reasons including parasocial interaction, surveillance, entertainment, and local orientation. These viewers would rather watch television than read.

Social Situation.

Researchers hold that social context influences reasons for using mass media. Although no one general theory has been formulated, researchers have found that an individual can be influenced by their social groups. Johnstone (1974) posits that "members of mass audiences do not experience the media as anonymous and isolated individuals, but rather as members of organized social groups and as participants in a cultural milieu" (p. 35).

This is especially true for adolescents who for the first time are looking to peer groups rather than parents when making decisions. Johnstone (1974) hypothesized that adolescent integration into peer groups would have an effect on the types and the amount of time spent with mass media. His results found that adolescents who are integrated into a peer group spend more time listening to the radio than adolescents who are not. These same adolescents also go to the movies more than the children who have not been accepted. On the other hand, adolescents who are rejected by a peer group spend more time watching television, mainly for escape.
An individual's social group will also influence a person's motivation to use the mass media for specific interests, such as political knowledge. Petttey (1988) found that people may be motivated to pay attention to areas of interest that their social groups presume are important. For example, if a person perceives that his or her social group believes that political knowledge is important then that person may use the mass media to gain more knowledge of politics.

Family has been shown to influence a person's motivation to use mass media. Lull (1980) described two types of families that are related to different media-use patterns. Parents of a socio-oriented family stress that everyone needs to get along. They teach their children to take into account other's feelings and to avoid controversy. These families use television for more social reasons such as background noise, companionship, punctuation, regulation of talk, illustration of experience, to reduce anxiety, agenda for talk, family relaxant, reduce conflict in home, model behavior, solve problems, reinforce roles, and family solidarity. A socio-oriented family will view programs that reinforce family roles.

Concept-oriented families stress the importance of expressing ideas, critical thinking, discussion of issues, and debate. These families use television to transmit family values, facilitate arguments, and to regulate children's experiences. A concept-oriented family will watch programs that facilitate family discussions.

Blumler (1979) suggested several other ways that social influences may be reflected in media use. An individual's "life-cycle position" or their place within "the social structure" may influence the satisfaction that someone receives from different
media and therefore influence the type and content of media that they select (p. 27).

Liberating elements of life position, such as membership in an organization, may lead individuals to become more involved with media. Lack of opportunities, such as independent mobility, may lend people to use media to fill time or compensate for lack of interaction. Rosengren and Windahl (1972), for example, found that fewer opportunities for social interaction led Swedish television viewers to watch more television because of interest in the people on the programs.

Life position is also reflected in contextual age, or people's perceptions about their physical health, life satisfaction, economic security, mobility, social activity, interpersonal interaction, and economic security. The physical health dimension concerns people's perceptions about their physical health. Interpersonal interaction reflects the perceived contact that a person has with others and includes feelings of loneliness. Mobility assesses perceptions about a person's ability to travel and be independent of others. Life satisfaction deals with an individual's happiness. Social activity examines a person's perceptions about his or her ability to participate in outdoor activities. Economic security evaluates a person's financial situation.

Rubin and Rubin (1982) found that these dimensions are related to television viewing patterns and program selection. People with high interactive levels through interpersonal communication and social activity are more likely to view music-variety programs, daytime serials, and talk interview shows. Individuals with high life satisfaction and self-reliance are more likely to have low levels of television affinity and
spend fewer daytime hours watching television. When they do watch they tend to prefer sports programs, action adventures, and comedy shows.

**Psychological Variables**

Psychological variables are powerful agents of motivation. McGuire (1974) summarized 16 psychological approaches that explain underlying motivation to use mass media. The approaches considered psychological reaction to internal pressures and personality influences on motivation. Conway and Rubin (1991) built on McGuire's ideas and considered several psychological variables involved in television viewing motivation. They found that anxiety, or negative tension, helped explain why some people use television to pass time, escape, and enhance status. If a person was anxious they would use the television to release tension. A sensation seeking disinhibition dimension reflected a person's stimulation level, facilitated motives such as pass time and escape. In addition, a creativity self-expression factor assisted in explaining why audience members use this medium for relaxation and for information seeking. Lastly, an assertiveness factor, or need for success and control, helped explain status-enhancement motivation.

Harper, Munro, and Himmelweit (1970) examined the connection between children's personality traits and their television program preferences. They found that psychological determinants such as fearfulness and self-esteem were related to program preferences. For example, children in the study who were less intelligent than the
average as a group preferred westerns and children's programs over other television content.

Studies have shown that demographic, social, and psychological factors have an effect on a person's motivation to use mass media. In turn an individual's motivation to use mass media will influence what media he or she selects. When examining why people spend so much time listening to call-in talk radio, it is important to examine how these three areas influence the use of this genre of radio.

**Radio**

Ninety-six percent of all people ages 12 and older listen to approximately 22 hours of radio a week. Radio is heard in the home, with more than 5.6 radio receivers in the average United States household, and in the car, with four out of five adults listening in their cars weekly (National Association of Broadcasters, 1995). Why are individuals so attracted to this medium? Radio stands out for several reasons. First, radio is the only mass medium that "follows an exact linear progression of time, keeping pace with the listener's sense of real time throughout the day (Altheide & Snow, 1986, p. 273)."

Therefore, listeners can always tune in to hear the latest music, news, weather, and traffic report. Other mass media, television, newspaper, and magazines, are not as up-to-the minute as radio. Second, through specialized programming, radio has specific appeals to different groups of people. Radio has developed a diverse range of radio formats to satisfy almost every one's preferences. With so many different radio formats, listeners have the opportunity to choose to tune to those stations and programs that reflect their
individual interests. Listeners may have similar reasons for listening to different radio formats, but demographic, social, and psychological dimensions may influence an individual's decision to listen to a specific radio format. Third, radio has the ability to affect community behavior (Crittenden, 1971). This is especially true when talking about the political behavior of audience members. Radio has the ability to become an open mike forum where individuals within a society can express opinions, legitimize actions, and mobilize fellow listeners (Crittenden, 1971). Lastly, radio is a versatile medium. Not only does radio speak to users, but it also speaks with listeners. The reasons people do or do not listen to this medium may be linked to the unique attributes of radio.

Although radio is a popular mass medium, current research, for the most part, has ignored this medium. The uses and gratifications perspective can provide needed information on the reasons why radio is still pervasive in our society.

The uses and gratifications perspective maintains that people are active and goal oriented when deciding on how they gratify unfilled needs (Katz et al., 1974). Examining different radio formats will allow researchers to gain more insight to how powerful and fulfilling this medium is. With the amount of people using this medium and the time spent, researchers must examine the reasons and motivations behind radio use.

Mendelsohn (1964) stated that "the importance of radio lies more in its ability to fulfill certain psychological needs than in the amount of time that is spent with the medium" (p. 247). Mendelsohn found that radio serves several important functions for listeners. People listen to the radio to bracket their day or as a part of their daily routine. Others listen for companionship, while they complete boring tasks or to combat
loneliness. People also listen to enhance or change their moods. Radio acts as a social lubricant because it provides something for listeners to talk about with others. Also, radio serves the function of conveying news and information to its audience. People use the radio to be informed of the important events of the day as an outlet for vicarious participation in newsworthy happenings.

Mendelsohn (1964) also stated that individual stations can serve one of four basic functions: utilitarian information and news, active mood accompaniment, release from psychological tension and pressure, and friendly companionship. He maintained that when a person listens to a station for one of these needs it is likely that he or she will not listen to that station for the other functions. His assertion may lend support to the idea that individuals are goal oriented in selecting specific media content to fulfill certain needs. The motivation to select particular radio content will influence the stations and program to which a person tunes.

Listening to the radio is an individual experience. So individual characteristics such as demographics, social, and psychological factors influence a person's motivation to use radio. Herzog (1944) conducted one of the first uses and gratifications study of the radio to explore how these factors influenced who listened to daytime radio serials.

Herzog (1944) found several differences between serial radio listeners and nonlisteners. Compared to nonlisteners, serial listeners were most likely to live in rural areas, less likely to vote and participate in political campaigns, preferred to read mystery novels, disliked historical novels, and spent more time during the day using radio.
Moreover, listeners who were less educated believed that these serials offered more advice to use in their daily lives.

One reason for people's attraction to radio is the personal relationship that radio stations and on-air hosts maintain with listeners (Altheide & Snow, 1979). This association has allowed radio to be a vehicle for informal social and cultural feedback and has helped to legitimize the views expressed on this medium (Altheide & Snow; Moss & Higgins, 1986). One format of radio that has seen a recent resurgence in popularity is call-in talk radio (Viles, 1992).

Radio is unique, one can tune in 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to one of the almost 12,000 stations across the country. The different radio formats allow people to tailor their listening to their individual needs. It is ever-changing with new formats emerging regularly and others dying out or being reborn. For example, the disco format was popular in the 1970s, died in the 1980s, and is now being aired nationally in the 1990s. Radio is aired on a predominantly local level, which means that radio stations are in tune and responsive to listener interests. With this, radio is a national force, setting the pace for the entire country. The staying power of this medium is one indication of its uniqueness and importance within a culture.

Call-in Talk Radio

In the past, radio stations believed that in order to be successful using the call-in talk format it was necessary to carry only local programs and air them during the day time (Marr, Brewer, & Eastman, 1993). Today with more than 1,000 station using this format
and airing nationally broadcast programs 24 hours a day, talk stations have found that they can successfully attract large listening audiences (Fineman, 1993, Rust, 1995). Several different genres of call-in talk radio exist including: issue-oriented shows, radio psychology and health, sex talk, sports, and business and information programs (Rubin & Rubin, 1993).

Issue-Oriented Programming

Hosts of issue-oriented shows know that audience members want to listen to and participate in discussions of local and national concerns. Programs of this nature take on a "town-meeting" quality where it is the responsibility of on-air personalities to facilitate and maintain a lively conversation with listeners on the most relevant topics of the day (Barone & Schrof, 1990; Rubin & Rubin, 1993). Audience members are encouraged by the host to call in with opinions and questions. Often, outside guests are invited on these programs to lend expertise to the exchange of ideas (Andreasen, 1985). Although numerous issue-oriented programs discuss topics ranging from community problems to national concerns, many are political in nature (Fineman, 1993).

Several of these programs maintain large and loyal audiences. The Times Mirror Center for the People and The Press's (1993) extensive study found that 61% of the sample had listened to at least one issue-oriented radio program; 42% said that they listened sometimes, and 23% said that they listened either today or yesterday. This means that one in six respondents listens regularly to talk radio and that half of the United States population listens frequently.
Rush Limbaugh speaks to more than 15 million listeners a week and is said to be America's highest rated host on call-in talk radio (Brewer & Brewer, 1992; Fineman, 1993). Larry King has more than 8 million listeners and can be heard on more than 355 radio stations across the United States (Brewer & Brewer, 1992; Fineman, 1993). Howard Stern boasts an audience of at least 4 million listeners and Don Imus and Bob Grant each have in excess of 1 million listeners (Andreasen, 1985; Fineman, 1993). Many of these hosts have a strong influence on public opinion and audience comments are taken seriously by those in politics (Fineman, 1993).

Radio Psychology and Health Programs

Radio psychology and health programs have been growing in numbers during the last few years. Hosts answer audience questions in a variety of areas including family, medical, and health. Many of these programs are syndicated nationally and maintain very loyal audiences. Dr. Laura Schlessinger, a psychotherapist who can be heard on over 220 stations across the United States and Canada, receives 60,000 calls a day (Petrozzello, 1996) although only 10 to 14 callers actually speak to the doctor during her daily 2-hour program (Marino, 1995). Other hosts that are heard nationally are Dr. Dean Edell, whose program is aired on over 300 radio stations, Dr. Harvey Ruben, who gives advice on family matters to his listeners (Brewer & Brewer, 1992), and Dr. Joy Browne, who has a listening audience of 2 million (Petrozzello, 1996).
Sex Talk

Sex talk programs encourage audience members to call-in and ask any questions that they have concerning sex and relationships. In the past, this format was called "topless" radio and generated much controversy (Carlin, 1976). In the 1970s, these programs were targeted by the Federal Communication Commission for violating obscenity statutes. Now that 25 years have passed and people's acceptance of sex talk has increased, these programs have once again begun to attract audiences. Radio hosts such as Myrna Lamb and Lee Mirabal discuss sexual topics during their variety talk shows. Doctor Judy, a clinical psychologist and sex therapist, targets her program to young adults and their problems. Dr. Drew Pinsky and Adam Carolla receive 2,000 calls a night, with the majority of callers under 25 years of age (Petrozzollo, 1996).

Sports

Call-in sports talk programs are no longer aired only during late night and early morning hours but rather can be heard throughout the day and especially during drive time. These shows are aired in every major city and are also very popular in smaller markets (Norman, 1990). Twenty-four hour sports channels, such as New York's WFAN and Philadelphia's WIP and WGMP, have found that they can attract a large audience of loyal listeners. There are many nationally syndicated programs such as "Costas Coast to Coast" and the "Fabulous Sports Babe." Hosts of these programs encourage listeners to discuss any topic that is of interest, which allows for a spontaneous conversation of any and all of the major happenings in the world of sports (Norman, 1990). Although only
2% of the audience of these programs ever have a chance of being heard, those who have a chance to speak give these shows a sense of community (Norman, 1990). Topics of conversation focus on "our team." Individuals call to talk about the coaching and playing and how it influences the game. It is as if each caller believes that they are a part of the team, being a fan gives audience members a sense of community.

**Business and Information**

Radio listeners tune in daily to talk radio programs that provide a variety of information on areas such as business and finance, real estate, auto care, food, home fix-it, and more. These programs give the average person a chance to receive free advice from experts and is seen as a valuable source of practical information (Barone & Schrof, 1990).

Business and financial programs can be heard everyday through both nationally syndicated and local programming. Bruce Williams reaches over 5 million listeners each day (Barone & Schrof, 1990). His radio show allows callers the chance to ask financial questions ranging from how to save for college through retirement (Reier, 1988). The Dolans, a husband and wife financial team, give audience members advice on stocks, taxes, and real estate (Brewer & Brewer, 1992). Others, such as Bob Brinker, Edward Schwartz, and Vera Gold provide financial advise to radio listeners.

One call-in talk radio program that has seen huge success is "Car Talk," a national broadcast show on public radio hosted by brothers Tom and Ray Magliozzi. This program answers automotive questions from audience members. Other hosts airing
successful information shows include: Michael Crose, host of "American Lawn and Garden Report," John Patch of "Talkin' Pets," Jackie Olden, of "In the Kitchen," and Michael Feldman of "Whad'ya Know" (Brewer & Brewer, 1992).

**Reasons for Listening to Call-in Talk Radio**

Much of past research on call-in talk radio has focused on callers to talk radio, especially their reasons for listening and calling (Turow, 1974). But studies have found that only 2 to 3% of all individuals trying to speak on the radio are actually selected (Norman, 1990, Times Mirror, 1993). It is perhaps more important to study the people who are not calling but rather are listening. Although there has been research that has tried to distinguish listeners from callers (Armstrong & Rubin, 1989), there are no studies that compare listeners and the nonlisteners of this format. Who are the people who enjoy listening to call-in talk radio and how are they different from those who do not care to participate in the discussion of issues and the dispersion of information of a wide variety of topics.

My first research question was: Why do people listen to call-in talk radio? This question follows years of research from the uses and gratifications perspective in that it looks at the motives driving call-in talk radio listeners. Some of the past research in this area has tried to answer the question of why do people watch certain types of television viewing, such as daytime serial television or television news (Miyazaki, 1981; Levy, 1979). Asking why people listen to call-in talk radio follows this line of research.
Researchers maintain that the need for communication and companionship may be a strong reason for listening to call-in talk radio. Avery, Ellis, and Glover (1978) found that individuals see talk radio as a source of information and as a channel to express themselves. For many of their respondents, call-in talk radio was seen as "a window on the world" (p. 16). Hosts and callers lend support to one another and listening to these programs was an important part of an individual's daily routine. This study found that hosts satisfied an interpersonal function for listeners.

The need for interpersonal contact may not be the only reason why individuals listen to call-in talk radio. Armstrong and Rubin (1989) found that respondents in their study cited several reasons for listening to talk radio other than for social contact. Reasons included relaxation, exciting entertainment, convenience, voyeurism, and escape, information utility, pass time and habit, and companionship. Results found that most of the motives for listening and calling were related to one another. Those who listened for relaxation also used talk radio for exciting entertainment. If a person listened for information utility they also used these call-in programs for voyeurism and escape, and convenience. Audience members who tuned in for companionship listened also for escape or out of habit. Voyeurism, escape, and habit were related listening motives as were voyeurism and convenience.

Other studies reinforce the importance of information seeking in talk radio listening. Cerulo, Ruane, and Chayko (1992) found that one third of their sample stated that listening allows them the opportunity to keep up on issues and current events. One in five respondents were motivated to hear other viewpoints and said that they listened to
learn how different people feel about the issues of the day. Many respondents reported that talk radio served as an arena for discussions of public opinion. Respondents also listened to talk radio because they believed it was entertaining.

Herbst (1995) found four main motivations for listening to call-in programs dealing with public affairs. Several listeners stated that they called in to transmit their own opinion and to disseminate knowledge. Other callers were motivated by a need to engage in some sort of dialogue. Some individuals telephoned programs because they sought advice, information, or clarification of some issue. A small percentage of people felt a need to "police" the public sphere and so called in to correct a bias of a host or caller and to broaden discussion topics.

The Times Mirror study (1993), which examined people's use of political talk radio, found that audience members listened for several reasons. First, respondents were motivated to keep up on issues and stay current with public affairs. Second, people listened because of the entertainment value in the programs. Lastly, individuals admired particular hosts and so they listened to these programs to hear what hosts had to say.

How do Listeners and Non Listeners Differ?

Although 95% of the United States population listens to the radio regularly, this audience is fragmented with individuals listening to adult contemporary (17.1%), country (13.3%), top 40 (10%), and urban contemporary (8.9%). During the hours of 6 a.m. to midnight, the news and talk format accounts for 15.2% of listeners (Biagi, 1994).
Demographic, social, and psychological characteristics may lend insight into how these call-in talk radio listeners differ from those who chose other formats.

Research has focused on two main areas in which talk radio listeners may differ from nonlisteners. First, listeners may use radio more for companionship or to serve interpersonal functions. Earlier studies of the talk-show audience found that listeners and callers used the program to fill interpersonal gaps in their own lives. Avery and his colleagues (1978) found that listeners (72% of their sample) were more likely to be retired and living on moderate to low incomes. They concluded that listeners may use radio as a way to provide fulfillment to their otherwise empty lives.

Turow (1974) was one of the first researchers to examine why individuals call radio talk shows. His exploratory study included 97 respondents who had called into one talk station throughout its programming schedule. He found that individuals who were older, less mobile, isolated and of a lower socio-economic status were more likely to phone in to talk shows. He also found that the time of day influenced those who called. During the daytime, callers were mostly married housewives; in the evening more widows called in. He concluded that callers had a "highly personal need for communication--for contact with the outside world" (p. 171). He maintained that these women were cut off from the outside world and needed to feel a part of society and called to fill their need for contact. He added that the continuous talk show radio format offers audience members a chance for social interaction that at their present situation is unavailable.
Bierig and Dimmick (1979) sought to apply statistical tests to Turow's exploratory study. Therefore, they also believed that a need for interpersonal contact motivated callers. They hypothesized that individuals who call talk radio programs would be less likely to be married, more likely to live in single-person households than the general population of Chicago, would be alone when they called the programs, and would be less likely to belong to an organization as compared to the United States population. The study found statistical support for all four hypotheses. Results show that the average caller was likely to be 18 to 34 years of age. This is an interesting finding because the majority of the listening audience of the program studied were 50 years or older. The researchers concluded that the need for interpersonal contact motivated audience members to call-in.

But, there is evidence that listeners may differ from nonlisteners in another way; listeners to call-in talk radio may listen to gain information to use in their daily lives. Armstrong and Rubin (1989) found that talk radio callers did not use the medium for reasons of companionship any more than noncallers although callers were more likely to be less socially interactive and less mobile than noncallers. The results of the study show that the most significant reason that individuals give for listening to talk radio is that it serves an "instrumental media experience, with issues, arguments, information, and humor encouraging listeners to attend and become involved" (pp. 90-91).

The Times Mirror study (1993) found that more men in the sample (45%) than women (38%) listened either "sometimes" or "regularly" to call-in talk radio. Also, respondents who were better educated and from wealthier households reported more use
of talk radio. Political orientation had a major influence on those who listened: Republicans were more likely to listen regularly than Democrats and Independents. Respondents who perceived themselves as being conservative listened to talk radio twice as much as liberal listeners. Other studies examining political issue-oriented talk radio audiences have found similar defining demographic characteristics to the Times Mirror study (Superville, 1995).

Rancer, Miles, and Baukus (1994) found that talk radio listeners were more likely to be 41 years of age or older and less likely to be categorized as "students" or "professionals." The researchers also found that listeners reported higher levels of self-esteem and participants were more likely to believe that arguing is a pleasant, enjoyable, and stimulating experience than nonlisteners and were more likely to listen. Rancer and his colleagues maintain that talk-radio listeners may be motivated by the opportunity to hear a discussion of controversial issues.

Herbst (1995) also suggested that call-in talk radio programs were seen as an exceptional outlet for public discourse for their listeners. Individuals, regardless of their expertise are given opportunities that may not be available to them in their daily lives to engage in a discussion of public affairs.

Differences between Listeners of Different Talk Show Genres

To date, there has been little research focusing on the differences between listeners of different call-in talk show formats. Surlin (1986) examined the reasons Jamaican radio listeners have for listening to talk radio. He found that listeners to various
Jamaican talk radio programs differed. There were 10 talk programs on Jamaican radio at the time of the study. Two of the 10 programs can be categorized as business and information, four others were issue-oriented, and four programs could be categorized as radio psychology and health programs.

Respondents cited several reasons for listening to call-in talk radio in general: to obtain useful information about daily living, to find out what is going on in Jamaica, to know why others think as they do, so that they are using their time well, to be entertained, to hear their points of view voiced, and to avoid feeling lonely. Surlin (1986) observed that surveillance and information gained were the most dominant gratifications sought by listeners.

Most interesting, listening to different program types was motivated by different reasons. Jamaicans were motivated to listen to health concerns and psychology programs for all of the reasons, but especially to feel they are using their time well. Listening to issue-oriented shows was motivated mainly by the need to find out what is going on in Jamaica. Younger listeners preferred issue-oriented programming. Both lower socio-economic status and greater isolation had a tendency to influence a person to listen to health and psychology programming.

Focus of the Study

The focus of this study was the listeners of talk radio. Specifically, I hoped to answer three questions: What are the reasons people have for listening to call-in talk radio? What are the differences between listeners and nonlisteners of this format? Is
listening to different call-in talk genres related to different demographic, social, and psychological dimensions? Based on uses and gratifications research, this study expected that demographic, social situation, and psychological variables would influence a person's motives for listening to talk radio. Therefore, the study will focus on how variables related to these constructs motivate radio listeners to tune into call-in talk radio.

These questions are important to ask because radio has permeated society and because individuals are choosing to listen to this format. Asking questions about why people listen and how they differ from nonlisteners will give more insight into how important and necessary this format and medium are to listeners. Such questions also allow one to evaluate how unique this format is and how it has become part of the culture.

Essentially, uses and gratifications researchers believe that people have certain needs that they wish to gratify. These needs are fulfilled by using a variety of communication channels, mass and interpersonal. Audience members are seen as active and goal oriented when deciding on what form and type of mass media programming they will use.

This study will investigate whether there are specific reasons for listening to this format that differ from listening to alternative formats. In addition, this study will examine differences between listeners and nonlisteners of this format. These possible findings would lend support to the idea of active and goal oriented listeners. Further, the distinction between call-in talk genres may further support this perspective. Studying this specific format might lend support to the uses and gratifications contention that call-in
talk radio is a communication channel that is helping individuals gratify needs that are not being filled elsewhere.

Social situation is an important media use motivation (Blumler, 1979; Johnstone, 1974; Rosengren & Windahl, 1972). In this study, I considered two concepts that influence social situation: contextual age and family communication patterns. Contextual age represents life position and reflects an individual's perceptions about his or her own physical health, mobility, social activity, interpersonal interaction, economic security, and life satisfaction (Rubin & Rubin, 1982). Because talk radio listening has often been viewed as a way to compensate for lack of interpersonal contact (Bierig & Dimmick, 1979; Turow, 1974), I focused on the mobility, social activity, and interpersonal interaction dimensions.

Family communication patterns have two dimensions and reflects how people communicate in their family (Chaffee, McLeod, & Atkin, 1971; Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990). This study focused on the concept-oriented dimension, which marks an orientation to family communication that stresses the importance of debate and expression of ideas.

Psychological variables motivate people to use media (McGuire, 1974). Of the many psychological variables discussed in previous literature this study addressed two: argumentativeness and social experience. As defined in past research, "argumentativeness involves the tendency to advocate and refute positions on controversial issues" (Infante & Rancer, 1982, p. 74). Argumentative individuals perceive this activity as pleasurable, exciting, challenging, and at times amusing. They
tend to approach situations where there might be arguments. Social experience, according to Duran (1983), reflects one's tendency to value and enjoy social participation. For example, it has been negatively related to communication apprehension (Duran, 1983) and loneliness (Zakahi & Duran, 1982), and linked to more attention to conversation (Duran & Kelly, 1988). So, I expected that this psychological variable may influence whether a person enjoys the highly interpersonal format of call-in talk radio.

This study focused on political interest and involvement because past research has shown that these variables motivate people to use news and public affairs media content because individuals believe it to be useful and rewarding (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stakes, 1960; McLeod & Perse, 1994). Political interest has been shown to influence an individual's television and newspaper news use (McLeod & Perse, 1994). Use of these forms of mass media has been linked to public affairs knowledge and community involvement related positively to newspaper use (McLeod & Perse, 1994). This study will try to link call-in talk radio to demographic, social, and psychological factors.

**Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The first goal of this study was to explore the reasons people have for listening to call-in talk radio. Prior research on this topic has been somewhat limited. The Times Mirror study (1993) focused only on reasons for listening to issue-oriented talk radio. Other studies have been limited to oversamples of callers (Armstrong & Rubin, 1989). So the research question of this study was:
RQ1: What are the reasons people have for listening to call-in talk radio?

This study tested several hypotheses concerning the differences between call-in talk radio listeners and nonlisteners. While radio is a ubiquitous medium, its audience is fragmented among the various formats (Eastman, 1993). Theory and research suggest that people's motives, demographic characteristics, social context, and psychology might influence their choice of the call-in talk radio format.

Uses and gratifications researchers have spent time addressing the reasons people give for using this mass media format (Armstrong & Rubin, 1989; Avery, et al., 1978; Cerulo, et al., 1992; Herbst, 1995; Times Mirror, 1993). Scholars have found that people cite information and companionship motives for listening to call-in talk radio.

The first set of hypotheses examined the differences between listeners of the call-in talk radio format and nonlisteners to this format. Based on previous findings the following predictions were made:

H1: Listeners of call-in talk radio will report stronger information-oriented motives for listening to the radio than nonlisteners.

H2: Listeners of call-in talk radio will report stronger companionship motives for listening to the radio than nonlisteners.

In addition to research that examined the reasons for listening to call-in talk radio, scholars have studied the antecedents of viewer motivation (Conway & Rubin, 1991; Johnstone, 1974; Palmgreen, 1984; Rubin & Rubin, 1982). Past research has found that an individual's social situation has a subsequent influence on media selection.
Lull (1980) suggested that family type is related to different media-use patterns. Because
the concept-oriented dimension stresses the value of discussion and controversy:

H3: Listeners of call-in talk radio will report stronger endorsement of concept-oriented family communication patterns than nonlisteners.

Prior research has suggested that call-in talk radio listeners lack social contact so
they choose the talk format because it is a "window to the world" (Avery et al., 1978,
Turow, 1974). So the next set of hypotheses predicted that listeners to talk radio will
perceive there social contacts as more confining:

H4: Listeners to call-in talk radio will be more likely to perceive themselves as
less mobile than nonlisteners.

H5: Listeners to call-in talk radio will be more likely to perceive themselves as
less socially active than nonlisteners.

H6: Listeners to call-in talk radio will be more likely to perceive themselves as
less interpersonally interactive than nonlisteners.

Other researchers found that psychological variables effect media use. Rancer,
Miles, and Baukus (1994) found that a person's predisposition to be argumentative is
related to listening to call-in talk radio. Argumentativeness is a personality trait that leads
people to value arguments and seek out situations where there might be arguments
(Infante & Rancer, 1982). Because several talk-radio shows encourage controversy and
contentiousness, and prior research has linked this trait to listening to talk radio (Rancer
et al., 1994):
H7: Call-in talk radio listeners will be more argumentative than nonlisteners.

There has been no research that has considered how valuing conversation is related to media use. Valuing conversation does not have to be related to being more socially active or interpersonally interactive. Individuals can value conversation but be in a position where they are not able to be active or interactive. The valuing of conversation is not necessarily isomorphic with the availability of interaction. Since conversation is an integral part of the talk radio format, I expected that listeners might enjoy social experiences more:

H8: Call-in talk radio listeners will enjoy social experiences more than nonlisteners.

Researchers have just begun to study the differences between listeners of different call-in talk radio genres. Surlin (1986) found that Jamaican listeners to different radio programs differed. This study explored some of the correlates of listening to different call-in talk radio formats. Because issue-oriented shows encourage discussions of topics that range from local to national concerns (Times Mirror, 1993). I expected that listeners to these programs would be related to political interest and involvement:

H9: Listening to issue-oriented programs will be positively related to political involvement.

Several of the national issue-oriented programs, such as Rush Limbaugh, encourage controversy. The Times Mirror study (1993) found that listeners of political call-in talk radio preferred to hear opposite points of view, two to one, over opinions
similar to their own. So, listening to this format might be linked to argumentativeness and preferences for discussion about controversial issues:

H10: Listening to issue-oriented programs will be positively related to argumentativeness.

H11: Listening to issue-oriented programs will be positively related to concept-oriented family communication patterns.

Anyone who has ever tuned into a call-in talk radio sports program has listened to a lively discussion of the major occurrences in the world of sports (Norman, 1990). For the most part these programs thrive on the mostly male population (Roloff & Solomon, 1989) that call-in with dissenting opinions. Listening to this format may be associated with greater argumentativeness and value for controversial discussions.

H12: Listening to sports-talk programs will be positively related to argumentativeness.

These hypotheses were tested in the present study.
Chapter 2

METHOD

Procedure

The study was designed to investigate the differences between call-in talk radio listeners and nonlisteners. A questionnaire comprised of independent, dependent, and control measures was administered to adults living in New Castle County, Delaware. In an interview with Charles Tarver on December 19, 1995 (manager WVUD), he maintained that this area has a concentration of call-in talk radio stations and syndicated programs because radio listeners can hear broadcasts from New York, Philadelphia, Delaware, and Washington D.C. Participants were Bell Atlantic customers who verbally consented to take part in a 10-15 minute random-digital dialing telephone survey. Twelve hired interviewers made calls over a 3-week period from April 14, 1996, to May 2, 1996. Respondents were informed that all information given was confidential and that participation was voluntary. They were further instructed that they could decline to answer any question or terminate the interview at any time. Out of 645 valid attempts (excluding business numbers, answering machines, disconnects, modems, operators, pay phones, pagers, no answers, voice mail, and fax numbers), there were 207 completions and 438 refusals, for a 32.1% completion rate. Many of the potential respondents cited
various reasons why they would not participate. Some individuals said that fifteen
minutes was too much time to spend completing the survey. Others believed that callers
were actually trying to sell them a product and that the survey was part of the sales
gimmick. Many potential participants ended the call before callers could reassure them
that this was not the case. Others felt that the information they were asked to give was
private and personal. Even though the response rate was lower than expected, the sample
population was representative of the general public (U. S. Census, 1990).

The questionnaire was designed to measure the following: call-in talk radio
listening exposure and motive, contextual age, social experience, argumentativeness,
family communication patterns, and political participation. The following demographic
variables were also obtained for descriptive purposes: Age, gender, employment,
political affiliation, education, and household size. Refer to Appendix , questions 52 to
65, for demographic questions.

The Nature of the Sample

The sample was composed of 207 adults living in New Castle County, Delaware.

Gender

The interviewers indicated the gender of respondents on the answer form. The
sample was 42.0% (n = 87) male and 58.0% (n = 120) female. U. S. census data (1990)
indicates that the population in New Castle County is 48.4% (n = 213,895) male and
51.6% (n = 228,051) female.
Age

Age was determined by asking, "What was your age on your last birthday?" The respondents ranged from 18 to 94 years of age, with the mean age being 40.23 years (SD = 15.97). The median age was 37.5 years. Three individuals refused to answer. U. S. Census data of New Castle County (1990) reports the median age to be 45 to 49 years.

Employment

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they were currently employed. Individuals who were retired or unemployed accounted for 21.3% (n = 44) of the sample, 77.3% (n = 160) were employed at the time. Three individuals refused to answer. U. S. census data (1990) finds that 66.9% (n = 230,995) of the population, 16 and older, in New Castle county is employed and 33.1% (n = 114,263) is unemployed.

Education

Education was determined by asking, "What is the highest year of school you have completed?" The respondents' educational levels ranged from 7th grade to the 21st grade, which signified completion of a Ph.D. program. The average self-reported educational level was 14.43 years (SD = 2.58) or almost two and a half years of college, the median was 14.00 years or two years of college. The New Castle County census data indicates that the median education to be some college, no degree (U. S. Census, 1990).
**Political Affiliation**

Political affiliation was operationalized as the respondent's answer to the question, "In your own mind, do you think of yourself as a supporter of one of the political parties or not?" The sample included 56.0% (n = 116) non-supporters of a political party, 42.5% (n = 88) supporters. Three respondents refused to answer. A second question asked respondents to disclose the political party that they support or the political party that they see themselves closest to. Of the sample, 35.3% reported to be Democrats (n = 73), 29.5% Republican (n = 61), 3.4% Independent (n = 7), 2.9% Libertarian (n = 6), 1.4% Reformists (n = 3), and 27.5% did not know (n = 56).

**Household Size**

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of people over the age of 18 currently living in their household. The household size ranged from 1 to 7 people, with the mean size being 2.23 (SD = 1.04). The median household size was 2.00 people.

**Radio Exposure**

General radio exposure was measured to determine any differences between the amount of time spent listening to the radio in general as compared to listening specifically to call-in talk radio. Respondents were asked to indicate about how many hours on a typical weekday they spent listening to the radio. Time spent ranged from 15 minutes to 12 hours, with the average time being 3.13 hours (SD = 2.64). The median was 2.00 hours a day. Of the respondents, 8.2% (n = 17) reported that they did not listen
to the radio. These nonlisteners differed from radio listeners only in that nonlisteners were older ($M = 53.06, SD = 18.63$) than listeners ($M = 39.13, SD = 15.29$), $t(202) = 3.44, p < .001$.

Radio Listening Motives

Respondents who listened to the radio ($n = 190$) were presented with a list of 13 5-point Likert-type statements. This list is a compilation of motives found in a number of previous studies on radio (Armstrong & Rubin, 1989; Mendelsohn, 1964; Surlin, 1986; Times Mirror, 1993). Participants were asked to compare their own reasons for listening to the radio with these 13 statements. Participants indicated whether motives were exactly (coded 5), a lot (coded 4), somewhat (coded 3), not much (coded 2), or not at all (coded 1) similar to their own reasons for listening to the radio. These motives are questions 3-15 in Appendix. Table 2.1 presents the listening motive statements, their mean scores, and their standard deviations.

The responses to the 13 motive statements were subjected to principal axes factor analysis with oblimin rotation. Three factors accounting for 44.1% of the variance were identified. The factor analysis is summarized in Table 2.2.
Table 2.1
RADIO LISTENING VIEWING MOTIVES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I listen to the radio</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Because it is enjoyable</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Because it entertains me</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Because it allows me to unwind</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To keep up on issues of the day</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Because it helps me change my mood</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Because it is a habit</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Because it breaks up my day</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. To obtain useful information about daily life</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Because it is a good way to learn things that I can't find out elsewhere</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. To learn about how different people feel about different issues</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. To pick up information that I use in conversation with other people</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. When I have nothing better to do</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. So I won't have to feel alone</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Means ranged from a low of 1 for "not at all" to a high of 5 for "exactly" with that statement. N = 190.
Factor 1 (Information) had an eigenvalue of 3.19 and accounted for 24.5% of the common variance. It included loadings of all information statements including: to obtain useful information about daily life, to learn about how different people feel about different issues, because it is a good way to learn things that I can't find elsewhere, to pick up information that I use in conversation with other people, and to learn about how different people feel about different issues. The factor depicts radio listening as a means to find out about current issues of the day.

Factor 2 (Enjoyment/Diversion) had an eigenvalue of 1.99 and accounted for 15.3% of the common variance. It included loadings of enjoyment, relaxation, and day structuring statements including: because it allows me to unwind, because it entertains me, because it helps me change my mood, because it breaks up my day, and because it is enjoyable. This factor depicts the use of radio for diversion.

Factor 3 (Companionship/Pass-time) had an eigenvalue of .56 and marginally accounted for 4.3% of the common variance. It included loadings of companionship statements including: when I have nothing better to do and so I won't have to feel alone. One habit statement, because it is a habit, only loaded marginally on this factor. This factor depicts a more passive use of radio. Although this factor does not account for a substantial amount of the common variance and would normally not be included in further analysis, I retained it only for hypothesis testing.

I created the radio listening motives by averaging responses to the items loading on each factor. Information ranged from 1 to 5 ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 1.01$, alpha = .76), Enjoyment/Diversion ranged from 1 to 5 ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.01$, alpha = .83). Because the
habit statement reduced the reliability, it was eliminated from the Companionship/Pass-time motive. Companionship/Pass-time ranged from 1 to 5 (M = 2.21, SD = 1.17, r = .55).

There was a correlation among the radio listening motives. Listening for Enjoyment/Diversion was correlated with Companionship/Pass-time (r = .48, p < .001).
Table 2.2

RADIO LISTENING MOTIVES OBLIMIN FACTOR SOLUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Viewing Motive Items</th>
<th>Listening Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues (4)</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dailylife (8)</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn (9)</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differ (10)</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversation (11)</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyable (1)</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertain (2)</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwind (3)</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood (5)</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daybreak (7)</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing Better (12)</td>
<td>-.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone (13)</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habit (6)</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Item identifications and numbers refer to listening motive statements presented in Table 1. \( N = 190. \)
Call-in Talk Radio

Respondents who listened to the radio were asked whether they tuned into talk radio programs where the host of the show invited listeners to call-in. Of the respondents, 45.9% (n = 95) were listeners to call-in talk radio, 54.1% (n = 112) were not. Listeners were instructed to estimate how many hours on a typical week day they listened to call-in talk radio. Time spent ranged from 5 minutes to 10 hours a day, with the average time being 1.80 hours (SD = 1.90). The median was 1.00 hour a day.

Participants were asked to indicate whether they listened to the five types of call-in talk radio (issue-oriented, information-oriented, radio psychology and health, sports, sex talk) regularly (coded 4), sometimes (coded 3), rarely (coded 2), or never (coded 1). See Appendix items 17-23. Table 2.3 presents the five types of call-in talk radio programs, their mean scores, and standard deviations.

For descriptive purposes, listeners were asked if they had ever called into a talk radio program. Of the listeners 9.7% (n = 20) reported to have made calls.
Table 2.3
Call-in Talk Radio Formats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Call-in Talk Format</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Issues of local and national concern</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sports</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Psychology and health</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sex Talk</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Practical information on finance, auto care, household maintenance</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.69*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Means ranged from a low of 1 for "never" to a high of 5 for "regularly" with that statement. Issues n = 92, Sports n = 89, Medical/family/health n = 93, Sex n = 84, Practical information n = 89.

There were some intercorrelations among listening to call-in talk formats. Listening to issue-oriented programs was correlated with listening to the business and information format (r = .30, p < .01) and also to radio psychology and health programs (r = .40, p < .001). Listening to radio psychology and health programs was also correlated with listening to business and information shows (r = .23, p < .05). In addition, listening to sex talk programs was marginally correlated with listening to radio psychology and health (r = .21, p < .06).
Argumentativeness

Argumentativeness is a personality trait that leads people to value and enjoy situations where arguments occur (Infante & Rancer, 1982). For this study, I used a shortened version of the argumentativeness scale (Infante & Rancer, 1982). A pretest showed that I could reliably reduce the scale to six items (alpha = .86) for the approach dimensions. Respondents were asked to answer, using a five-point Likert-type scale from almost always true (coded 5) to almost never true (coded 1), whether each statement was personally true of them as they saw themselves argue a controversial issue. These items are 29-34 in Appendix. To create a measure of argumentativeness, responses to the six items were averaged. Argumentativeness scores ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 (M = 2.59, SD = 1.01) The Cronbach’s alpha reliability of the scale was .86 which is similar to previous studies. Table 2.4 presents the argumentative statements, their mean scores, and standard deviations.
Table 2.4
Argumentativeness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Argumentative Statements</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I enjoy a good argument over a controversial issue</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I consider an argument an exciting intellectual challenge</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Arguing over controversial issues improves my intelligence</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I feel refreshed and satisfied after an argument on a controversial issue</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I do not like to miss the opportunity to argue a controversial issue</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I feel excitement when I expect that a conversation I am in is leading to an argument</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Means ranged from a low of 1 for "almost never true" to a high of 5 for "almost always true" with that statement. \( N = 203 \) to 206.

Contextual Age

For brevity's sake I used a shortened version of Rubin and Rubin's (1982) contextual age scale. This scale assesses people's perceptions about their physical health, life satisfaction, mobility, social activity, interpersonal interaction, and economic security. Similar to Armstrong and Rubin (1989) I used six items from research on contextual age to measure interpersonal interaction, mobility, and social activity. Respondents were instructed to answer how much they strongly agree (coded 5) to strongly disagree (coded 1) with statements. Questions 38 and 42 in Appendix measure
interpersonal interaction, statements 39 and 43 measure mobility, and questions 41 and 45 measure social activity. Two questions concerning life satisfaction, 40 and 44, are included on the questionnaire but are not part of this study. Table 2.5 presents the contextual age items, means, and standard deviations.

To create measures of each of the contextual age dimensions, scores on the items were averaged. Interpersonal interaction scores ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.80$, $r = .14$, $p < .05$), mobility scores ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.93$, $r = .13$, $p = .06$), and social activity scores ranged from ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 1.05$, $r = .28$, $p < .001$).
Table 2.5
Contextual Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contextual Age Items</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I have ample opportunity for conversations with other people</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I often visit with friends, relatives, or neighbors</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I often participate in the meeting or activities of clubs, lodges, recreation centers, churches or other organizations</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*4. I stay at home most of the time</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*5. I often feel lonely</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*6. I have to rely on others to take me places</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Means ranged from a low of 1 for "strongly disagree" to a high of 5 for "strongly agree" with that statement. N = 206. * Items recoded for further analysis.

Social Experience

Respondents were asked to answer questions concerning their social experiences, taken from the Social Adaptability Scale (Duran, 1983). Social experience reflects one's tendency to value and enjoy social participation. I conducted a pretest with students enrolled in nonmajor communication classes to explore the reliability of the subscale. The pretest showed that I could reliably reduce this original scale from five to three questions (alpha = .73). A five point Likert-type scale from almost always true (coded 5) to almost never true (coded 1) was used to answer questions 35-37 in Appendix.
To create social experience scales, I averaged item scores. Social experience ranged from 1.33 to 5.00 ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.97$). The Cronbach's alpha reliability of the social experience scale was .76. The social experience items, mean, and standard deviations can be found in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6
Social Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Experience Items</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I enjoy meeting new people</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I enjoy socializing with various groups of people</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I like to be active in different social groups</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Means ranged from a low of 1 for "almost never true" to a high of 5 for "almost always true". $N = 206$.

Family Communication Patterns

The Family Communication Patterns Scale (FCP, Chaffee & McLeod, 1972) examines two dimensions of family communication: how conformity-oriented and conversation-oriented a family's communication environment is. This scale and subsequent revisions (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990) were originally intended to be answered by both parent and child. Because this study focuses on individual-level
responses I developed a shortened version of a generalized concept-oriented scale that I
pretested using students enrolled in communication courses and found reliable (alpha = .88). The items in the adapted scale measured people's general perceptions of how they
valued open family communication. Respondents were instructed to indicate, using a
five-point Likert-type scale, whether they strongly agree (coded 5), agree (coded 4),
somewhat agree and disagree (coded 3), disagree (coded 2), or strongly disagree (coded 1) to questions 46-51 in Appendix. Table 2.7 contains the items, means, and standard deviations of the adapted family communication patterns items. To create concept-oriented FCP scores, I averaged item responses. FCP scores ranged from 2.83 to 5.00 ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.50$). Cronbach's alpha reliability of the scale was .73 which is notable lower than in the pretest.
Table 2.7
Family Communication Patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FCP Items</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Parents should encourage their children to express their feelings</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Families should often talk about their plans and hopes for the future</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Families should often talk about things that they have done during the day</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Family members should talk about their feeling and emotions</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Parents should ask their children's opinion when the family is talking about something</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Children should tell their parents what they're thinking about things</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Means ranged from a low of 1 for "strongly disagree" to a high of 5 for "strongly agree". N = 206.

Political Participation

Respondents were asked to answer questions concerning their political participation, which were taken from previous research (McLeod & Perse, 1994). Respondents answered yes (coded 2), no (coded 1), or I don't know (coded missing) to statements concerning 6 political activities. These questions are 52-61 in Appendix.
Table 2.8 contains the items, means, and standard deviations of the political participation scale.

A political participation scale was created by averaging the responses to the individual items. Political participation ranged from 1.00 to 2.83 (M = 1.45, SD = 0.64, alpha = .65).

Table 2.8
Political Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the past few years have you done any of the following...</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Been active as a volunteer for a community organization or action group or community fundraising work</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Contacted an elected official about some problem you were interested in</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Belonged to any civic organizations that carry out projects that are potentially helpful to communities</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Contributed money to a political or a public interest campaign</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Attended a city council meeting, public hearing, or legislative meeting</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Written a letter to the editor of a newspaper, television station, or magazine</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Means ranged from a 1 for "no" to a 2 for "yes". N = 205.
Statistical Analysis

After scale construction and reliability analysis, there were several steps to the analysis. The first research question, which concerned the motivation for listening to call-in talk radio, was answered by examining descriptive statistics. The salience of different motives was tested using one-tailed \( t \)-tests and multiple regression. Hypotheses 1 through 8 all concerned differences between listeners and nonlisteners to call-in talk radio. These were tested using one-tailed \( t \)-tests. Hypotheses 9 through 12 concerned social situation and psychological variables and their influences on listening to different call-in talk radio genres. These hypotheses were tested first with Pearson correlations. Then, hierarchical multiple regressions were used to test the multivariate contribution of demographics, listening motives, social situation, and psychological variables to listening to call-in talk radio format. \( T \)-tests were used to examine several nonhypothesized differences between callers and listeners of call-in talk radio.
was used in testing the hypothesis. Hypothesis 1 was supported. Listeners \( (M = 2.97, \ SD = 1.01) \) reported stronger information-oriented radio listening motives than nonlisteners \( (M = 2.36, \ SD = 0.86) \), \( t(188) = 4.47, \ p < .001 \).

Hypothesis 2 predicted that listeners of call-in talk radio would report stronger companionship motives for listening to the radio than nonlisteners. Hypothesis 2 was not supported. Listeners' companionship motives \( (M = 2.21, \ SD = 1.25) \) were not significantly different from nonlisteners' \( (M = 2.13, \ SD = 1.17) \), \( t(188) = 0.45, \ p = .65 \).

Hypothesis 3 maintained that listeners of call-in talk radio would report stronger endorsement of concept-oriented FCP than nonlisteners. Hypothesis 3 was not supported. Listeners' endorsement of concept-oriented family communication patterns \( (M = 4.54, \ SD = 0.46) \) did not differ significantly from nonlisteners' \( (M = 4.46, \ SD = 0.54) \), \( t(204) = 1.08, \ p = .28 \).

Hypothesis 4 stated that listeners to call-in talk radio would be more likely to perceive themselves as less mobile than nonlisteners. Hypothesis 4 was not supported. In fact listeners were marginally more mobile \( (M = 4.23, \ SD = 0.79) \) than nonlisteners \( (M = 3.99, \ SD = 1.02) \), \( t(204) = 1.92, \ p = .06 \).

The fifth hypothesis predicted that listeners to call-in talk radio would be more likely to perceive themselves as less socially active than nonlisteners. Hypothesis 5 was not supported. Listeners' perception of their social activity \( (M = 3.46, \ SD = 0.99) \) did not differ from nonlisteners' \( (M = 3.23, \ SD = 1.10) \), \( t(204) = 1.60, \ p = .11 \).

Hypothesis 6 maintained that listeners to call-in talk radio would be more likely to perceive themselves as less interpersonally interactive than nonlisteners. Hypothesis 6
was not supported. There was no significant difference between listeners' perception of interpersonal interactivity ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.78$) and nonlisteners' ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.82$), $t(204) = 0.43$, $p = .11$.

The seventh hypothesis expected that call-in talk radio listeners would be more argumentative than nonlisteners. Hypothesis 7 was supported. Listeners reported significantly stronger argumentativeness endorsement ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 0.99$) than nonlisteners ($M = 2.38$, $SD = 0.99$), $t(204) = 3.22$, $p < .05$.

Hypothesis 8 predicted that call-in talk radio would enjoy social experiences more than nonlisteners. This hypothesis was not supported. Listeners' enjoyment of social experiences ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 1.03$) did not significantly differ from nonlisteners' ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 0.92$, $t(204) = 0.05$, $p = .96$). Table 3.1 summarizes the $t$-test analyzes.
Table 3.1

T-test:

Listeners and Nonlisteners to Call-in Talk Radio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Listener (n = 95)</th>
<th>Nonlistener (n = 112)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p ≤</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment Diversion</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companionship/Pass-time</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Comm Patterns</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argue</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Activity</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Interaction</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>40.63</td>
<td>39.88</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>14.38</td>
<td>14.46</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. F(1,187) = 4.22, p < .001
The next set of tests concern the social and psychological influences on listening to different call-in talk radio genres. Four hypotheses explored influences on individuals' motivation to listening to the different formats of talk radio.

Hypothesis 9 predicted that listening to issue-oriented programs would be positively related to political involvement. Hypothesis 9 was tested with correlations and was not supported. Listening to issue-oriented call-in talk programs was not related to political involvement ($r = .05, p = .64$).

The tenth hypothesis maintained that listening to issue-oriented programs would be positively related to argumentativeness. This hypothesis was not supported. Listening to issue-oriented programs was not related to argumentativeness ($r = .05, p = .67$).

Hypothesis 11 stated that listening to issue-oriented programs would be positively related to concept-oriented family communication patterns. Hypothesis 11 was not supported. Listening to issue-oriented programs was not related to concept-oriented family communication patterns ($r = .12, p = .26$).

Hypothesis 12 predicted that listening to sports-talk programs would be positively related to argumentativeness. This hypothesis was not supported. Listening to sports-talk programs was not related to argumentativeness ($r = .18, p = .10$).

As additional testing of hypotheses 9, 10, 11, and 12; I used a multiple regression to see the multivariate influences of demographics, listening motives, and social and psychological characteristics on listening to specific call-in talk radio genres. The variables included were: demographic characteristics of age, gender, and education; factors that motivate listening to the radio including information, enjoyment/diversion,
and companionship/pass-time; and other variables including family communication patterns, politics, and argumentativeness. These analyzes examined if the listening motives, social situation, psychological variables, and demographic characteristics added substantially to any explanation of listening to the five call-in talk radio genres. The multiple regressions for each genre are summarized in Tables 3.2 to 3.6.
Table 3.2
Multiple Regression:
Listening to Issue-Oriented Call-in Talk Radio Genre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.375</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>16.61</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment/Diversion</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companion/Pass-Time</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social/Psych Variables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Comm Patterns</td>
<td>-.83</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argue</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $R^2 = 30.2\%$; $F(10,79) = 3.42$, $p < .001$. 
A multiple regression was performed on the issue-oriented call-in talk radio genre. The equation accounted for 30.2% of the variance. The information listening motive was the only significant contributor ($\beta = .45$, $F(10,79) = 3.42$, $p < .001$). The analysis is summarized in Table 3.2.

A multiple regression was performed on the information-oriented call-in talk radio genre. The equation accounted for 23.8% of the variance. The information listening motive was a significant contributor ($\beta = .31$, $p < .05$). The FCP was another significant contributor to the equation ($\beta = .22$, $p < .05$). See Table 3.3 for the analysis.
Table 3.3

Multiple Regression:

Listening to Information-Oriented Call-in Talk Genre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motives</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>6.54</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment/Diversion</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companion/Pass-Time</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social/Psych Variables</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Comm Patterns</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argue</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. R² = 23.8%; F(10,76) = 2.37, p < .05.
The next analysis regressed listening to radio medical, health, and family call-in talk radio genre. The information listening motive was the only significant contributor ($\beta = .54, p < .001$). The analysis is summarized in Table 3.4.

A multiple regression was performed on the sports talk call-in talk radio genre. The equation accounted for 17.2% of the variance. None of the variables were able to significantly predict listening to this genre. Analysis is summarized in Table 3.5.

Finally, a multiple regression was performed on the sex talk call-in talk radio genre. The equation accounted for of the variance. The companionship listening motive was a significant contributor ($\beta = .28, p < .05$). In addition, FCP concept dimension was another contributing variable ($\beta = -.23, p < .05$). The negative relationship demonstrates that individuals who supported less family communication were more likely to listen to sex talk call-in talk radio. Gender was another contributing variable ($\beta = .23, p < .05$). See Table 3.6 for analysis.
Table 3.4

Multiple Regression

Medical, Family, and Health Call-in Talk Radio Genre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p &lt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demographics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>.62</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
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<td>Information</td>
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<td>25.29</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment/Diversion</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.07</td>
<td>.79</td>
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Note. $R^2 = 33.5\%; F(10,80) = 4.03, p < .001.$
Table 3.5

Multiple Regression:

Sports Call-in Talk Radio Genre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>F</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Demographics</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Age</td>
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<td>1.15</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
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<td>.08</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.49</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companion/Pass-Time</td>
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<td>.89</td>
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<td><strong>Social/Psych Variables</strong></td>
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<td>.08</td>
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<td>.09</td>
</tr>
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<td>Argue</td>
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<td>2.36</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $R^2 = 17.2\%$; $F(10,77) = 1.60$, $p < .13$. 
Table 3.6
Hierarchical Multiple Regression:
Sex Call-in Talk Radio Genre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>p  &lt;</th>
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<td>3.03</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1.33</td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>Motives</strong></td>
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<td>Enjoyment/Diversion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
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<td>1.03</td>
<td>.31</td>
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</table>

*Note.* R^2 = 24.3%; F(10,72) = 2.31, p < .05.
Call-in Talk Radio Callers

Because previous research focused on the differences between callers and listeners to talk radio (Avery et al., 1978; Bierig & Dimmick, 1979; Turow, 1974) the next stage of analysis explored the nonhypothesized differences between callers and noncallers. T-tests were used in the analysis to locate significant differences between callers and noncallers to call-in talk radio programs.

Callers were more motivated to listen to the radio for information ($M = 3.38, SD = 0.99$) than listening noncallers, ($M = 2.86, SD = 0.97$), $t(86) = 2.10, p < .05$. They perceived themselves as less mobile ($M = 3.98, SD = 1.02$) than noncallers ($M = 4.37, SD = 0.69$), $t(86) = 1.99, p < .05$. In addition, callers were more likely to listen to issue-oriented programs ($M = 3.00, SD = 1.05$) than listening noncallers ($M = 2.37, SD = 1.02$), $t(85) = 2.37, p < .05$. Callers ($M = 3.90, SD = 0.90$) also believed they had fewer opportunities for interpersonal interaction than noncallers ($m = 4.29, SD = 0.69$), $t(86) = 2.05, p < .05$. There were no other differences in demographics, listening motives, or social and psychological variables. Table 3.7 summarizes the differences between callers and noncallers.
Table 3.7

T-test:

Listeners and Callers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Listeners (n = 68)</th>
<th>Callers (n = 20)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p &lt;</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2.10</td>
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<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.26</td>
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<td>.81</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.83</td>
<td>1.45</td>
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<td>3.00</td>
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<td>.05</td>
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Table 3.7 Continued

T-test:

Listeners and Callers

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Callers</th>
<th>( t )</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>( p )</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>4.60</td>
<td>0.74</td>
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<td>Argue</td>
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<td>3.08</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>.29</td>
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<td>Experience</td>
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<td>86</td>
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Chapter 4

Discussion

The goal of the study was to answer three research questions: What are the reasons people have for listening to call-in talk radio? What are the differences between listeners and nonlisteners of this format? Is listening to different call-in talk genres related to different demographic, social, and psychological dimensions? Although historically, uses and gratifications research in this area has examined the call-in talk caller (Avery et al., 1978; Bierig & Dimmick, 1979; Turow, 1974), radio listeners, as a group, have been ignored. This study was an attempt to examine the listeners of call-in radio as compared to nonlisteners of this format. Twelve hypotheses were proposed to answer the three research questions. In this chapter the results of the investigation are first discussed. Then, the implications of the findings are considered. Next, the limitations of the study are examined. Finally, the chapter concludes with suggestions for future research.

Discussion of Results

The study's preliminary results found that 91.8% of the sample ages 18 and older reported that they listened to the radio daily. This is similar to the National Association
of Broadcasters' (1995) findings that 96.0% of all people ages 12 and older listen to the radio in a typical week. The overall reasons for listening cited by respondents include two major factors, listening for information and for enjoyment/diversion, and one minor, listening for companionship/pass-time. The study also found that 45.9% of respondents were listeners to the call-in talk radio format. This percentage is slightly higher than the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press study (1993) that found that 42.0% of their sample listened sometimes to call-in talk radio. It may be that listening to call-in talk radio is on the rise and that a new Times Mirror Study would find similar results. Another possible reason for these findings may be due to the sheer number of talk radio shows available to listeners in this area of the country.

The first research question dealt with the reasons people have for listening to call-in talk radio. Overall, there are two major reasons and one minor. Listening to call-in talk radio for enjoyment/diversion was the most strongly endorsed motive. Respondents also cited listening for information as an important motive. Lastly, companionship/pass-time was another reason specified by listeners. The only significant predictor of the amount of time spent listening to call-in talk radio, though, was information. Therefore, although respondents maintained that their primary reason for listening to this format of radio content was for entertainment/diversion, those who spent the most time listening were motivated by information.

Hypotheses 1 through 8 dealt with the differences between listeners to the call-in talk radio format and nonlisteners to this format. The first hypothesis predicted that listeners of call-in talk radio would report stronger information-oriented motives for
listening to the radio than nonlisteners of this format. Hypothesis 1 was supported. Listeners reported stronger information-oriented motives for listening to the radio than nonlisteners. Listeners were motivated to listen because of the desire for information about daily life and to hear different opinions so that it could be possibly used in conversations with others. Information-oriented motives was the main reason behind individuals listening to call-in talk radio as compared to nonlisteners.

Hypotheses 2 predicted that listeners of call-in talk radio would report stronger companionship motives for listening to the radio than nonlisteners. Hypothesis 2 was not supported. There was no significant difference between listeners and nonlisteners concerning listening for companionship.

Hypothesis 3 maintained that listeners of call-in talk radio would report stronger endorsement of concept-oriented FCP dimension than nonlisteners. This hypothesis was not supported. The results founds no significant difference between listener' and nonlistener' endorsement.

Hypotheses 4 through 6 dealt with contextual age. The fourth hypothesis predicted that listeners of call-in talk radio would be more likely to perceive themselves as less mobile than nonlisteners. Hypothesis 5 predicted that listeners to call-in talk radio would be more likely to perceive themselves as less socially active than nonlisteners. Hypothesis 6 maintained that listeners to call-in talk radio would be more likely to perceive themselves as less interpersonally interactive than nonlisteners. None of these hypotheses were supported. There was no significant differences between listeners and

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nonlisteners of this format for each of these scales. In fact, listeners were marginally more mobile than nonlisteners.

The seventh hypothesis contended that call-in talk radio listeners would be more argumentative than nonlisteners. Hypothesis 7 was supported. Listeners reported significantly stronger endorsement of the argumentativeness scale than nonlisteners.

Hypothesis 8 predicted that call-in talk radio listeners would enjoy social experiences more than nonlisteners. This hypothesis was not supported.

The next set of hypotheses concerned only the listeners of call-in talk radio and explored the social and psychological influences that motivate individuals to listen to the different genres of call-in talk radio. Hypothesis 9, which predicted that listening to issue-oriented programs would be positively related to political involvement, was not supported.

Hypothesis 10 maintained that listening to issue-oriented programs would be positively related to argumentativeness. This hypothesis was not supported. There was no relationship between listening to this genre and argumentativeness.

Hypothesis 11 stated that listening to issue-oriented programs would be positively related to concept-oriented family communication patterns. Hypothesis 11 was not supported.

Hypothesis 12 predicted that listening to sports-talk programs would be positively related to argumentativeness. This hypothesis was not supported.

As addition testing of hypotheses 9, 10, 11, and 12, multiple regressions to assess the multivariate influences of demographics, listening motives, and social and
psychological characteristics on listening to specific call-in talk radio genres were used. The information listening motive was the only significant contributor for listening to the issue-oriented genre and the radio psychology and health genre. The concept-oriented dimension of the family communication pattern scale and information listening motive were the only factors contributing to listening to the information-oriented genre. Gender, the companionship/pass-time motive, and lower levels of concept-oriented dimension of the family communication pattern scale contributed to listening for sex talk. There were no significant predictors of listening to the sports talk genre.

Because previous research on call-in talk radio has been heavily focused in the area of callers to talk radio, the study explored some nonhypothesized differences between caller and noncaller. Callers were more motivated to listen to the radio for information, were more likely to listen to issue-oriented programs, were more likely to believe that they had fewer opportunities for interpersonal interaction, and were more likely to perceive themselves as less mobile than noncallers.

Implications

The results of this study support a basic tenet of uses and gratifications research: People's reasons for using mass media influence the medium that is selected, the amount that is used, and the content that is chosen. The most salient motivation for listening to the radio was for enjoyment and diversion. This corroborates the findings of Armstrong and Rubin (1989) who found exciting entertainment to be one of the main reasons for
listening to the radio. But, individuals who stated that they listen to the call-in talk radio format were strongly motivated by the desire for information.

This finding is similar to the research of Cerulo, Raune, and Chayko (1992) whose respondents reported that information was an important motive for radio listening. Radio is a ubiquitous medium, used by almost everyone at sometime. The results of this study support a basic uses and gratifications assumption, different motives lead to different media use. Radio use is clearly primarily motivated by entertainment, but when people also seek information, they turn to call-in talk radio. Information seeking is a clear and significant distinction of listeners to call-in talk radio. This is evidence for active and goal-oriented call-in talk radio listening. To fulfill the desire for information listeners seek out this specific radio format.

Rubin (1984) suggested that media use motives can be differentiated into two broad categories, instrumental and ritualistic. His study examined television viewers who purposefully sought out information versus viewers who were more habitual in their viewing and who sought companionship, relaxation, arousal, and escape. The two different television viewers sought out different content and spent different amounts of time using the medium. The results of this study indicate that because information-seeking is such a salient aspect of listening, call-in talk radio listeners are more instrumental in their approach to radio.

There are important implications of distinguishing instrumental listeners from habitual listeners. Possibly, a distinction can be made between listener type and both call-in talk radio genre preference and amount of time spent listening. This might further
support the basic tenet of uses and gratifications. Listeners to call-in talk radio are more instrumental users of radio. Also, the results of this study show that individuals who are strongly motivated for instrumental purposes are more likely to call radio programs and they were more likely to listen to issue-oriented programming. It may be that viewer motivation for instrumental purposes may affect the choice of call-in genres that individuals listen to and subsequently call.

Although the study may seem at odds with past research that found that talk radio listeners used the medium for companionship and for fulfillment in people's otherwise empty lives (Bierig & Dimmick, 1979, Turow, 1974), it may not be. Past research has focused on callers of call-in talk radio rather than listeners. Of the respondents in the study 9.7% were callers. These individuals perceived themselves to be less mobile and have fewer opportunities for interpersonal interaction than noncallers and nonlisteners. With a larger sample of callers this study may have found similar results to past research (Bierig & Dimmick, 1979, Turow, 1974). However, the current study did not find the companionship/pass-time motive to be a salient or important factor in the reasons for listening to the radio.

Call-in talk radio may now, more than ever, attract more involved listeners. Of the five genres, issue-oriented talk radio was cited as the most listened to genre. These programs include lengthy discussions of local, national, and international issues of the day. Viewer participation and involvement are the key to success for these programs. Also, when 45.9% of respondents listen to call-in talk radio it is difficult to argue that all of these people are living "empty lives." It must be that viewers are interested and

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involved in program topics and seek call-in talk radio for information rather than companionship.

Mendehlson (1964) stated that individual radio stations serve one of four basic functions: utilitarian information and news, active mood accompaniment, release from psychological tension and pressure, and friendly companionship. He maintained that when a person listens to a station for one of these needs it is likely that he or she will not listen to that station for the other functions. His speculations were not supported by the current study. Individuals can be motivated by more than one reason to listen to a particular station or program. This supports a multifunctional approach to listening to the radio. This study found that there was a correlation among the radio listening motives. Listening for enjoyment/diversion was correlated with companionship/pass-time. This means that a person will listen to the same program for more than one reason at the same time.

This study also found intercorrelations between listening to the different call-in talk radio genres. Listening to issue-oriented programs was correlated to listening to both the business and information genre and the radio psychology and health genre. Listening to sex talk programs was correlated to listening to radio psychology and health programs. From these results it can be assumed that individuals will listen to the same station and format at different times for different reasons.

Historically, uses and gratifications research has looked at media use as a way to fill unmet needs (Elliot, 1974). This deficit-approach can be seen especially throughout the research on call-in talk radio. Avery, Ellis, and Glover (1978) found that listeners and
callers to a call-in show used it to fill interpersonal gaps in their own lives. Turow (1974) maintained that the talk radio format offers audience members a chance for social interaction that at their present situation is unavailable.

Several hypotheses posited that listeners to call-in talk radio would be less mobile, interactive, and socially active than nonlisteners to this format. These hypotheses were based on past research grounded in the deficit-need based approach that said that listeners to this format were looking for interpersonal contact that they did not have at the present time (Avery et al.; 1978; Turow, 1974). The study found that listeners to this format were not less interpersonally interactive nor socially active. In fact, listeners to the call-in talk radio were marginally ($p < .06$) more mobile than nonlisteners to this format.

This study did not find support for these deficit-motivated assumptions of prior research. Both listeners to radio and listeners to the call-in talk format were not strongly motivated for the need for companionship. Radio listeners were motivated by enjoyment/diversion and call-in talk radio listeners were motivated by enjoyment/diversion and information, nor did listeners and nonlisteners differ on companionship/pass-time motives nor contextual age. There were few indications that listeners were trying to fill emptiness in their lives. Instead, the results of this study suggest that radio listeners are not using this medium to fulfill a need, but rather positively, to promote an interest. Audience members may listen to the radio because they are interested in what they see or hear and are subsequently gratified by their positive experience. According to Blumler, (1979) active and goal-oriented people use the media less to fulfill a need but instead may use it to pursue interests. The
enjoyment/diversion and information motives seem to be more interest-oriented than
deficit-oriented.

The results of this study provide only limited support for uses and gratifications' belief in the influences of social and psychological factors on the reasons people listen to the call-in talk radio format. One significant difference between listeners and nonlisteners of call-in talk radio emerged: Listeners reported higher scores on the argumentativeness scale than nonlisteners. Argumentativeness is a trait that marks enjoyment in advocating positions on controversial issues (Infante & Rancer, 1982). This finding is consistent with Rancer, Miles, and Baukus' (1994) study of call-in talk radio listeners and nonlisteners. Their study found that listeners to call-in talk radio reported higher levels of self-esteem and were more likely to believe that arguing is a pleasant, enjoyable, and stimulating experience than nonlisteners. The finding is also supportive of a more interest-based approach. Listeners are interested in the give and take of a controversial issue and will therefore look toward specific media, such as call-in talk radio, to follow their interest.

Given the nature of call-in talk radio it is not surprising that listeners endorse this trait. Call-in talk radio has been characterized as an open-mike forum with listeners speaking out on the major topics of the day (Crittenden, 1971). As this forum serves a democratic function it allows callers the ability to voice very different opinions. Therefore, individuals have a place to seek support for their positions while also allowing for dissent and disagreement.
In support for the uses and gratifications approach was the finding that call-in talk radio listeners prefer arguments over controversial issues than nonlisteners. Individuals are motivated to listen to the radio for discussions of controversial issues which in turn affects their selection of media content. Although different genres of talk radio, specifically issue-oriented and sports talk genres, did not elicit listeners with higher endorsement of argumentativeness, it is likely that individuals listen to more than one genre of talk radio. If this is true than it would be difficult to see any significant differences between genres. All genres of call-in talk radio seem to attract individuals who support argumentativeness.

Limitations of the study

One major limitation of this study was the high refusal rate. Of 645 valid attempts there were 207 completions and 438 refusals, for a 32.1% completion rate. Interviewers stated that the two main reasons that individuals refused to participate was the length of the study, 10 to 15 minutes, and the skepticism people had that callers were trying to sell something. The disturbing reality that individuals are not willing to participate in phone surveys, because companies have inundated individuals from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., will hinder any attempt for random digit dialing phone surveys. Researchers need to explore ways to restore public confidence in research and encourage participation in future studies.

A second limitation of the study was that I used shortened versions of some of the scales. This clearly led to lower internal consistencies in contextual age subscales and the
social experience subscale and may have reduced my ability to test my hypotheses. Another limitation included only examining single dimensions of concepts. For the family communication pattern, I used only the concept-oriented subscale and did not include the socio-oriented subscale. I may have seen that call-in talk radio listeners endorsed the conversation-oriented subscale over the conformity-oriented subscale. I also used only the social experience items of Duran's (1983) social adaptability scale. If I used all dimensions including social experience, social confirmation, social composure, articulation, appropriate disclosure, and wit I may have found more significant findings. In addition, I did not use all of the items for the contextual age subscales. I found that mobility ($r = .13$), interpersonal interaction (.14), and social activity items ($r = .28$) were not strongly correlated. It may also be that people gave the most socially desirable answer. It may be difficult for individuals to admit that they are lonely and/or that children should not express ideas to parents.

My pretest of shortened scales may not have been adequate. There were differences between the reliability of the pretest alpha of the conversation dimension of the family communication pattern (alpha = .86) as compared to the study (alpha = .73). One reason for this is that college students were the respondents for the pretest and college students are typically trained in test taking and often yield higher reliability estimates (Sears, 1986).

Another limitation of the study is that I did not ask respondents where they listened to call-in talk radio. I believe that respondents would have stated that they spent
most of their time listening to this format in their automobile. This alternative test to hypotheses 4, 5, and 6 concerns listeners mobility and activity.

A final limitation is the inclusion of companionship as a factor. With its eigenvalue it would not normally be in the equation.

**Future Research**

The results of this study have led to many ideas for future research. More time needs to be spent examining the differences between listeners and nonlisteners. Although the study found limited support for uses and gratifications belief in the influence of social and psychological factors on the reasons people listen to the call-in talk radio format, a more extensive examination needs to take place. Although this study focused on the social and psychological characteristics distinguishing listeners and nonlisteners to call-in talk radio, future research might explore how social and psychological characteristics influence motives to listen to the radio. In other words, future research should explain the indirect influence of social and psychological facets on radio format and genre selection. In addition, until all of the scales in the study are used in their entirety it is not prudent to discount the influence of these factors. In addition, other psychological and social factors need to be examined. For example, Rancer, Miles, and Baukus (1994) found that self-esteem and high scores of argumentativeness are related. It may be interesting to examine psychological variables such as self esteem and social skills in future studies on call-in talk radio listeners.
Future research should go beyond examining the reasons people listen to call-in talk radio and should focus on the influence of instrumental and ritualistic radio use motivation on listener selection. Rubin's (1984) distinction between these two categories of media users seems appropriately fitting for an examination of listeners versus nonlisteners. Additional time should be spent examining the use of mass media for information and the actual calling of talk radio programs. Also, the next step in looking at this are would be to study the effects of call-in talk radio on learning and agenda setting. Two questions that should be asked are: What is it that individuals are learning? and How might the information they receive during call-in talk radio programs influence the public agenda?

Finally, contextual age items and call-in talk radio listening needs to be reexamined. The study supports the idea that listeners are active individuals who are highly mobile. Past research has spent time developing deficit-based hypotheses based on the assumption that listeners and callers to call-in talk radio have needs that are unfilled. Taking a more interest-based approach to examining call-in talk radio may lead to different results.
APPENDIX

Study: Call-in Talk Radio

Spring 1996

Telephone number of respondent: ______________

Gender of respondent: M  F

Hello. I'm ______________. I'm a student in the Department of Communication at the University of Delaware. We are conducting a study of people and their radio preferences and we would like to ask you some questions about your opinions. This survey will take about 12 minutes of your time.

(IF R DOES NOT OBJECT, GO AHEAD)

(IF R REFUSES, THANK THEM FOR THEIR TIME)

(IF R DOES NOT HAVE TIME, WHEN WOULD BE A GOOD TIME TO CALL BACK)

ENTER EXACT TIME NOW: ___:___

Before we begin, I want to assure you that all of the information you give me is confidential. Your participation, of course, is voluntary. If you wish you may decline to answer any question or terminate the interview at any time.

I certify that the information contained in this questionnaire represents the true and complete answers by the respondent whom I personally interviewed on the day and time indicated above.

Signature of the interviewer ______________

Date: _______________
1. During a typical week do you listen to radio?

[1] yes  [2] no  {If no, skip to #29}

2. About how many hours on a typical week day do you listen to the radio?

___ hours ___ minutes

We are interested in hearing why you listen to the radio. The following are reasons people have given in the past. Please tell me whether these reasons are EXACTLY, A LOT, SOMEWHAT, NOT MUCH, or NOT AT ALL similar to the reasons you have for listening to the radio:

I listen to the radio...

3. To keep up on issues of the day


4. Because it is enjoyable


5. Because it is a good way to learn things that I can't find out elsewhere


6. To learn about how different people feel about different issues


7. To pick up information that I use in conversation with other people


8. To obtain useful information about daily life

9. So I won't have to feel alone


10. When I have nothing better to do


11. Because it allows me to unwind


12. Because it entertains me


13. Because it breaks up my day


14. Because it helps me change my mood


15. Because it is a habit


16. Are there any reasons that you listen to the radio that have not been mentioned?

17. Do you ever listen to talk radio programs where the hosts invite listeners to call-in?

   [1] yes  [2] no  {If no, skip to #29}

18. About how many hours on a typical week day do you listen to call-in talk radio?

   hours _____ minutes _____

19. How often do you listen to radio shows that invite listeners to call-in for practical information about things like finance, auto care, and household maintenance?

20. How often do you listen to radio shows that invite listeners to call in about issues of local and nation concerns?


21. How often do you listen to radio shows that invite listeners to call in about medical, family and health concerns?


22. How often do you listen to radio shows that invite listeners to call in about sports?


23. How often do you listen to radio shows that invite listeners to call in with sex questions?


24. Do you ever listen to any other call-in talk radio shows that I haven't mentioned?

   If so, what?__________________________

25. How often do you listen to this program?


26. What is your favorite call-in talk radio program?

27. Have you called into a talk radio program with in the last year?


27a. If so, what?__________________________
28. When do you find yourself being the most interested in what you are listening to on talk radio -- when you hear people expressing YOUR point of view on a subject or when you listen to people expressing THE OPPOSITE point of view?


This part of the survey asks you to provide responses to the items as you see yourself when you argue a controversial issue. Please tell me whether each statement is almost true, often true, occasionally true, rarely true, or almost never true for you personally.

29. I am energetic and enthusiastic when I argue


30. While in an argument, I worry that the person I am arguing with will form a negative impression of me.


31. I enjoy a good argument over a controversial issue


32. When I finish arguing with someone I feel nervous and upset


33. I enjoy defending my point of view

34. I prefer being with people who rarely disagree with me

[5] Almost never true

35. I have the ability to do well in an argument

[5] Almost never true

36. I try to avoid getting into arguments

[5] Almost never true

Now we would like to know how true the following statements are of you personally:

37. I like to be active in different social groups

[5] Almost never true

38. I enjoy socializing with various groups of people

[5] Almost never true

39. I enjoy meeting new people

[5] Almost never true

Here are some statements that people might say about themselves. Can you tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree and disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements:

40. I have ample opportunity for conversations with other people

[5] Strongly disagree
41. I stay at home most of the time

[5] Strongly disagree

42. I am very content and satisfied with my life

[5] Strongly disagree

43. I often visit with friends, relatives, or neighbors

[5] Strongly disagree

44. I often feel lonely

[5] Strongly disagree

45. I have to rely on other people to take me places

[5] Strongly disagree

46. I've been very successful in achieving my aims or goals in life

[5] Strongly disagree

47. I often participate in the meeting or activities of clubs, lodges, recreation centers, 
chuches or other organizations

[5] Strongly disagree

Here are a few questions about the things that families might talk about. Please tell me 
whether you STRONGLY AGREE, AGREE, SOMEWHAT AGREE AND DISAGREE, 
DISAGREE, or STRONGLY DISAGREE with each of the following statements:
48. Parents should ask their children’s opinion when the family is talking about something

[5] Strongly disagree

49. Children should tell their parents what they’re thinking about things

[5] Strongly disagree

50. Family members should talk about their feelings and emotions

[5] Strongly disagree

51. Parents should encourage their children to express their feelings

[5] Strongly disagree

52. Families should often talk about things that they have done during the day

[5] Strongly disagree

53. Families should often talk about their plans and hopes for the future

[5] Strongly disagree

Now, some questions about you:

54. In your own mind, do you think of yourself as a supporter of one of the political parties or not?


55. If yes - Which political party do you support?

If no - Which political party do you think of yourself being closest to?
Turning to questions about your community involvement, in the past few years, have you done any of the following?

57. Attended a city council meeting, public hearing, or legislative meeting?

58. Written a letter to the editor of a newspaper, television station, or magazine?

59. Contacted an elected official about some problem you were interested in?

60. Contributed money to a political or a public interest campaign?

61. Been active as a volunteer for a community organization or action group or community fundraising work?

62. Belonged to any civic organizations that carry out projects that are potentially helpful to communities?

63. Are you currently employed?

64. What is the highest year of school you have completed?

65. What was your age on your last birthday?

66. Including yourself, how many people over the age of 18 are currently living in your household?
REFERENCES


