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Assessing the Impact of United States mass media on Croatian cultural identities

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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Iveta Imre entitled "Assessing the Impact of United States mass media on Croatian cultural identities." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Communication and Information.

Norman Swan, Major Professor

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Assessing the Impact of United States mass media on Croatian cultural identities

A Dissertation Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Iveta Imre

May 2014

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ABSTRACT

Researchers throughout the decades have been interested in understanding how global communications coming from the West affect different cultures around the world. Many have raised concerns about the impact of American media on unique national cultures. The main purpose of this study was to understand how exposure to American television influences cultural identities and values of young people in Croatia, one of the new democracies of post-Communist Eastern Europe. This was accomplished in two parts. First part of this study sought to test the relationship between watching American television and adopting American values following a cognitive functional theory of television's socialization effects developed by Tan, Nelson, Dong, and Tan (1997). Survey was distributed to a sample of 487 undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Zagreb in Croatia. The second part of the study aimed to further understand the meaning of Croatian youth's experiences when they come in contact with foreign media and how they view their cultural identities. A total of 26 undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Zagreb participated in 5 focus groups. Results indicate that American television programs do not influence Croatian values as much as Croatian culture. While the survey participants accepted only five American values out of 16 measured, the focus group participants, on the other hand, described how American influences could be seen in everyday life in Croatia. However, as the results of this study show, exposing foreign cultures to American television programs hardly leads to cultural homogenization based on Western values. Instead, these cultural encounters lead to cultural hybridity, an emergence of a new form of culture comprised, on one hand, of old,

well established Croatian cultural elements, and on the other hand newer, accepted or assimilated Western cultural elements.

Key words: *Global communication, cultural identities, Croatia, Western values*

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The rise of global communication has caused an increase in interactions among the world's unique cultural groups. Marshall McLuhan coined the term "global village" referring to the advances in technology and greater interconnectivity (McLuhan & Powers, 1992). McLuhan argued that through media such as television and the Internet, people across the globe are becoming increasingly linked together. Technology is enabling us to connect with people on the other side of the world quickly, and we are now able to hear and see events that take place far away in a matter of seconds. The term globalization was created later, but it follows the basic principles outlined by McLuhan. Today, television still plays a crucial role in the globalization process and is central to what Stuart Hall called "a global mass culture" (Hall, 1997). As a visual medium, it has a wider reach and appeal than the print media because millions of people around the world still do not know how to read or write. Global television, which disseminates images capable of overcoming linguistic barriers, has "created a space of its own through a unique merger of entertainment and information technologies" (Wallis & Schneider, 1988, p. 7).

As such, media play an important role in identity formation. Wheeler argued that, "It is through communication that cultures define themselves. In modern societies, much of this sense of shared identity is communicated through media technologies. These technologies help to transmit shared symbolic forms, a sense of group culture" (Wheeler, 2000, p. 432). The sheer pervasiveness of television allows for what Meyrowitz (1989) calls "mediated experience." The mediated world involves an overlap of different forms

of experience. Our day-to-day experiences are being supplemented and displaced by mediated experiences, which take on an important role in self-formation. Thompson (1995) argues “individuals draw on mediated experience to inform and refashion the project of the self” (p. 233). As we are relying on the media for these mediated experiences, which involve images of people, events and places, our knowledge of the “Other” depends on it.

The Western countries today dominate the global media landscape. For example, United States and United Kingdom corporations produce and distribute much of the world’s news and current affairs output. This means that the bulk of global entertainment and information flows between Africa, Latin America and Asia is mediated through content provided by Anglo-American news organizations (Sreberny-Mohammadi et al., 1997).

Researchers throughout the decades have been interested in understanding how global media coming from the West affects different cultures around the world (Barnett, & McPhail, 1980; Grixti, 2006; Chen, 2009). Many have raised concerns about the impact of American media on unique national cultures. Such globally transmitted programs promote shared media culture, and could create a global village based on the English language and Western lifestyles and values. Morley and Robins (2013) argue that, given the fact that the flow of global information mostly comes from the West, our knowledge of the “Other” is created from the Western perspective, and we often see ourselves through “Western eyes” (p. 223). Thussu (2006) argues that, over time, one potential consequence of globalization might be cultural homogenization, which he describes as “the convergence of indigenous cultures of the world into a universal

culture” (p. 175). Thus, it argues that people are detaching from their national cultures, and realigning with the universal principles of international consumer culture. Some researchers even argue that in today's globalized world one cannot say that there is a true national cultural identity anymore; cultural identities are being eroded by the global cultural supermarket, whose aspects, such as the American pop tunes on radio, Coca-Cola, and McDonald's, can be seen around the world (Mathews, 2002).

Country where American influence is present is Croatia. Croatia is a small post-communist country that has been independent from Yugoslavia since 1991. Many argue that Croatia still does not have a well-defined cultural identity. Even though a nation of Croats has existed for centuries, the Croatian identity has been changing through the years depending on the situation and the events the country and the nation were going through (Skoko, 2004).

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to understand how exposure to American television influences cultural identities and values of young people in Croatia, one of the new democracies of post-Communist Eastern Europe. This was accomplished in two parts. The first part of this study aims to test the relationship between watching American television and adopting American values following a cognitive functional theory of television's socialization effects developed by Tan, Nelson, Dong, and Tan (1997). Many researchers have argued that values are central in understanding cultures. Orbe and Harris (2007) even define culture as “learned and shared values, beliefs, and behaviors common to a particular group of people; culture forges a group's identity and assists in its survival” (p. 6). Thus, values could be seen as essential to cultural identities because they

set apart one culture from another and as such could be considered to be basic to the description of culture. Following the premise of cognitive-functional theory of media effects (Tan, Nelson, Dong, Tan, 1997), this study assumes that whether or not young Croatians will adopt cultural values they see in American programs will depend on how often they see them, and how functional they find them to be.

The second part of the study aims to further understand the meaning of people's experiences when they come in contact with foreign media and how they view their cultural identities in today's globalized world. Croatia is a new democracy and former Yugoslav republic. As such, its cultural values are in a transitional phase and Croats themselves are struggling with understanding what it means to be Croat. Thus, the researcher took an exploratory approach to understand the meaning of Croatian cultural identity to young people in Croatia, and possible American media influences on their identities.

There are several reasons why this research in Croatia is important. First, this study takes the media import debate into a part of the world where it has not been studied in detail. In fact, literature on the foreign media impact on cultural identities in countries of former Yugoslavia is almost non-existent. Croatia, as a former Yugoslavian republic, is particularly interesting because it is a fairly new democratic country with a strong communist background. Croatia is a country that has had only a couple of dozen years to distinguish itself from the Yugoslavian and Communist mentality and transform into a democracy. This study looks into how this transformation transpired, and whether American influences played any role in it. Second, this study furthers the understanding of the effects of globalization by testing a theory not previously tested on the foreign

audiences. Tan, Nelson, Dong, Tan, (1997) tested their cognitive-functional theory of media effects on the Hispanic population in the United States, but have not further taken it beyond the American borders. Third, this study adds to the research about foreign media influence on local cultures by looking at how American media specifically impact young Croats because research shows that young people are generally exposed to foreign media more than older generations (Kang, & Michael, 1988; Zaharopoulos, 2003). They are an interesting generation to study in Croatia because they were born after Croatia became independent and are some of the first real Croats, and they do not remember Yugoslavia or know life in Yugoslavia beyond the stories they hear. In addition, they are also part of the millenials, a generation that has been impacted by globalization the most through their extensive use of new technologies and globally disseminated programs (Rollin, 1999). This study will shed light on how these young people balance Yugoslavian legacy that still prevails with older generations with globalized values. Finally, this study will further the knowledge on foreign media effects and provide a better understanding of what it means to be a Croat in today's globalized world.

Croatia was selected for this study because of the author's knowledge of the country's history and culture. The researcher was born and raised in Croatia, and has lived there for the longest part of her life. In addition, Croatia was selected because it is a new democracy still in political and cultural transition. For most of its history Croatia has been under various influences – there were Greek colonists in the fourth century BC, Arabian and Ottoman conquests, and Italian, Normans, Hungarians, Austrians, Germans, and French. Today, Croats are still struggling with the Yugoslavian communistic legacy and are trying to develop their own, distinct cultural identities.

The background section of this study discusses Croatian identity and the development of Croatian media; defines identity, collective identity, and cultural identity; and discusses the rise of American media on the global level. The second chapter is a literature review introducing research on cultural identity and values in Eastern Europe and Croatia, and studies examining influence of American media on foreign cultures. The third chapter provides information on the methods used to collect data for this study, and the fourth chapter describes the results collected. Finally, the fifth chapter provides discussion on the findings and provides some conclusions and recommendations for future studies.

Background

Croatia

After World War II in 1945, Maršal Tito, the partisan guerilla leader, created the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a federation of six republics: Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Hercegovina and Macedonia. Tito successfully stopped the USSR from taking over Yugoslavia and established communist rule of his own. He ruled the country following the principles of liberal communism allowing open borders and heavy international borrowing (Cox, 2002). Yugoslavia was in good relations with Western countries for many years, which facilitated economic growth. Tito led the country until his death in 1980. After his death, Yugoslavia as a country existed under various leaders for another decade. However, the end of the 1980s brought economic problems and ethnic tensions resulting in a series of ethnic wars in the first part of 1990s (Baskin & Pickering, 2011). The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 was the beginning of the end of Yugoslavia. The final breakup of the federation began in May 1991 when Croatia

and Slovenia declared independence from the Serbian-dominated central government in Belgrade (Thompson, 1999).

Croatia declared independence in 1991. The new country bordered Italy, Slovenia and Hungary to the North, Bosnia-Herzegovina to the South and Serbia to the East. Croatia inherited 1,000 kilometers of beautiful coastline on the Adriatic Sea from the federation. The declaration of independence was followed by the first multiparty elections where Communists lost without a fight. The winning party was the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) led by Franjo Tuđman. HDZ won the majority in the parliament, and Tuđman became the president of Croatia, with vast ruling power in his hands. Tuđman ruled Croatia in a form of a hybrid regime called competitive authoritarianism. He formed democratic institutions but used them for obtaining and exercising political authority (Levitsky & Way, 2002).

The price of independence did not come cheap. The war that started in Croatia in 1991 was a result of political conflict between Serbia and Croatia. The war brought destruction, death and damaged infrastructure. At the end of the war in 1995, foreign markets and investments were paralyzed; the tourism industry was at a halt because of the lack of security, and economic losses added up to \$27.5 billion (Gher, 2003). The Croatian economy also suffered from the closings of markets experienced by other Yugoslav republics and the crises that plagued other former socialist countries (Goldstein, 1999).

In addition, Croatia had to deal with problems inherited from the old system, specifically the ones that were associated with the political and sociological complexity of the region. The former Yugoslavia was a complicated country with a mix of ethnic

groups that, although they spoke similar languages, were historically different. These differences ultimately led to separation. The wars leading to separation were just the latest ones in historically long line of economic, cultural and militaristic conflicts (Cvitanić, 2011). As Yugoslavia was falling apart, Croatians started searching for a new cultural identity that would take the place of the old “collectivistic” identification imposed from the old institutions (Winland, 2002). Since the new president of Croatia, Dr. Franjo Tuđman, declared independence in the winter of 1992, Croatians started actively recuperating Croatian traditions through public displays of unity and the new, reinvigorated Croatian identity. They started organizing cultural and folk festivals, introduced Croatian studies programs, and resurrected traditional Croatian icons, monuments, and folk songs (Winland, 2002).

Media in Croatia

Today, the television market in Croatia is primarily national and highly concentrated in terms of viewership. The three most watched national television broadcasters are the public station, Croatian Public Television (HRT), and two commercial television stations, NOVA TV and RTL (Popović et al., 2010). In addition to the national broadcasters, there are at least 13 smaller, privately-owned channels that broadcast in specific regions. HRT broadcasts on four channels, the first three are a mix of news, sports and entertainment, and the fourth is only news. Broadcast user fees paid by each Croatian household mostly fund this television station, although advertising revenue is also available (Cvitanić, 2011). Unlike the television market, the radio market in Croatia is regionally structured with regional and local stations holding 65 % of radio audience, and national commercial and public stations holding 34% (Peruško & Jurlin,

2006). The total number of registered radio stations in Croatia is around 165, and the most popular ones are *Narodni Radio*, *Antena Zagreb*, *Otvoreni Radio*, and the *PBS Croatian Radio 1* (Popović et al., 2010). The number of newspapers, magazines, and other printed media has grown significantly over the past twenty years, and today the overall number of printed media is somewhere between 850 and 2,525. The three most popular daily newspapers are *24 sata*, a small format news tabloid, *Jutarnji List*, a morning newspaper founded in 1998 as a left center alternative to *Večernji List*, a conservative evening daily with a long tradition (Popović et al., 2010). In recent years, Croatians have started increasingly relying on the Internet as a source of news, entertainment, and everyday communication. In 2000, only 4.6 % of population used the Internet regularly. This number rose to almost 33 % by 2006, and in 2010, approximately 2.24 million Croats, or around 50 % of the population, used the Internet (Cvitančić, 2011).

The Law on Electronic Media regulates the program requirements on Croatian television stations. The law regulates that television stations must broadcast at least 20% locally produced programming daily, and 10% programming produced in Europe (Zakon o Elektroničkim medijima). The Law on HRT additionally regulates HRT, and this law requires 40% of daily programming to be locally produced while 15% must come from Europe (Law on HRT). The laws also require that all foreign programs broadcast on one of these stations needs to be dubbed in Croatian language. Despite the regulations of programming content, television in Croatia has been criticized for being under an excessive influence of commercialization. Critics argue that commercial broadcasters do not promote national culture and social values, while the public broadcaster is criticized

for its efforts to attract advertisers through programming that is thought to appeal to the mass audience (Malović, 2005).

When it comes to regular daily programs, most of the national broadcasters usually begin with news or cartoons in the morning; followed by Latin American telenovelas, and American, domestic, and Turkish soap operas in the afternoon, and news, reality shows, movies; and domestic shows in the evening. American programs are aired on Croatian television regularly. One can find a wide range of American programs from talk shows and reality television such as the *Jerry Springer Show* and *Survivor*, sitcoms such as *Seinfeld* and *30 Rock*, to popular American series such as *Lost*, *Desperate Housewives*, and *Prison Break* (Cvitanić, 2011). In fact, American-produced shows and series have traditionally been some of the most watched on Croatian national stations. For example, in 2006, the American television series *Prison Break* broadcast on RTL was the most watched series in Croatia with a 15% market share when compared to the other two national broadcasters ("RTL i Nova ugrozili HTV: U najgledanijem terminu HTV ima manju gledanost," 2006). However, locally-produced shows and Turkish soap operas have become increasingly popular in recent years. The audience ratings show that the top two most watched series in Croatia in 2011 were Croatian soap operas, followed by two Turkish ones ("Nova TV najgledanija i najkvalitetnija televizija u 2011," 2011). Despite the changing trend in audience preferences on the three national broadcasters, the Croatian audience still enjoys American television films and series broadcast via cable. Cable is present in 18% of households, while 30% have a satellite (Cvitanić, 2011). Recent audience research results indicate that among the most popular cable providers are

channels such as Fox Life, Fox Crime, and HBO ("Top 25 najgledanijih televizijskih postaja u Hrvatskoj," 2009).

A similar trend can be observed among Croatian moviegoers. Despite the fact that Croatian cinematography has revived during the last decade, American films are still earning top box-office revenues. Foreign films are a necessity in Croatian movie theaters because Croatia releases between six and nine movies a year, and the country's 87 cinemas are forced to show movies imported primarily from the United States (Cvitanić, 2011). The company that owns and operates the most movie theaters in Croatia, Blitz-CineStar, has contracts with top American distributors such as Warner Bros Pictures International, Universal, Paramount, and Dreamworks. Blockbuster earnings show that the top ten movies in Croatian theaters in 2012 were American made and include movies such as *The Avengers*, *The Hunger Games*, and *The Dark Knight Rises* (Deset najboljih filmova u 2012. godini).

The global rise of American media exports

The concentration of global media power resulted in a one directional flow of international communication coming from the West, mainly the United States (Varis, 1985). Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung noticed this pattern as early as the 1970s and he associated the role of international communication with maintaining the structures of economic and political power. Galtung argued that the world consists of developed center states and underdeveloped periphery states. According to the theory he developed, structural imperialism, the information flows from the center states to the periphery, and in the periphery, primary importance is attached to the issues prioritized by the center (Galtung, 1971). Research has shown that today, even though some peripheral countries

(Cox, & Sinclair, 1996) have emerged as mass media exporters, the United States still is the leader in the global media market. For example, even in countries with strong domestic television production such as Brazil, Mexico and Argentina, more than 70 percent of film and television series are imported from the United States (UNESCO, 1998).

The American rise in exporting media entertainment could be traced back to World War I when the United States gained an advantage in film industry. The war had curtailed production in the biggest European film producing countries such as France, Italy and Germany, allowing American exporters to step in (Segrave, 1997). When the United States entered the war in 1917, the American government formed a partnership with the film industry and started a massive promotional effort to sell American culture and values abroad. Today, many countries around the world depend heavily on imported television coming primarily from the United States (McChesney, & Herman, 1997). Hollywood films are shown in more than 150 countries around the world, while American television programs can be seen in over 125 international markets (Thussu, 2006). According to the Motion Picture Association of America, the United States film and television industries generated \$13.5 billion of revenue abroad (2012 Report on Economic Contribution, 2012). It also appears that European moviegoers prefer Hollywood-produced films to locally-produced cinema. The presence of Hollywood-made movies in European cinemas and on European television stations has increased substantially, especially in film and series-based programming, which is often dubbed into local languages. A study conducted by the European Audiovisual Observatory found that the top 10 films in 34 European countries for 1996-2004 were all American made

(World Film Market Trends, 2007). Furthermore, this report showed that in 2004, nearly 72% of films showed within the European Union were from Hollywood, 26% were European, and just 2% came from the rest of the world.

In addition to entertainment, the United States is the leader in the global news market as well. The Second World War era called for the creation of a global communication system for the first time in history. Events in one part of the world affected events elsewhere and were of interest to states across the globe. The beginning of the 1980s opened the doors to innovations in communication technologies such as the creation of CNN. Ted Turner envisioned and created the first global news network (Whittemore, 1990) that broadcast news around the clock and around the world through satellites and cable television outlets. CNN was innovative because it concentrated completely on news and its reach was global. In other words, CNN reported news events from all over the world internationally as they were happening. With such an innovative approach it did not take long for CNN to emerge as a global actor in international relations. Coverage of Gulf War at the beginning of 1990s launched CNN into stardom and inspired other broadcasting organizations, such as BBC, to establish global television networks (Gilboa, 2005).

The term “Americanization” became popular in the late 1960s when research on media systems focused on examining efforts the United States put into influencing and changing media systems in Europe and around the world (Jakubowicz & Sukosd, 2008). It appears that the efforts United States put into exporting American values and beliefs were successful because it is American entertainment, such as film, television programs and advertising, and American networks, such as news, documentaries, online

information, that have the widest appeal in the world (Segrave, 1998; Marling, 2006). Researchers studying the global appeal of United States popular culture argue that there are three main reasons for the worldwide success: the universality of its themes and formulas make the program easily translatable and physiologically accessible; the open potential of the stories make the programs valuable as projective mechanisms; and the abundance of American programs, which are available around the globe and which national producers could never match (Katz & Liebes, 1990).

Identity

To even begin to understand the possible effects of foreign media on cultural identities, one needs to understand the concept of identity. This concept has been a subject of study for many decades, and has come into focus as more and more researchers are concerned about how globalization affects our identities. Identity is a complex concept, one that has been defined in a number of ways. Yep (1998) defines identity as a “person’s conception of self within a particular social, geographical, cultural, and political context” (p. 79). Identity is a sense of self, a sense of who we are in a specific situation. Mathews (2002) refers to the dictionary definition of identity as the condition of being a specific person or thing. Hall (1997) rejects the idea that fixed identities exist and writes that identities “are points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us” (p. 33). Giddens (1991) defines identity as “the ongoing sense the self has of who it is, as conditioned through its ongoing interactions with others” (p. 53).

Castells (1997) argues that identity must be distinguished from roles, and role-sets. Roles, such as being a worker or a mother, are outlined by the society and society’s

institutions and organizations. Identities, on the other hand, are created through a process of individualization and are sources of meaning for the actors themselves. Castells (1997) defines meaning as “the symbolic identification by a social actor of the purpose of her/his action”(p. 7). He further explains that identities can also derive from dominant institutions, but they do not become identities until actors internalize them and construct meaning around the internalization. In other words, identities organize the meaning while roles organize the functions (Castells, 1997).

When it comes to how identities are formed, researchers agree that identities are not something foundational and fixed, but are the production of interactions among people. For example, Lawler (2008) argues that identities are dynamic and produced through narratives that people use to explain and understand their lives. As Stuart Hall (1996) puts it, “Identification is a construction, a process never completed – always in “process” (p. 4). Somers and Gibson (1993) further explain this idea: “People construct identities, however multiple and changing, by locating themselves or being located within a repertoire of emplotted stories...people are guided to act in certain ways on the basis of projections, expectations, and memories derived from a multiplicity but ultimately linked repertoire of available social, public and cultural narratives” (p. 38-39).

Collective identity

Another important aspect to consider when defining identities is the idea that identities refer to people’s sameness as well as difference. The root of the word “identity” is the Latin *idem*, meaning the same, from which we also get identical. This means that not only are we identical with ourselves, but we are identical with others. There are both personal and collective identities, the first one referring to one’s sense of who one

uniquely is as an individual, and the second one denoting the one's sense of who they are in reference with others. However, as Lawler (2008) writes, another aspect of identity refers to people's uniqueness and their difference from others. In this way people are understood as being simultaneously the same and different.

Jenkins (2002) argues that collectives emerge as a consequence of individuals sharing certain characteristics and doing things together in a way that is mutually meaningful and coordinated. He defines collectives as “symbolic constructs and complexes, which are, to some extent, known about, understood, and manipulated by individuals” (p. 12). In other words, collectives are something that individuals know at least something about, and they know what it takes to be or become a member. Individuals in the collectives identify themselves with the group based on collective affiliations and characteristics. Jenkins (2002) further argues that collectives are not fixed, but continually change as a result of social interactions between members and non-members of a specific group. For a collective to form there has to be not only some prior community of territory or language, but also shared experiences and shared history. As Castells (1997) writes, “people cluster in community organizations that over time generate a feeling of belonging, and ultimately a communal, cultural identity” (p. 29).

Cultural Identity

To understand the concept of cultural identity, one needs to define culture first. Orbe and Harris (2007) define culture as “learned and shared values, beliefs, and behaviors common to a particular group of people; culture forgoes a group's identity and assists in its survival” (p. 6). Jackson (1998) provides more details and says that culture is “a set of patterns, beliefs, behaviors, institutions, symbols, and practices shared and

perpetuated by a consolidated group of individuals connected by an ancestral heritage and a concomitant geographical reference location” (p. 44).

People have multiple identities composed of personal, cultural and social characteristics. Cupach and Imahori (1993) explain that personal identities are distinctive traits of people such as personality and relationships, while cultural identities are shared with others. Therefore, cultural identity can be defined as a sense of belonging to a particular group, which is formed through membership in a particular culture, and it involves sharing traditions, heritage, language, religion, ancestry, aesthetics, thinking patterns, and social structures (Lustig & Koester, 1999). According to these researchers, cultural identity is a social construction. Fong and Chuang (2004) explain that the distinguishing features of a particular group of people identify with are historical and political struggles, significant celebrations, and a sense of common fate or destiny. In addition, exposure to films, books, exhibits, travels, and discussions educate and promote understanding among members in a cultural and intercultural context. Besides these distinguishing features, cultures differ from each other depending on the cultural patterns by which they go about their daily routines. Bauman (2002) writes that each culture has its ideal standard by which members set apart the proper from improper, good from evil, true from false, and right from wrong. He argues that these particular ideals and the difference between selected ideal patterns is what differentiates one group from another.

Cultural identities and value systems

As the definitions of culture show, values are an important part of studying cultural identities. For Parsons (1964), values are central to the understanding of personality functioning, important in the integration of social systems and basic to the

description of culture. Many researchers have observed that values differ among different groups of people. Factors such as similar culture, social system, sex, occupation, education, caste and class, religion, and political orientation can influence the value systems of people. While individual value systems may differ as a result of influences coming from personality factors, cultural, institutional, and social factors will restrict the number and the scope of such variations. Social psychologist Rokeach (1972) was the first researcher who, in the 1970s, ranked values along a continuum of importance. He developed a list of 36 value items that respondents were asked to rank with respect to how strongly the respondent endorsed each item. Items found in value studies today go back to Rokeach's list of values, such as equality, freedom, salvation, friendship, national security, and so on.

Definition of terms

Globalization: refers to the rapidly developing process of complex interconnections between societies, cultures, institutions and individuals world-wide. It is a social process which involves a compression of time and space, shrinking distances through a dramatic reduction in the time taken – either physically or representationally – to cross them, so making the world seem smaller and in a certain sense bringing them closer to one another (Tomlinson, 1999)

Americanization: the influence the United States has on the culture of other countries, such as their popular culture, cuisine, technology, business practices, or political practices (Abdulrahim, 2009).

Identity: the ongoing sense the self has of who it is, as conditioned through its ongoing interactions with others (Giddens, 1991).

Culture: a set of patterns, beliefs, behaviors, institutions, symbols, and practices shared and perpetuated by a consolidated group of individuals connected by an ancestral heritage and a concomitant geographical reference location (Jackson, 1998).

Cultural identity: a sense of belonging to a particular group, which is formed through a membership in a particular culture, and involves sharing traditions, heritage, language, religion, ancestry, aesthetics, thinking patterns, and social structures of culture (Lustig & Koester, 1999).

Values: Values are concepts or beliefs that pertain to desirable end states or behaviors, transcend specific situations, guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and are ordered by relative importance (Schwartz, & Bilsky, 1990).

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The following literature review is divided into several sections. The first two sections report findings from studies looking at cultural identities and value systems in Eastern Europe and Croatia. The third section reports on studies examining the impact of the U.S. media on foreign audiences. This section has two subsections. Each of the subsections examines studies that tested important theories in this field, cultural imperialism and cultivation theory. The final section reports findings of studies that focused on examining the impact of the U.S. media on young foreign audiences.

Cultural Identities and Value Systems in Eastern Europe

Culture and cultural heritage play an important role in determining the value systems of societies. For example, Inglehart (2004) notes that large differences exist between value systems of the historically Catholic or Protestant societies and the historically Orthodox societies in Europe. He wrote that the publics of Central and Eastern European countries have similar basic values that differ from those in Western Europe. Based on data that was conducted through a World Value Survey in 80 societies between 1981 and 2002, The World Value Survey data revealed two major dimensions of cross-cultural variance, which were traditional versus secular-rational orientations toward authority, and a polarization between privileging of survival or self-expression. The data showed that the post-communist countries are much less likely to have traditional values than other countries. For example, he found that people in post-communist countries are less likely to think that God has an important role in their life, rank low on national pride, do not respect authority as much as non-communist countries, have relatively high levels

of tolerance for abortion, and have low levels of national pride. In addition, he found that these cultures emphasize survival values over self-expression values, which means that they give low priority to environmental protection, do not tolerate diversity, and do not participate in decision-making in economic and political life. In addition, these societies are conducive to an atmosphere of intolerance, mistrust, and political extremism (Inglehart, 2004). For example, tolerance of homosexuality and gender equality are lower in post-communist countries.

According to Inglehart (2004), values in post-communist countries have been impacted by decades of Communist rule. Even though Communist governments in different countries varied in the rigidity and style in which they ruled, the Communist regime in general managed to create a common cultural framework superseding distinct national cultures. In addition to a shared institutional structure of autocracy and command economy, the Communist rule imposed a “philosophy of dependence” instead of self-reliance; collectivism and conformity instead of individualism; equality of opportunities and outcomes; extremism in beliefs; and intolerance (Miller, Reisinger, & Hesli, 1993).

In summary, Inglehart (2004) conducted a World Value Survey where he discovered differences in values between Central and Eastern European countries as supposed to Western European countries. Some of the major findings from this study are that post-communist countries are less traditional, do not tolerate diversity, are conducive to an atmosphere of intolerance, mistrust, and political extremism. Inglehart (2004) concluded that the main reason for these differences is the fact that post-communist countries have been impacted by decades of Communist rule, which created a common cultural framework superseding distinct national cultures.

Cultural Identity and Value System in Croatia

Many argue that Croatia still does not have a well-defined identity. Even though a nation of Croatians has existed for centuries, the Croatian identity has been changing through the years depending on the situation and the events the country and the nation were going through (Skoko, 2004). Kale (1999) writes that Croatian cultural identity is partially defined by the fact that, historically, Croatia has been a part of the European cultural circle. In addition, he points out that some of the distinguishing features of that identity stem from the shared Croatian language, cultural boundaries, and values people hold as a nation. Tarle (2004) sees Croatian cultural identity as a mix of different cultures. Because of its unique geographical position, Croatia has, through the years, been influenced by three great cultures: middle European, Mediterranean, and Balkan.

Many authors write that Croatian cultural identity was not formed until the early 1990s when Croatia separated from Yugoslavia and became independent. Šimac (2001) thinks that precisely because Croatia is a young country, its cultural identity is not well defined and is fragile, and during the 1990s it was plagued by the sudden resurrection of national pride propagated heavily by the Croatian president. Despite the desire of many Croats for respect and engagement in the European community, which finally resulted in the membership in the European Union in the summer of 2013, the whole 1990s decade was plagued by xenophobic right-wing nationalism, political favoritism and corruption, and discrimination against minorities (Cvitanić, 2011). Croatian nationalism, as propagated by Tuđman, was a direct consequence of years spent under the Communist rule imposed by the Yugoslav government in Belgrade. From a philosophical perspective, this kind of ideology was designed to preserve conservative values and traditional

Croatian culture. Even though in recent years many Croatians moved away from the politics of nationalism, the 1990s did instill a xenophobic mentality in people who are intolerant of anyone not fitting the Croatian prototype, including homosexuals, black people, and Muslims (Cvitanić, 2011). For example, the data from the European World Value survey from the 1999-2000 showed that Croatians ranked as the fourth most xenophobic nation among thirty-one nations surveyed, behind only Turkey, Bulgaria, and Romania, in regards to people of different race. The same survey also showed that Croatians are anti-Muslim (ranking fifth behind Lithuania, Romania, Malta, and Bulgaria); they ranked sixth most anti-immigrant, and seventh most anti-Semitic (Ramet, 2007).

Historically, and especially during the years of being a part of Yugoslavia, Croatian social heritage was influenced by the characteristics of totalitarianism such as the planned economy and the one-party system. The early 1990s brought independence and change, and the new political order was, at least nominally, based on liberal and democratic principles, such as the development of a market economy, implementation of political pluralism, and respect for human and minority rights (Ilišin, 2007). However, the first decade after the independence was plagued by the idea of building an ethnically homogenous state, and the revitalization of traditional values. As it was already mentioned, during Tuđman's years in power, years of war and reconstruction, the regime promoted a traditionalist and exclusive vision of Croatia. He promoted extreme nationalism and tried to build a country exclusively for the Croatians; and Serbs collectively were made to feel unwelcome (Ramet, 2007). Research shows that the most common values among the Croatians in the mid 1990s were patriarchalism (56%) and

liberalism (54%), followed by authoritarianism (43%), ethnocentrism (37%), and collectivism (19%) (Ilišin, 1999).

The early 2000s brought many political changes. With the death of president Tuđman, the idea of nationalism slowly started dwindling, and the left wing coalition took power and started promoting liberal and democratic values. Ilišin (2007) studied the acceptance of these values in Croatia by surveying the young population in 2004. She found an overwhelming rate of acceptance. The highest acceptance was found for freedom (94%), respect for human rights (92%), equality (74%), and social justice (76%), while least-accepted values were ethnic equality (58%), rule of law (55%), and democracy (61%). These results indicate that basic liberal rights are more accepted than the values of constituting a democratic order or the values of national equality. Ilišin (2007) writes that these results are a direct consequence of the totalitarian regime sold as democracy during the 1990s, and the fact that ethnic conflicts during the early 1990s left people insensitive toward the need for ensuring minority ethnic rights by the majority nation. In addition, Ilišin (2007) measured acceptance of certain social phenomena. An overwhelming majority of Croatian citizens believes that premarital sexual experience (93%), sexual education in schools (90%), extramarital partnerships (70%), the birth of children out of wedlock (65%), divorce (61%), organ donation (85%), and obligatory AIDS tests (78%) are acceptable. These results indicate substantial erosion of the traditional and patriarchal legacy, as the young people in Croatia are going through the liberalization of sexual behavior and the institution of marriage following the trends seen in the rest of European countries. However, Croatian young people are more conservative regarding the marital and parental rights of homosexuals. Rights of homosexuals to marry

were supported only by 33% of young Croatians, while rights of homosexuals to adopt or having homosexual experiences had an even lower acceptance rate (17%) (Ilišin, 2007). Other researchers have also noted that the views on gay rights lag far behind Western nations and are rarely even discussed. In Yugoslavia, homosexuality was looked at in an extremely negative context, and was put in the same category as prostitution and drug abuse. Cvitanić (2011) writes that, “given the predominance of conservative traditional values in Croatia, the stigmatization of gays and the predominance of gay stereotypes is hardly surprising” (p. 72). Many Croatians are uncomfortable with this issue, and according to surveys from the International Encyclopedia of Sexuality, around half of the respondents are homophobic (Francoeur, & Noonan, 2004). When it comes to gender equality, Croatia is still very traditional as well. For example, a woman is still expected to take on the role of a homemaker and a mother. At the same time, though, young women are expected to get a college degree and work. However, when these women do enter the labor market, they face discrimination when it comes to job prospects and salaries (Cvitanić, 2011).

The traditional views on gender equality and homosexuals might be related to the fact that Croatia is still considered a highly religious country, especially when compared to her Western neighbors. Zrinščak (2007) conducted a comparative study between Croatia and its northwest neighbor, Slovenia. He found that Croatia was more religious in all aspects. For example, only 11% of Croats declared a non-confessional identification, while in Slovenia this figure is almost three times as high. Some 79.9% of Croatia’s inhabitants say they are religious people, compared with only 64.6% percent in Slovenia. Also, Zrinščak found that Roman Catholicism is the dominant denomination in Croatia,

while other denominations in Croatia are almost nonexistent, with only 4.42% declaring as Orthodox, and only 1.28% as Muslim (Zrinščak, 2004).

In sum, there is an agreement among the researchers that Croatia does not have a well-defined identity. Through the years, it was influenced by the middle European, Mediterranean, and Byzantine cultures. Since Croatia is a young country, it has not been able to distinguish itself culturally from Yugoslavia yet. Early 1990s President Tudjman propagated extreme nationalism designed to preserve conservative values and traditional Croatian culture, but ended up creating a xenophobic mentality in people, who became intolerant of diversity. The early 2000s brought change with the new liberal government, and new research on liberal value acceptance found that young Croats have been receptive of basic liberal rights such as freedom, respect for human rights, and equality, but that support for homosexuals and gender equality is still very low. One of the reasons for the lack of support for gay rights and gender equality might be the fact that Croatia is still largely a religious country.

The impact of U.S. media on foreign cultures

Barnett and McPhail (1980) wanted to understand how United States television affects Canadian national identity. Using metric multidimensional scaling, the researchers surveyed 149 students in Canada. They found that students who watched more U.S. television perceived themselves as less Canadian and more American, than the group that watched little U.S. television, and they held more American than Canadian values. The researchers concluded that the Canadians should increase regulation of U.S. television within Canada in order to enhance the Canadian identity, or try to compete with the U.S. television with better content.

Surlin and Berlin (1991) also wanted to explore how United States television influences Canadians. Specifically, they wanted to determine how Canadian students perceived the television programming produced in the United States, and how that programming impacts the students' own attitudes toward their culture. Their sample consisted of students from Ontario, Canada, and from Buffalo, New York. They first asked the respondents to fill out a questionnaire and arrange 18 terminal values and 18 instrumental values in order of importance, as guiding principles of their lives. Then, they asked them to watch a five-minute scene from *Cosby Show*, and a 30-second television commercial for Oldsmobile. They found that among both sets of students those who watched more U.S. television had more favorable attitudes toward the program, saw Canada as culturally less unique, and were more likely to believe that Canadian culture is not worth preserving.

In summary, the research on the impact of U.S. media on foreign national identities found that viewing American programming influenced foreign audiences in a way that caused them to shy away from their culture, feel their culture was not worth preserving, and align more with American values.

Cultural imperialism

McChesney (2001) and Schiller (1991) see the globalization trend as proliferating the homogenization of programming content and American popular culture. These critical researchers coined the term cultural imperialism in the 1960s to explain the impact of the media on less developed peripheral nations, at the same time looking at issues such as power dominance and economic determinism. Herbert Schiller (1991) defines cultural imperialism as, "the extent to which American programs, art, culture, and

other values are exported and overwhelm those of foreign countries” (p. 149). Schiller studied ways in which Western developed nations were having a negative effect on peripheral countries, as well as how Western media industries were drawing economic revenues, such as box office revenues, from the nations around the world to benefit Hollywood. He argues that American films, TV programs, music, news, entertainment, theme parks, and shopping malls set the standard for worldwide imitation and that “American cultural domination remains forceful in a rapidly changing international power scene” (p. 22).

Payne and Peake (1977) tested the cultural imperialism theory in their study. Specifically, they wanted to know whether exposure to U.S. television affects attitudes toward the U.S., whether U.S. television conveys political information about the U.S., and whether U.S. television creates attitudes characteristic of American culture. Data was collected in Iceland, where the researchers administered questionnaires to children ages 11-14. Data revealed that U.S. television had a minimal effect in generating favorable attitudes about the U.S., and it did not increase political information about the U.S. The most interesting finding of this study was that attitudes of fear, anger or sadness, which Icelanders usually associate with U.S. culture, were affected more by the Icelandic television programming than the American. The researchers did not find evidence of cultural imperialism in Iceland, but they did find that local media, which is adapted to each community, has a much more powerful effect. They concluded that the effects of foreign media might not be as strong as previously thought, and that the tenacity with which people hold on to their own culture should be taken into consideration.

Tan, Tan, and Tan (1987) also tested cultural imperialism theory. They wanted to determine whether exposure to American television in the Philippines influences Filipino high school students and their value systems and aspirations. They found that frequent viewers of American television were more likely to rate “pleasure” as an important value, and “salvation,” “wisdom,” and “forgiving” as less important. These findings are in stark contrast from the value priorities of an average Filipino. Thus, the researchers concluded that frequent viewing of American television led to some erosion of traditional Filipino values. However, only four of 36 values measured seemed to be affected by television, making the results miniscule.

In a more recent study, Stacy and Gordon (2009) found evidence of cultural imperialism. They wanted to find out whether the proliferation of the American television program promotes cultural heterogeneity and diversification of the programming content, or whether it contributes to the homogenization of programming culture and promotion of American popular culture. The researchers conducted in-depth interviews with people in Jamaica, and analyzed television content on local stations. The television content analysis revealed that, despite the fact that Jamaica increased private ownership of television media since 1994, there is strong evidence of American influence in the use of imported models for producing local television content. American-imported programming still dominates airtime, and the locally-produced programs resemble those from the U.S. The researchers concluded that American cultural imperialism is prevalent in Jamaican television programming, which is becoming homogenized, and that Jamaican viewers are exposed to foreign cultural images.

In summary, the term cultural imperialism was coined in the 1960s and refers to the extent to which American culture is exported and is overwhelming foreign cultures. Schiller (1991) argued that American films, TV programs, music, news, entertainment, theme parks, and shopping malls set the standard for worldwide imitation and that “American cultural domination remains forceful in a rapidly changing international power scene” (p. 22). Results from the studies testing this theory were mixed. Research in Iceland found that the effects of domestic media were more powerful than those of foreign media. Research in the Philippines did find some evidence to support the thesis that frequent viewing of American television leads to some erosion of traditional values of a particular country, but the results were very limited. The strongest support for this theory was demonstrated with the research in Jamaica where the results show that American-imported programming still dominates airtime, and the locally-produced programs resemble those from the U.S.

Cultivation Theory

The theories outlined above explore only a one-way relationship from the media to the audience but do not aid in understanding how individuals internalize and accept American mass media representations. This has become much of the focus of reception studies associated with the cultural studies movement, which has questioned the extent to which audiences negotiate their own meanings from foreign media content. Gerbner and Gross (1976) suggested that television, through selective presentation and emphasis on certain themes, is a major influence on audience perceptions of the society’s norms and values. Gerbner’s cultivation theory was created through long-range research called Cultural Indicators, and the first reports were published in 1969 and 1972. Through their

research, Gerbner and his colleagues demonstrated that heavy television viewing is correlated to real world perceptions, such as fear of crime, and to perceptions of economic class membership, political ideology, and social and economic opinions (Gerbner et al., 1978).

Pingree and Hawkins (1981) studied the influence of television on culture in Australia using George Gerbner's cultivation theory. The researchers argued that, based on this theory, the amount of television viewing will be related to viewers' concepts of social reality. To collect the data, the researchers administered questionnaires to 1,280 children from public schools in Perth, the largest city in Western Australia. Their hypothesis was supported by the collected data. They found that children who watched television more were more likely to show the influence of television when answering questions about their social reality. Thus, they concluded that the findings indicate that there is a reason to believe that the internationally-traded U.S. television programs affect local culture as predicted by the cultivation theory.

Kang and Michael (1988) also used cultivation theory to examine how heavy exposure to television entertainment cultivates images and attitudes based on television portrayals. This study explored whether people exposed to American television would endorse Western views, which would strengthen the cultivation argument. The researchers surveyed 226 Korean college students in Seoul, Korea. They chose students because they were more likely to watch American Forces Korean Network (AFKN) on a regular basis. The questionnaire consisted of questions on two cultural areas: marriage and family, and sex-role attitudes. These were selected because they were most likely to reflect possible tensions between Western and traditional Korean values. Results

indicated that the females who watched AFKN more were more liberal and more likely to support non-traditional viewpoints concerning roles, norms, and values. On the other hand, males who watched AFKN more often had a greater desire to protect Korean culture. They valued the Korean over the American family system, and believed that Western culture might be detrimental to Korean cultural distinctiveness. However, males who watched AFKN did accept several non-Korean customs, such as sharing dating expenses. In this case, the researchers observed a conflict between having hostile views toward Western culture, and accepting some of its elements. Therefore, Koreans both embraced and rejected Western cultural values. The researchers concluded that the effects of U.S. programming abroad are not uniform across the population, and that these effects may be more diverse than previously acknowledged. Although this study did find some evidence that would point to a foreign media impact on peripheral values such as wearing jeans, the impact was not observed among deeply held values such as the views of the Korean family system.

Tan, Tan, and Gibson (2003) describe three theories that have been influential in studying the influence of American television on American audiences, and apply them in an international context to Russian college students. They used cultivation theory, social cognitive theory, and cognitive functional theory. Social cognitive theory suggests that behavior and values are learned when they are simple and repetitive, and when the viewer feels capable in adopting them. The cognitive functional theory expands on social cognitive theory and postulates that television audiences accept and adopt values, behaviors, and norms portrayed in television when they are perceived to be functional or useful in reaching goals. The findings did not support the cultivation theory because the

researchers did not find that aggregate frequency of viewing American television leads to the acceptance of American values. However, they did find support for the social cognitive theory because the results indicate that viewing certain television genres, specifically American television dramas and American news, predicted acceptance of American values.

Zaharopoulos (2003) also used the cultivation theory to look at Greek adolescents' foreign television viewing and how this viewing influences Greek culture and consumption of foreign products. Data was collected in two Greek high schools, one in Athens, and the other in Amaliada, an agricultural town in southwestern Greece. This study found that heavy viewers of U.S. television tend to have more favorable attitudes toward foreign brand-name clothing and are more likely to feel that Greek cultural identity is threatened.

In summary, Gerbner and his colleagues developed a theory called cultivation theory, which suggested that television, through selective presentation and emphasis on certain themes, is a major influence on audience perceptions of a society's norms and values. The results indicate that the effects of cultivation could be seen in some cases, particularly among children. The research also showed that the effects of U.S. programs are not uniform across the population in terms of gender. Studies did find some evidence pointing to foreign media impact on peripheral values such as wearing jeans, but the impact was not observed among deeply held values such as the views of family systems. The results also indicate that viewing certain television genres, specifically American television dramas and American news, predicted acceptance of American values.

The impact of U.S. media on young people

Research on television influence has found that not all members of the audience are affected equally. Patterns of influence in global terms, such as “Americanization,” have been most pronounced among young people, and they are the most noticeable in their clothing styles, speech patterns, and the films, television programs, and music they find most appealing. Young people in different parts of the world are consuming the same goods, resemble each other, and have more in common than any other generation in history (Rollin, 1999). These patterns of consumption are creating “a borderless youth culture” (Sine, 2000).

Prickett (2006) studied South Asian American diaspora younger members and looked at how they negotiate cultural identity in today’s global environment. Specifically, she wanted to understand the interplay between globalization and cultural identity, what role media plays in this discourse, and how cultural globalization affects their experiences in the diaspora. She conducted in-depth interviews with young South Asian Americans in 2005, at the same time as MTV Desi was launched. This channel is a part of the new division of MTV World, and was created to target young South Asian Americans. Her premise was that this channel was a new way for the young South Asian Americans to negotiate their hybridized cultural identities. Prickett found that her respondents welcomed MTV Desi because they had a need to have something that resembled their experiences of living between two cultures and with which they could identify. She summarized her findings, “because media is a system of meaning, MTV Desi constitutes a new way for young South Asian Americans to find cultural meaning in affirmation of their hybridized identities” (p. 26).

Grixti (2006) was interested in looking at how the lifestyle choices made by young people are affected by the global media, local tradition and changing cultural demographics. This study was done as part of a research project funded by the National Broadcasting Authority in Malta. They wanted to understand what role the media plays in shaping young Maltese consumers. Grixti conducted a series of focus groups with 195 young men and women between 14 and 25 years of age. He found that the ongoing process of hybridization shapes perceptions of Maltese cultural identity. He describes the process of hybridization as intertwining unique local habits and traditions with commercial aspects of global media. Grixti concludes, “There seems to be a growing sense that values and attitudes are changing dramatically and forever. But the precise contours of these emerging new beliefs and attitudes remain as distinctly ambivalent and local as ever” (p. 118).

In a newer study, Chen (2009) was interested in how the Internet influences Chinese college students and their perceptions of their own cultural identities. He wanted to know how they react to the influence of globalization, particularly Westernization, and to what extent does the Internet influence their identification with China’s cultural tradition. Chen’s data comes from self-reports from 44 Chinese students with whom he also conducted follow-up interviews. His findings suggest that heavy reliance on the Internet and exposure to Western culture did not turn Chinese students into Westerners. He writes that even though Chinese students celebrate Western holidays such as Christmas, they do not embrace the deeper religious meanings of these occasions. Further, he found that most of his interviewees were very confident about their cultural identities. He concludes, “they enjoy the many benefits that the global village shares

through the Internet, but the impact is mostly on their ‘mind’, that is, incoming information and images may enrich their mind. But their ‘hearts’ are deeply rooted in China, in their homeland, in the traditional Chinese culture, including the classic texts and all kinds of artistic products, to which they have been attached since early childhood” (p. 39).

These studies support arguments made by several researchers who say that instead of creating homogenization, globalization is successful in producing more diverse cultures. For example, Appadurai (1996) argues that globalization of Western culture may be producing “heterogeneous disjunctures.” This thesis, called cultural hybridity, is based on the assumption that people who are exposed to global media create a zone where the local and the global cross-encounter to generate a new set of cultural identities. This interaction between the global and the local is creating a hybrid culture, which is a combination of the modern and the traditional, and the national and global culture (Appadurai, 1996). Robertson (1992) calls this new phenomenon “glocalization,” a cultural fusion comprised of adapting Western media genres to suit local languages, styles, and cultural conventions.

In summary, research has shown that Americanization can be seen primarily impacting younger generations. Studies have found that globalization is creating new hybridized cultural identities where unique local habits and traditions are intertwining with commercial aspects of global media. Research in China also showed that young audiences enjoy the many benefits that the global village shares through the Internet, but this consumption of foreign media does not influence their cultural identities, which remain to be deeply rooted in the traditional Chinese culture.

Literature Review summary

- Inglehart (2004) conducted a World Value Survey where he discovered differences in values between central and eastern European countries as opposed to Western European countries. Some of the major findings from this study are that post-communist countries are less traditional, do not tolerate diversity, and are conducive to an atmosphere of intolerance, mistrust, and political extremism.
- Research in Croatia on liberal value acceptance found that young Croats have been receptive of basic liberal rights such as freedom, respect for human rights, and equality, but that support for homosexuals and gender equality is still very low. One of the reasons for the lack of support for gay rights and gender equality might be the fact that Croatia is still largely a religious country.
- The term cultural imperialism refers to the extent to which American culture is exported and is overwhelming foreign cultures. Results from the studies testing this theory were mixed. Research in Iceland found that the effects of domestic media were more powerful than those of foreign media. Research in the Philippines did find some evidence to support the thesis that frequent viewing of American television leads to some erosion of traditional values of a particular country, but the results were limited. The strongest support for this theory was demonstrated by the research in Jamaica, where the results show that American imported programming still dominates airtime, and the locally produced programs resemble those from the U.S.

- Cultivation theory suggests that television, through selective presentation and emphasis on certain themes, is a major influence on audience perceptions of a society's norms and values. The results indicate that the effects of cultivation could be seen in some cases, particularly among children. The research also showed that the effects of U.S. programs are not uniform across the population in terms of gender. Studies did find some evidence pointing to foreign media impact on peripheral values such as wearing jeans, but the impact was not observed among deeply held values such as the views of family systems. The results also indicate that viewing certain television genres, specifically American television dramas and American news, predicted acceptance of American values.
- Research has shown that Americanization can be seen primarily impacting younger generations. Studies have found that globalization is creating new hybridized cultural identities where unique local habits and traditions are intertwining with commercial aspects of global media. Research in China also showed that young audiences enjoy the many benefits that the global village shares through the Internet, but this consumption of foreign media does not influence their cultural identities, which remain to be deeply rooted in the traditional Chinese culture.
- The thesis of cultural hybridity is based on the assumption that people who are exposed to global media create a zone where the local and the global cross-

encounter to generate a new set of cultural identities. This interaction between the global and the local is creating a hybrid culture, which is a combination of the modern and traditional, and the national and global culture

- The majority of research on the influence of American media was conducted in Canada (Barnett, McPhail, 1980; Payne, & Caron, 1982; Surlin, & Berlin, 1991), Iceland (Payne, & Peake, 1977), Jamaica (Stacey, & Gordon, 2009), Australia (Pingree, & Hawkins, 1981), Russia (Tan, et. al., 2003), and Asian countries (Tan, et. al., 1987; Kang, & Michael, 1988; Delwiche, 2004; Prickett, 2006, while Eastern Europe has been largely neglected.

Theoretical Framework

This study uses a theory developed by Tan et al. (1997), who tried to explain television's influence on acceptance of values by adolescents from a cognitive-functional perspective. Tan et al. (1997) take the research on media influence and value acceptance further by offering a new theory, which is derived from three theories, cultivation theory, social cognitive theory, and social exchange theory. Cultivation theory, explained earlier in this study, was developed by Gerbner et al. (1982) and it suggests that television presents a distorted portrayal of social reality that is internalized by heavy viewers. In other words, heavy viewing of television leads to commonality of attitudes and values. Social cognitive theory, developed by Bandura (1986), suggests that behaviors are learned from observation when they are repeated, simple, and reinforced. Television programs fulfill these criteria, and people can learn from them. Social exchange theory, developed by Homans (1959), suggests that comprehending the behaviors of individuals

is the starting point in understanding social systems. Homans (1959) saw people as goal driven, behaving in a certain way to attain rewards and evade punishments. Homans (1974) also introduced the term the “Value Principle,” which suggests that the more a person values the result of a certain action, the more likely that person will perform the action.

Tan et al. (1997) used the concepts and principles from the three theories discussed above to construct their Cognitive-functional theory of television's socialization effects. The unit of analysis is the individual within the social structure. Tan et al. (1997) assume that members of a specific group share basic cultural elements, which are manifested more within older populations. Younger generations, however, adopt the group's culture through socialization. To explain how television might influence socialization, these researchers offer four postulates: learning the observed event, evaluating the realism and functionality of the observed event, internalizing the functionality of the observed event, and assimilating the observed event. Learning is the first step in the socialization process. An individual observes events via television paying attention and coding it. Attention and coding are aided when the event is repeated, simple and reinforced to the point that the individual feels competent in performing it (Bandura, 1986). The second step is evaluation of the event's realism and functionality. Realism refers to the extent to which the observed event is similar to real life, and functionality refers to the extent to which the observed event is rewarded (Bandura, 1986; Homans, (1974). The third step in socialization is internalizing the functionality of the event, or the prediction of functionality of an event to the individual's own reality. Finally, when an

observer internalizes the functionality of the observed event, the characteristics of a certain group will be assimilated.

The major predictions are that observed values are assimilated when learned and perceived to be functional. The theory suggests that people pay attention to an observed event via television, which leads to recognizing themes and learning, which leads to evaluation of the functionality of the observed event, which leads to internalization of the functionality evaluations by the observer to his or her world leading to assimilation (Tan et al., 1997).

Hypotheses and research questions

Cognitive-Functional theory of television socialization effects is useful in studying the socialization effects of American television programs on young Croatians. Today, television still plays a crucial role in the globalization process and is central to what Stuart Hall called “a global mass culture” (Hall, 1997). The bulk of global entertainment and information flow is mediated through content provided by Anglo-American organizations (Sreberny-Mohammadi et al., 1997). Such globally transmitted programs promote shared media culture, and could create a global village based on the English language and Western lifestyles and values, especially in light of the fact that the dominant values in American culture are deeply embedded in American television programming (Selnow, 1990). Croatian culture and its values, according to Inglehart (2004) differ from Western European countries primarily because of Croatia’s Communist legacy. Post-communist countries are less traditional, do not tolerate diversity, and are conducive to an atmosphere of intolerance, mistrust, and political extremism. In addition, research has shown that Croatia does not have a well-defined

cultural identity given to the fact that it became an independent country fairly recently and it did not have time to develop a distinct identity (Skoko, 2004). Young Croatian generations are particularly interesting because previous research has shown that younger generations tend to be more exposed to American programs in foreign countries than older generations (Kang, & Michael, 1988). Therefore, as a vulnerable generation in a young, post-communist country without a well-defined cultural identity, the effects of American programs on young Croatians might be strong. This study tested two hypotheses dealing with two important concepts of the theory: learning and functionality evaluations.

H1: The more frequently the participants recognized a value in American television; the more likely they would consider it important.

H2: The more the participants thought that a certain value is functional for their life in Croatia, the more they would consider it important.

Taking into account that the influence of American television programs on young Croats has not been studied in length, we also try to describe media habits of the population in question.

RQ1: What are the media habits of young Croatians?

RQ2: What are the media habits of young Croatians when it comes to American mass media?

To understand how American media influences Croatian cultural identity it is important to understand some of the main elements of Croatian cultural identity. Croatia is a young country in transition and its culture has been influenced by Yugoslavia on one end, and globalization on the other. Since there has not been much research done in this

area, the second part of this study tries to understand the meaning of Croatian cultural identity to young people in Croatia, and possible American media influences on their identities. Thus, we posit the following additional research questions:

RQ3: How does American television programming influence the cultural identities of young Croats?

RQ4: How do young Croats see and relate to Croatian cultural identity?

Chapter 3

Methodology

Research Design

This study applied a mixed methods approach to collecting data by combining survey and focus group research. This mixed methods approach has been popular since 1960s across many disciplines such as psychology, health, and sociology. Researchers tend to use the mixed method approach when their research questions cannot be answered with one method alone (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009).

Although survey and focus group techniques stem from different theoretical approaches, there is nothing inherent in the methods themselves that would stop researchers from using them together. There are several ways these two research methods can be combined. Focus groups can be conducted before the survey and used to assist questionnaire design (Morgan, 1988) or to help foresee survey nonresponse and minimize potential sources of sampling bias (Desvousges & Frey, 1989). A second approach is to conduct focus groups among survey respondents shortly after they have completed their questionnaires to evaluate the survey process. Another approach is to conduct focus groups after the survey results have been analyzed to explore the findings in greater depth (Wolff, Knodel, & Sittitrai, 1993). This study took a fourth approach to combining focus groups and survey research. Focus groups were conducted more or less at the same time as surveys, as two components of a cohesive research design. The survey questionnaire and focus group discussion guidelines were designed in advance to produce independent quantitative and qualitative research views on the topic of investigation. The goal of such complementary research design was to enhance the analysis and understanding of each

component by the other (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Focus group analysis results were used in an exploratory fashion.

Survey

Participants and procedure

To address hypotheses H1 and H2 and research questions R1 and R2, a paper and pencil survey was distributed to a volunteer sample of 487 undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Zagreb in Croatia. The students were recruited from undergraduate and graduate classes from schools of economics, political science, journalism, Croatian studies, and agriculture. The researcher contacted professors from different colleges and asked if they would be willing to dedicate a part of their class time for participation in this research. The participants then reported to classrooms to take the paper and pencil survey. They were given a brief description of the study, and they had time to ask questions. They were also told that the participation in the study was completely voluntary and that they had the right to decline to participate, or if they started answering the questions, they could rescind their participation at any time.

The survey contained items in Croatian language. The measures were translated from English using the method of back-translation. The method is appropriate for establishing cross-cultural linguistic equivalence (Gudykunst, 2002). Two bilinguals fluent in both Croatian and English, assisted. One of them translated the English questionnaire to Croatian and the other back-translated it. The variations in original wording were reconciled. The participants were presented with an informed consent (Appendix A) and instructed to answer an 80-item questionnaire (Appendix B). The participants first completed measures that assessed their media use habits in general:

American media use in particular, measures that assessed their value systems, measures that assessed their knowledge of English language, and a battery of demographic questions. The author of this study administered the questionnaire. The data were collected in May 2013. Once the paper and pencil questionnaires were completed, the author of this study brought them to the United States where the results were entered into SPSS for further analysis.

Measures

Values. The author selected 16 values based on the similar study by Tan et al. (1998). Some of the values were adopted from the Rokeach (1968) Value Scale, while others were adopted from the literature on democratic values (Selnow, 1990). Values they included were selected because they represent Anglo-American culture and democratic principles (Tan et al., 1998), thus being different from Croatian values, which are considered to be similar to those of Post-Communist countries (Inglehart, 2004). The values, listed in a random order in the questionnaire, were *participating in the political system, being tolerant of other races, pursuing wealth, being independent, enjoying wealth, being tolerant of other opinions, change, strong family ties, equality for all, freedom, being competitive, being individualistic, being obedient to authority, being honest, working hard, and discussing political issues.* These values are indicators of the six dominant American cultural patterns: individualism, equality, materialism, science and technology, progress and change, and activity and work (Samovar, & Porter, 1995). Respondents were asked to assign a level of importance to each of 16 listed values, which were treated individually in this study as discrete concepts, rather than items of a

composite scale. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each of the values on a 7-point Likert scale from 1, not important, to 7, very important.

Recognition of Value Themes in Television Programs. Following Tan et al. (1998), this study measured recognition of value themes respondents saw in American television programs. The respondents were asked to answer how often they see these 16 values in American television programs on a 7-point Likert scale from 1, almost never to 7, very often. The values were arranged in a different order than in the scale discussed above.

Functionality of values. This study defines functionality as necessary for success in Croatia. According to the theory proposed by Tan et al. (1998), the values perceived to be functional will be accepted by the participants. The respondents were asked to rate how important they thought these values were for success in Croatia on a 7-point Likert scale from 1, not important, to 7, very important.

Total television time. Respondents were asked to circle how many days per week and how many hours per day they spent watching television.

American media exposure. Exposure to American television programs could influence the acceptance of Anglo-American values since these values can often be found in these programs (Gerbner et al., 1987). Respondents were asked how often they watched television programs produced in the United States on a 7-point Likert scale from 1, never, to 7, all the time.

Personal contact with Americans. Since personal contact with Americans, or visiting the United States could influence respondent's acceptance of values, they were asked to indicate, on a scale from 1 (Never) to 7 (Always) how often they came in contact with

Americans face to face, over the phone, via Skype, via email; and they were asked to answer with yes or no, indicating whether or not they had visited United States.

English language knowledge. Since knowledge of English language could influence respondent's acceptance of values, they were asked to indicate on a 4-point scale from 1 (not at all) to 4 (very well), how well they understood spoken English, and how well they could speak, read, and write English.

Demographic questions. Standard demographic controls (i.e., age, gender, religion, school year) were also included in the questionnaire.

American media viewing habits. Participants were also asked to describe their TV viewing habits by indicating on a scale from 1 (Never) to 7 (Always) what kind of TV programming they usually watch: news, movies, sports, series, sitcoms, documentaries, and other. Further, they were asked to indicate on a scale from 1 (Never) to 7 (All the time) what kinds of American television genres they watch: comedy, adventure, drama, and sports. They were also asked to indicate on a scale from 1 (Never) to 7 (Always) how often they watched American series, American sitcoms, American news, American movies, and read American magazines, and American newspapers. For each of these they were asked with an open ended question to indicate what movies, series, sitcoms, news programs they had watched lately, and what American magazines and newspapers they read. These measures were used to describe American media habits of young Croatians.

Data Analysis

The first part of data analysis addressed research questions 1 and 2 dealing with American media viewing habits in particular and television viewing habits in general. To answer these two research questions, the researchers run descriptive statistics and

frequencies in SPSS. A standard regression equation was used to test H1 and H2 for each of the 16 values measured.

Value acceptance= Age + Sex + Knowledge of English Language + American media exposure + Value theme recognition in TV + Functionality of the values

The authors of the original study took their theory further and tested the causal model to identify links among learning, functionality evaluations, and assimilation. This study just tested the two hypotheses using the regression analysis.

Focus Groups

The researcher also conducted five focus group discussions to address research questions 3 and 4. Focus groups were selected as a method because they are useful in providing in-depth information regarding how a group approaches a certain topic. Singleton and Strait (1998) described focus groups as structured discussions among a small group of people led by a skilled interviewer who follows a structured or semi-structured questionnaire. The main reason to conduct focus groups is to learn how people think about a certain topic. Some of the advantages of focus group discussions are that they can yield rich information from the participants' interaction when they either agree or disagree on a topic. Therefore, they allow the researcher to see how individuals think about a topic in a group setting (Hakim, 2000). Durham (2004) argues that qualitative research is essential when one studies culture as it allows the researcher to dissect the layers of culture embedded in social practice. By focusing on everyday life, a qualitative approach offers a way to understand multiple levels of experience and effectively paint a picture of the ways people respond to cultural and social forms.

The researcher conducted five focus groups because at that point the data collection reached redundancy of data, or in other words, theoretical saturation. Redundancy occurs when no new findings are generated (Lincoln, & Guba, 1985). In other words, data collection reaches saturation point when the data collected illustrates the complexity of the phenomenon of interest (Strauss, 1987). When theoretical saturation has occurred, it may be sensible to assume that redundancy has been reached in a practical sense as well.

Participants

Focus group discussions were conducted at the College of Political Sciences at the University of Zagreb in Croatia in a two-week period in May of 2013. The researcher recruited participants with help from university professors working at the College of Political Sciences. The focus group discussions took place in a seminar-type classroom at the College of Political Sciences in Zagreb, Croatia. A group of professors of communication and political sciences at the College of Political Sciences assisted as the main contacts with the potential focus group participants and helped the researcher identify participants. The researcher visited classrooms and talked to the students about the study and asked for their participation. The participants volunteered to participate.

A total of 26 undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Zagreb participated in 5 focus groups. Each focus group consisted of 5 participants, except for one consisting of 6 participants. There were 10 men and 16 women between the ages 19 to 30 who participated in focus groups. Most of the participants were from Zagreb, the capital city of Croatia, while others were from a couple of different regions in the eastern part of Croatia.

Procedures

At the beginning of each focus group discussion, the participants were presented with an informed consent form (Appendix C), and were asked to fill out a "Focus group participant's pledge of confidentiality" (Appendix D). Then, they were offered snacks and refreshments, and the moderator spent a couple of minutes chatting with them. The focus group discussions were conducted following a question guide (Appendix E) that was created by the researcher prior to the meetings. The discussions usually began with questions exploring what cultural identities mean to the participants, how they see Croatian cultural identity and its features, characteristics, traditions and core symbols. The participants then went on to discuss the style of life in Croatia today. From there, the researcher started asking questions about the American media available in Croatia and how much they were exposed to it. They were asked about their thoughts on the American way of life and American values portrayed in American television programs and movies, and they were asked to compare them to the Croatian way of life and values.

The researcher served as moderator for all of the discussions, each of lasting between 60 and 80 minutes. The discussions were conducted in Croatian, the native language of the researcher and the participants. During the discussion, the researcher often asked the participants to provide examples. Asking respondents to give examples about their experiences enriched the discussion and helped the researcher to understand their experiences in their own words. Probes were used throughout the interviews to delve deeper into participants' reasoning and experiences. Topics of conversation were not limited to the basic discussion guide and new ideas introduced by participants were actively explored.

Overall, the participants often dictated the flow of discussion. The researcher prepared a discussion guide, however, in some cases the participants introduced new topics, which were not asked about earlier but acted as an extension of other participant's opinions.

The focus group discussions were recorded with a digital recorder. Recording allowed the researcher to capture the participant's exact words, which provided the data for the study. The responses were translated into English during the transcription process. A research facilitator assisted the researcher in transcribing the material. Before the transcription process began, the research facilitator was asked to fill out a "Transcriber's Pledge of Confidentiality" (Appendix F), which stated that what was on the tapes was confidential and the information may not be revealed to anyone.

Analysis

The researcher analyzed the focus group discussions throughout the period of data collection. This was possible due to the nature of qualitative research. The researchers utilized inductive analyses, allowing the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis to come from the data rather than imposing them on the data prior to analysis. Inductive, rather than deductive, reasoning was used, allowing for concepts and relationships to evolve during the process of investigation rather than defining them in advance (Znaniecki, 1934). The transcripts were scanned line-by-line for themes and categories, and the researcher developed a working schema from examining the initial cases, and then modified and refined it on the basis of subsequent cases (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

The researcher then organized the key concepts and phrases into indigenous typologies that categorize them according to thematic similarities and contrasts. The

researcher looked for patterns, categories, and themes. From here, the researcher moved beyond description into interpretation. Patton writes that the researcher who reflects on the surfacing patterns and themes that run through the data “is in as good a position as anyone else at that point to speculate about the meanings, make conjectures about significance, and offer hypotheses about relationships” (Patton, 2002, p. 423). This involved making inferences, attaching meanings, building relationships, and making meaningful conclusions.

Chapter 4

Results

The following findings are presented in two different parts. The first part includes the results of surveys. The second part includes the results of focus group discussions.

Survey results

On average, participants were 21.49 ($SD = 2.21$) years old and in their second or third year of university attendance ($M=2.65$, $SD =1.25$). Their ages ranged from 18-35, with 93 % being born after the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe. Females comprised 77.6% of the sample with males making up 19.5% of the sample (2.9% of participants did not indicate their gender). The great majority of participants declared themselves as Catholic (75.8%); 11.5% did not want to declare their religious orientation; 11% were agnostic; 0.6% Orthodox; and 1% stated an affiliation with other religions. When asked to indicate ethnicity, 95.1% declared themselves as Croatian, 3.4 % did not want to indicate their ethnicity, and the other 1.5% declared themselves as cosmopolitan, Slovakian, Serbian, or Albanian.

When it comes to regular contacts with Americans, most of the participants did not have contacts with anyone from the U.S. Only 4% of participants stated they had personal contact with Americans, while majority said they never (52%) or rarely (20%) were in personal contact with Americans (see Table 1). The majority of participants said that they were never (83%) in contact with Americans over the phone (see Table 2), 80% said they are never in contact with Americans on Skype (see Table 3), and 70% did not exchange emails with them (see Table 4). Participants did say that they communicated with Americans via social networks, with 11% saying they were in touch occasionally.

Still, the majority of the participants (52%) said that they never communicated with Americans via social networks (see Table 5). Even though the participants were not in regular contact with Americans, the majority said they had a very good knowledge of English: 79% said they understood spoken English very well (see Table 6), 60% of them spoke English very well (see Table 7), 74% read English very well (see Table 8), and 60% said that they wrote English very well (see Table 9).

RQ1: What are the media habits of young Croatians?

The first research question asked about the media habits of young Croatian students. The results showed that news is the third most popular TV program among the participants of this study ($M=4.77$, $SD=1.70$). It is preceded by sitcoms ($M=5.12$, $SD=1.76$), and drama series ($M=4.96$, $SD=1.91$), and followed by movies ($M=4.74$, $SD=1.83$), documentaries ($M=3.92$, $SD=1.76$), and sports ($M=2.95$, $SD=2.02$) (see Table 10). The analysis of media use showed that the Internet is the most popular medium among the young Croatian population (see Table 2). On average, it is used daily ($M=6.79$, $SD=0.87$). The great majority of participants (88.1%) use it every day, between 2 to 5 hours per day (73.8%) (see Table 3). The Internet is followed by television. On average young Croatians watch it 3.81 days per week ($M=3.81$, $SD=2.42$) (see Table 11), and almost 4 hours per day ($M=3.77$, $SD=1.93$) (see Table 12). Radio follows television in popularity, with average listening time of 3.34 days per week ($M=3.34$, $SD=2.60$) (see Table 11) and 3 hours per day ($M=3.18$, $SD=2.58$) (see Table 3). The least popular medium among young Croatians is newspaper. On average, they read newspapers 3 days per week ($M=3.20$, $SD=2.29$) (see Table 11), and 2 hours per day ($M=2.34$, $SD=1.29$) (see Table 3).

Table 1. Days per week watching program types (7-point Likert scale)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
usually watching news	479	1.00	7.00	4.7683	1.70483	-.564	.112	-.531	.223
usually watching movies	480	1.00	7.00	4.7375	1.83046	-.574	.111	-.766	.222
usually watching sport	472	1.00	7.00	2.9534	2.02058	.735	.112	-.794	.224
usually watching series	479	1.00	7.00	4.9624	1.91521	-.772	.112	-.603	.223
usually watching sitcoms	480	1.00	7.00	5.1250	1.90182	-.805	.111	-.530	.222
usually watching documentaries	479	1.00	7.00	3.9165	1.76475	.004	.112	-.945	.223
Valid N (listwise)	472								

Table 2. Days per week using media types (7-point Likert scale)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Days per week watch television	485	.00	7.00	3.8103	2.42343	-.008	.111	-1.361	.221
Days per week read newspapers	487	.00	7.00	3.2033	2.28561	.318	.111	-1.076	.221
Days per week listen to radio	483	.00	7.00	3.3395	2.59760	.198	.111	-1.429	.222
Days per week use the Internet	487	1.00	7.00	6.7269	.86624	-3.752	.111	15.280	.221
Valid N (listwise)	481								

Table 3. Hours per day using media types

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Daily watching TV	471	.00	12.00	3.7665	1.92978	.501	.113	2.771	.225
Daily reading newspapers	450	.00	6.00	2.3356	1.28581	-.317	.115	-.112	.230
Daily listen to radio	444	.00	12.00	3.1779	2.57832	1.107	.116	1.889	.231
Daily use the Internet	464	1.00	12.00	5.7780	2.20746	1.029	.113	1.051	.226
Valid N (listwise)	410								

RQ2: What are media habits of young Croatians in terms of American mass media?

The second research question asked about the American media habits of the young Croatian population. The results showed that American programs are slightly more popular ($M=5.07$, $SD=1.73$) than Croatian programs ($M=4.34$, $SD=1.78$) (see Table 4), with 20% of the participants indicating that they watch American programs all the time (see Table 5) versus 14% saying the same for the Croatian programs (see Table 6). In terms of types of American programs, American sitcoms were the most popular ($M=5.08$, $SD=1.89$) (see Table 7) with 32% of the participants saying that they watch sitcoms all the time (see Table 8). The most popular American sitcoms among the participants were *The Big Bang Theory*, *Two and a Half Men* and *Friends* (see Table 9). Following American sitcoms, the second most popular American program type was American drama series ($M=5.1$, $SD=1.86$) (see Table 7), with 31% of the participants saying they watch American series on Croatian television all the time (see Table 10). The most watched American series were *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, *Gossip Girl*, and *Dr.*

House (see Table 11). The least popular American program was news ($M=1.53$, $SD=1.07$) (see Table 7), with 70% of the participants indicating that they never watch American news (see Table 12). Of the few that said they watch American news programs, the overwhelming majority (81%) said they watch *CNN International*, followed by *Fox news* and *MSNBC* (see Table 13). In terms of what kinds of genres the participants watched when watching American programs, the most popular were comedies ($M=5.17$, $SD=1.7$), followed by dramas ($M=4.23$, $SD=1.8$), and action films ($M=3.88$, $SD=1.77$), while sports were the least popular ($M=2.32$, $SD=1.72$) (see Table 14). In terms of watching movies, the participants indicated that they prefer going to the movies ($M=4.36$, $SD=1.95$) as supposed to watching American movies at home on DVD's ($M=3.62$, $SD=2.29$) (see Table 7). When it comes to reading American magazines and newspapers, 71% of the participants (see Table 15) said they never read American magazines, while even more, around 85%, said they never read American newspapers (see Table 16). The few who indicated that they read American magazines mostly listed *Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *National Geographic* as the most read ones (see Table 17). The few who said that they read American newspapers listed *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *L.A. Times* as the most popular newspapers (see Table 18).

Table 4. How often watching program from Croatia and U.S. (7-point Likert scale)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Program from Croatia	465	1.00	7.00	4.3484	1.78449	-.134	.113	-.980	.226
Program from U.S.	465	1.00	7.00	5.0753	1.73601	-.903	.113	-.081	.226
Valid N (listwise)	450								

Table 5. How often watching program from the U.S. (7-point Likert scale)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	28	5.7	6.0	6.0
	Rarely	27	5.5	5.8	11.8
	Occasionally	29	6.0	6.2	18.1
	Sometimes	54	11.1	11.6	29.7
	frequently	87	17.9	18.7	48.4
	Usually	140	28.7	30.1	78.5
	all the time	100	20.5	21.5	100.0
Total	465	95.5	100.0		
Missing	System	22	4.5		
Total		487	100.0		

Table 6. How often watching program from Croatia (7-point Likert scale)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	29	6.0	6.2	6.2
	Rarely	54	11.1	11.6	17.8
	occasionally	74	15.2	15.9	33.8
	Sometimes	84	17.2	18.1	51.8
	Frequently	86	17.7	18.5	70.3
	Usually	69	14.2	14.8	85.2
	all the time	69	14.2	14.8	100.0
Total	465	95.5	100.0		
Missing	System	22	4.5		
Total		487	100.0		

Table 7. Use of American media

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
American series	486	1.00	7.00	5.1070	1.86583	-.797	.111	-.427	.221
American sitcom	483	1.00	7.00	5.0890	1.89844	-.744	.111	-.617	.222
American news	487	1.00	7.00	1.5339	1.07266	2.669	.111	7.772	.221
Movies on DVD	486	1.00	7.00	3.6214	2.29223	.223	.111	-1.474	.221
Movies in the theater	484	1.00	7.00	4.3616	1.95377	-.187	.111	-1.119	.222
American magazines	486	1.00	7.00	1.6605	1.33392	2.283	.111	4.660	.221
American newspapers	485	1.00	7.00	1.3216	.94456	3.617	.111	13.975	.221
Valid N (listwise)	476								

Table 8. Watch American sitcoms

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	30	6.2	6.2	6.2
	Rarely	40	8.2	8.3	14.5
	Occasionally	32	6.6	6.6	21.1
	Sometimes	58	11.9	12.0	33.1
	Frequently	73	15.0	15.1	48.2
	Usually	95	19.5	19.7	67.9
	every time	155	31.8	32.1	100.0
	Total	483	99.2	100.0	
Missing	System	4	.8		
Total		487	100.0		

Table 9. Most watched American sitcoms

	TV Sitcoms	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	The Big Bang Theory	181	22.8	22.8	43.3
	Two and a half Men	160	20.2	20.2	20.2
	Friends	126	15.9	15.9	62.9

Table 10. Watch American series

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	34	7.0	7.0	7.0
	Rarely	28	5.7	5.8	12.8
	Occasionally	34	7.0	7.0	19.8
	Sometimes	60	12.3	12.3	32.1
	Frequently	81	16.6	16.7	48.8
	Usually	98	20.1	20.2	68.9
	every time	151	31.0	31.1	100.0
	Total	486	99.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.2		
Total		487	100.0		

Table 11. Most watched American series

	TV Series	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	CSI	60	12.6	12.6	36.4
	Gossip Girl	40	8.4	8.4	51.9
	Dr. House	35	7.3	7.3	63.8

Table 12. Watch American news

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	343	70.4	70.4	70.4
	Rarely	87	17.9	17.9	88.3
	Occasionally	27	5.5	5.5	93.8
	Sometimes	13	2.7	2.7	96.5
	Frequently	8	1.6	1.6	98.2
	Usually	6	1.2	1.2	99.4
	every time	3	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	487	100.0	100.0	

Table 13. Most watched American news

	TV News	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	CNN	78	81.3	81.3	86.5
	Fox	6	6.3	6.3	94.8
	MSNBC	4	4.2	4.2	99.0

Table 14. Frequency watching different American genres

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
						Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
frequency watching comedies	487	1.00	7.00	5.1766	1.70017	-.936	.111	.100	.221
frequency watching action films	484	1.00	7.00	3.8843	1.77136	.008	.111	-.938	.222
frequency watching dramas	485	1.00	7.00	4.2351	1.80518	-.263	.111	-.973	.221
frequency watching sport	483	1.00	7.00	2.3271	1.72022	1.280	.111	.627	.222
Valid N (listwise)	482								

Table 15. Reading American magazines

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	350	71.9	72.0
	Rarely	59	12.1	12.1
	Occasionally	22	4.5	4.5
	Sometimes	26	5.3	5.3
	Frequently	12	2.5	2.5
	Usually	10	2.1	2.1
	every time	7	1.4	1.4
Total	486	99.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.2	
Total	487	100.0		

Table 16. Reading American newspapers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	412	84.6	84.9	84.9
	Rarely	37	7.6	7.6	92.6
	Occasionally	10	2.1	2.1	94.6
	Sometimes	14	2.9	2.9	97.5
	Frequently	6	1.2	1.2	98.8
	Usually	3	.6	.6	99.4
	every time	3	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	485	99.6	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.4		
	Total	487	100.0		

Table 17. Most read American magazines

	Magazines	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Vogue	31	25.2	25.2	99.2
	Cosmopolitan	25	20.3	20.3	22.8
	National Geographic	13	10.6	10.6	46.3

Table 18. Most read American newspapers

	Newspapers	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	The New York Times	43	75.4	75.4	98.2
	Washington Post	7	12.3	12.3	21.1
	L.A. Times	2	3.5	3.5	8.8

H1: The more frequently a value is recognized in television; the more likely it will be accepted among young Croatians.

The first hypothesis predicted that the more frequently a value is recognized in television, the more likely it will be accepted among Croatians. This hypothesis was partially supported. It was only partially supported because out of 16 values measured, the effects seen in only 9 values were significant. Controlling for age, gender, TV watching, exposure to American programs, and knowledge of English language, the results indicate that the participants frequently recognized in American television programs the following values: tolerance towards other races ($b = .095, p = .026$), tolerance of other opinions ($b = .102, p = .020$), freedom ($b = .050, p = .049$), being individualistic ($b = .145, p = .003$), personal wealth ($b = .146, p = .013$), enjoying wealth ($b = .168, p = .003$), change ($b = .128, p = .014$), equality ($b = .087, p = .028$), and obedience to authority ($b = .228, p = .000$) (see Table 19). These results indicate that the above-mentioned 9 values were frequently recognized in American television programs and were considered by the participants to be important to them. The correlations between cultural values seen on TV and personal values were not significant: family ties ($b = .048, p = .278$), being competitive ($b = .026, p = .404$), honesty ($b = .020, p = .102$), working hard ($b = .012, p = .729$), independence ($b = .015, p = .258$) discussing political issues ($b = .003, p = .909$), and participation in political system ($b = .068, p = .207$). The gender control variable was significant for 11 values except personal wealth, independence, change, individualism, and discussing political issues. The control variable knowledge of English language was significant for 8 values excluding political participation, personal wealth, enjoying wealth, change, freedom, competition, honesty, and working hard.

H2: The greater a value's functionality rating, the more likely it will be accepted.

The second hypothesis predicted that the greater a value's functionality rating, the more likely it will be accepted. In other words, the more the participants thought that a certain value is functional for their life in Croatia, the more they would consider it important. This hypothesis was partially supported. It was only partially supported because out of 16 values measured, correlations for only 10 values were significant. Controlling for age, gender, TV watching, exposure to American programs, and knowledge of English language, the results show correlation between viewing a value as functional and assigning personal importance to that value for the following values: strong family ties ($b = .076, p = .045$), being competitive ($b = .149, p = .002$), being honest ($b = .053, p = .023$), working hard ($b = .098, p = .001$), discussing political issues ($b = .126, p = .011$), personal wealth ($b = .067, p = .047$), enjoying wealth ($b = .230, p = .000$), change ($b = .186, p = .000$), equality ($b = .086, p = .012$), and obedience to authority ($b = .108, p = .020$) (see Table 19). These results indicate that the above-mentioned 10 values were considered by the participants to have high functionality value and were considered by the participants to be important to them. The values of personal wealth, enjoying wealth, change, equality, and obedience to authority were significant for both hypotheses (see Table 19). Other cultural values variables were not significant when evaluating the correlation between functionality and acceptance: political participation ($b = .071, p = .163$), tolerance for other races ($b = .014, p = .355$), independence ($b = .050, p = .169$), tolerance for other opinions ($b = .040, p = .239$), freedom ($b = -.013, p = .260$), and individualism ($b = .072, p = .087$), (see Table 19). The gender control variable was significant for 11 values, excluding personal wealth, independence, change,

individualism, and discussing political issues. The control variable knowledge of English language was significant for 8 values excluding political participation, personal wealth, enjoying wealth, change, freedom, competition, honesty, and working hard.

Table 19. Value correlation to TV theme recognition and value functionality

Values	TV Viewing	American TV	TV theme Recognition	Value Functionality	P	R Square
Political Participation	-0.008 (.183)	-0.055 (.321)	.068 (.207)	.071 (.163)	.012	.038
Tolerance, other races	-0.007 (.098)	-0.028 (.465)	.095 (.026)	.014 (.355)	.000	.098
Personal Wealth	.011 (.043)	-.011 (.818)	.146 (.013)	.067 (.047)	.010	.039
Independence	-.004 (.387)	-.019 (.596)	.015 (.258)	.050 (.169)	.149	.022
Enjoying wealth	.005 (.338)	.016 (.734)	.168 (.003)	.230 (.000)	.000	.099
Tolerance, other opinions	-.005 (.270)	-.057 (.139)	.102 (.020)	.040 (.239)	.001	.050
Change	-.007 (.185)	-.046 (.331)	.128 (.014)	.186 (.000)	.000	.060
Strong Family Ties	.010 (.031)	.045 (.261)	.048 (.278)	.076 (.045)	.000	.060
Equality	-.004 (.339)	-.052 (.158)	.087 (.028)	.086 (.012)	.000	.080
Freedom	-.001 (.550)	-.008 (.705)	.050 (.049)	-.013 (.260)	.090	.025
Being Competitive	.004 (.428)	.039 (.377)	.026 (.404)	.149 (.002)	.000	.061
Being Individualistic	-.015 (.003)	.006 (.891)	.145 (.003)	.072 (.087)	.000	.078
Obedient to Authority	.013 (.011)	.022 (.612)	.228 (.000)	.108 (.020)	.000	.114
Being honest	-.001 (.641)	-.013 (.630)	.020 (.102)	.053 (.023)	.021	.034
Working hard	-.003 (.492)	.033 (.295)	.012 (.729)	.098 (.001)	.000	.057
Discussing Political Issues	-.001 (.927)	-.058 (.279)	.003 (.909)	.126 (.011)	.056	.029

Summary of key findings

- Most of the participants do not have regular contacts with Americans
- The majority of participants said they have a very good knowledge of English
- Sitcoms are the most popular TV program type
- The Internet is the most popular medium followed by television
- American programming is slightly more popular than Croatian programming
- American sitcoms were the most watched type of American program
- The most popular genre of American program was comedy followed by drama and action film
- The majority of participants said they never read American magazines, while even more said they never read American newspapers
- The first hypothesis predicted that the more frequently a value is recognized in television, the more likely it will be accepted among Croatians. This hypothesis was partially supported because 9 out of 16 values showed significant correlations between frequency of viewing and acceptance: tolerance towards other races, tolerance of other opinions, freedom, being individualistic, personal wealth, enjoying wealth, change, equality, and obedience to authority
- The second hypothesis predicted that the greater a value's functionality rating, the more likely it will be accepted. This hypothesis was partially supported because out of 16 values measured, 10 values showed significant correlations between functionality and acceptance: strong family ties, being competitive, being honest, working hard, discussing political issues, personal wealth, enjoying wealth, change, equality, and obedience to authority

- The values of personal wealth, enjoying wealth, change, equality, and obedience to authority were significantly correlated to both functionality and frequency of exposure
- The control variable gender was significant for 11 values, excluding personal wealth, independence, change, individualism, and discussing political issues
- The control variable knowledge of English language was significant for 8 values excluding political participation, personal wealth, enjoying wealth, change, freedom, competition, honesty, and working hard

Focus group results

Americans as seen on the screen

Most of the focus group participants, with an exception of one or two, never traveled to America and did not know any Americans. Participants said most of their opinions and views on Americans and life in the United States came from television series, films, and documentaries they watch. And the opinions were not very positive. In fact, they were overwhelmingly negative and critical. They saw Americans as stupid and fat. These opinions were based on reality shows portraying women pregnant at 16, radical and ignorant Texans, and the Kardashians, a family that was considered to be trivial. Americans were considered to be ignorant because they don't care about other countries in the world, and they do not have any desire to seek information about the world. They were considered to be naive and lacking critical thinking. They agreed that what they saw Americans eating on television is disgusting, starting from fast food restaurants to frozen meals.

While some of the participants were extremely critical, others were cautious in expressing opinions about Americans because they said it is hard to generalize about a huge nation such as America.

When we say American, we don't really know whom we are talking about because most of the information we get is negative because that is more interesting. So if we say that 97 out of a 100 Americans don't know where Croatia is we are generalizing that all Americans are stupid, while in fact there are a lot of intelligent people there who know who and where we are, but their voice is not heard.

Participants didn't know what to think about Americans and about American culture as it is portrayed on television. One of the participants said most of the things he has seen on television deal with trivial situations and he does not know what to believe. Not even documentaries are helpful in creating an accurate image of America. Movies and documentaries portray these perfect families but don't answer questions that really matter.

I don't really know what to think about Americans. That whole country seems to me like one big conspiracy theory. I don't know if they were ever on the moon, what happened with WTC, who finances the war in Iraq, why are they sending an army to Syria. In fact, I don't know anything about America. That world looks insincere to me and there are so many questions I am interested in getting answered. I know America through movies and documentaries, but I don't believe them. The whole America is one big enigma.

While some struggled with understanding what they saw on television, others believed that media do not give accurate picture of America. One of the participants said that she did not know anybody in America to confirm whether what she saw was true or not. She thought that only after living there for a certain time she would be able to see whether life in America is about living fast, chasing money and every man for himself. In addition, the participants were aware of the fact that America is a big country with different cultures and that life in one part of the country might not be the same as in

another. Some participants thought that whether or not one can see the real American life on television depends on what you are watching. One of the participants said she recently visited America for the first time and what she saw in series such as *Private Practice* and *Gray's Anatomy* really does represent American society and culture. Another participant said there are two types of American movies - mainstream movies targeting mass audiences and quality film.

In mainstream movies there are four professions, such as fashion designer, photographer, PR executive, or a lawyer, that are portrayed in every romantic comedy and you cannot really expect too much. Some people get the wrong perception from these movies; they think life in America is glamorous, but it is not because life is more or less the same everywhere. In the second category quality films offer a realistic glimpse of America when they portray life in trailer parks.

One of the participants also added that there are some documentary makers, such as Michael Moore, who are doing a great job in explaining American system in depth and in an intelligent way.

American and Croatian culture as vastly different

Participants often compared life in Croatia to their views on life in America. One of the things they talked about was contact among people. Some participants said people in Croatia hang out more and spend more quality time with family and friends than people in America. One of the participants said that he thought kids in Croatia don't care about differences in interests, wealth or class status, which is not the case in America. He thought Americans have very structured society connections.

Participants also said they liked education in Croatia and thought education is not as good in America. Some of the participants had first hand experience with family

members who moved to America to continue their education. One of the participants talked about her cousin who moved to America when she was a teenager.

I think that Americans are not as intelligent as we are. I don't want to generalize, there are educated people here and there, but my cousin was telling me that her elementary education in Croatia was more difficult than first two grades in high school in America. She wasn't taking as many classes, and I was telling her about some stuff we learned here, and she didn't even hear about them yet.

Other participants said that despite the fact that American elementary and high school education is not as good as in Croatia, their college education based on specialization is much better.

We take 18 subjects, we know a lot of things about a lot of subjects, but this knowledge does not help us later in life. They take two or three subjects and become experts in their field. That is not half bad.

The participants also said they think Americans take better care of their students and are willing to invest much more in education. One of the participants said she had friends in America who were athletes in college. When her friends hurt their knees the school paid for surgeries and rehabilitation. She said in Croatia when you get injured in a similar situation you are on your own.

The participants saw America as the land of opportunity. If you had a great idea in America you could succeed. They liked the fact that there are many opportunities for people, many places you can go live and work. On the other hand, in Croatia, besides Zagreb, you really don't have many opportunities.

One of the biggest critiques of Americans was that they are too materialistic and are constantly running around, working too much, all in an effort to make more money. They said they didn't like the idea of "live fast, die young," and that such life would be too hectic for them.

It is important to be wealthy, beautiful and successful. We don't understand the need of most Americans to have everything in huge quantities. Also, everything is so big, starting with people, buildings, and the way of life. It is unthinkable to me driving two hours one-way to get to work. They spend their time in cars, at work, and somewhere along the way they lost the perception of what is really important in life.

Croatians, on the other hand, are much more relaxed, never in a hurry, and enjoy life on a daily basis. They said that even though Croatians are aware of the fact that material things are important in life, they don't consider it to be the most important. They value non-material, spiritual things, and they enjoy life more than Americans.

American influences on Croatian society

Despite the fact that the participants said Croatian and American cultures are quite different, they were aware that some of the things have changed and that life in Croatia is not as it used to be. Some of the negative things are that family relationships are changing and foreign companies that have been coming to Croatia are changing the culture of work. People are making more money, but they are working more and more, and are getting sucked into the consumer culture of living on credit. Some of the positive influences coming from abroad are that civil society is getting stronger and Croats are dealing with corruption and criminals on all levels, including politics. Education is more readily available, there are more freedoms to live as you want to, and the society is more open toward diversity.

Some participants said the strongest influence coming from America is seen in business. They said Croatian society is becoming driven by consumerism. In the past, Croatians would go to mass on Sundays and gather in local community centers and churches. Today, everybody is hanging out in one of dozens of shopping centers built in Zagreb in the past 10 years, or in bars and restaurants. New generations want everything

right now and want to enjoy things that their parents worked for their whole lives. One of the participants said reason for this is influence coming from American media. Another participant added technology is to blame as well.

If something is not available today for 2 minutes, everybody immediately freaks out. For example, if router is not working it is a big problem, and 30 years ago if somebody could not put gas in a car one day, that was not a problem, they would do it tomorrow. We became an instant product. I think influences from America have a lot to do with it.

American trends implemented in Croatia are the need to look good and care about material things, which is wrong. What we should have adopted instead is working hard and ethics. Unfortunately, in Croatia everybody just pay attention to how they look, not even how well they do something, but how well that work is presented.

American influences from the media

According to the participants, influences coming from America could be seen in every part of Croatian society, from what they watch, to how they live their lives, what they eat, listen to or the ways they think. Most of these influences have been coming from the media since few people have any contact with Americans. In terms of American content on television or in movie theaters, everything has been accepted and watched. America was considered to be too big of a player in the entertainment world for them not to accept American programming. Some of the participants thought Croatians are too oriented toward the Western world. They said they don't know what happens in Eastern countries and that they don't have access to music, movies or art coming from there.

Participants talked about Croatians accepting reality shows from America. Domestic production companies have been producing reality television shows based on American models such as *The Big Brother*. The new trend among Croatians is becoming

famous and a public figure. Another popular show is *Sex and the City* and a lot of young women use what they see in the show as a premise for their own lifestyle.

Girls today cite *Sex and the City* constantly and try to make their lives as similar to the show as they can, it is like they don't understand it is just a series, life doesn't function like that, not even in America.

American media in Croatia brought variety. For example, when it comes to music, one of the participants said in the past people had limited music choices. Today, if you listen to a specific type of music you can listen to both foreign and domestic musicians. However, as a result more people have been shying away from listening domestic music or watching locally-produced movies. Participants pointed out that a lot of people don't think Croatian movies or music are good, and people who like Croatian artists are mocked. However, one of the participants thought that American media influence is just a passing trend.

I read a book recently where the author claims that Americanization is just a trend, just fashionable right now. He gives an example of two Al-Qaeda men sitting together, drinking Coca-Cola, wearing jeans and devising a plan how to destroy America. Fashion is always changing and new things come all the time. Right now America is in, but people will always identify with their own culture. Watching some American sitcom doesn't make us American.

Participants thought English influences Croatian language. Croatians use English phrases on an everyday basis. For example, one of the candidates for mayor of Zagreb used numerous English phrases in his speech as a tactic to attract older voters who think using English words made him appear smarter even though they couldn't understand what he was talking about.

American influences could be seen especially during the holidays. The participants said it is frustrating when media starts promoting Christmas months in advance, and they said it did not used to be like that. One of the most frustrating holidays

in Croatia today is Valentine's Day. Television stations have been promoting Valentine's Day with love movies, magazines have been giving out gifts, McDonalds has had specials for people in love, and movie theaters have been giving out tickets. In addition to Valentine's Day other holidays have been commercialized as well, such as New Year's and Easter, and the participants pointed out that everything has been evolving around making people spend more money.

In addition to American media influencing existing holidays, Americanization has brought some new traditions to Croatia. Croatians started throwing costume parties for Halloween, which is not a Croatian tradition. Traditionally, this day is called All Saints Day, a time when people gather at cemeteries to honor the deceased. Croatians also started celebrating St. Patrick's Day, which is originally an Irish holiday but it has been hugely popular in America. Participants said older generations have not embraced this holiday, but it has become normal for younger ones who consider it to be a part of Croatian identity.

Perhaps the biggest influence can be seen in food preferences. Numerous American fast-food restaurants have opened in Zagreb in the past couple of years and have joined McDonalds, the only American fast food restaurant in Croatia for more than a decade. Today, another popular American fast food restaurant is Kentucky Fried Chicken, which has opened three restaurants in Zagreb in the past year.

The participants said that the American fast food chains in Croatia are popular because they are new and they come from America. One of the participants said he often asks people if chicken at KFC is special, and their answer is usually no. He said people don't want to admit that they go to KFC because it is popular and it is the place to be seen.

Another participant said he went to KFC after seeing characters on *South Park* eating there. He said he would have never gone otherwise, but that he really liked the chicken. Another participant said that the reason Croatians like to go to American fast food restaurants and American stores is that there is really not much else offered. This culture has been enforced for the past 20 years and they don't know anything else, or alternatives are not interesting enough. They said in the past couple of years McDonalds, KFC, Subway, American doughnut shops, and numerous shopping malls and movie theaters have opened, but only one Croatian museum of contemporary art. Therefore, they said their habit, for lack of anything better, is to go downtown to McDonalds.

I don't have a smart reason why I eat at McDonalds, watch American movies or listen to American music. I just do. This is the style of life I have been living for a long time, and I think Americans do a good job. If this is good for them why wouldn't it be good for us as well, and we are years behind them. We don't have an alternative.

Participants also said American fast food restaurants are popular because food is cheap. They said that Croatian restaurants charge too much for what they offer. They said Croatian restaurants charge huge prices for food that their mothers cook at home. They eat at McDonalds because it is cheap and different. Some Croatian restaurants also started offering American cuisine, including cheeseburgers, fried onion rings, and American pancakes. These restaurants are becoming increasingly popular, and many of the participants said they eat there often because they enjoy the food and the ambiance. They said these restaurants promote food and music from America because they know people in Croatia will buy anything that comes from America.

However, Starbucks is one franchise that did not come to the Croatian market. Participants said that Starbucks would never make it in Croatia because the culture of

drinking coffee is completely different. They referred to an American blogger named Cody who lives in Croatia and writes a blog about his experiences. Cody wrote in one post about coffee drinking that an American idea of drinking coffee is huge cups of coffee and people sitting in Starbucks alone working on laptops or playing on their iPhones. In Croatia drinking coffee is a social thing and Croatians sit in one of the numerous coffee shops around the town drinking one small coffee for hours and hanging out with friends. However, Starbucks is still considered to be interesting and a place to visit. Participants said the closest Starbucks to Zagreb is in Vienna, and many people who go visit need to stop by Starbucks and take pictures. They said Starbucks is almost like a tourist site for them, and not entering Starbucks on their travels would be like not going to see the Berlin Wall while in Berlin.

Croatian cultural identity as hard to define

The participants said that what makes them Croatian is the Croatian language, which they consider to be one of the basic parts of the Croatian identity. In addition, they mentioned Croatian history as defining who they are today, and historical heritage, such as folk songs, traditional clothing and art. They said that what makes them Croatian is the fact that they are Croatian citizens, they were born in Croatia, and most of their friends and family live in the country.

On a deeper level than just language and history, the focus group participants had a hard time defining Croatian cultural identity. Despite the fact that Croatia is a small country, the participants explained that the culture in one part of Croatia is different from the culture in another. For example, the coastal areas have been under the Italian influence, which is quite different from the Eastern influences that can be felt in the rural

areas, such as Slavonija and Moslavina. The differences go as far as people using different words and phrases, and having different traditions and dishes. The participants said that Croatians are particularly proud of their local identities and differences. Thus, it is difficult to talk about a Croatian cultural identity overall.

The participants had a hard time defining what Croatian cultural identity is and said that Croatians really never had a distinct identity as a nation. There was a prevailing idea that Croatians still share their cultural identity with other countries in the region. Croatia was part of Yugoslavia for most of the 20th century and the countries that were a part of it mixed to the extent that even today it is hard to distinguish what is purely Croatian culture from what is Serbian, Slovenian, Bosnian, or Macedonian. Croatia has been an independent country for the past 20 years, which, according to the participants, has not been enough time to distinguish the nation. One of the participants was skeptical about the chance that Croatians will ever develop a distinct identity:

Today we are fighting because only 20 years ago we came out of Yugoslavia, and now we are entering a new system, EU. We didn't use these 20 years of independence to develop a cultural identity. Language is one of the most important aspects of a culture, yet we are having problems with many words that were never translated into Croatian. We are not producing anything in terms of culture, but mostly importing foreign products, we are not even producing Croatian movies because of the lack of governmental support. We have never been independent enough to create our culture or our identity because we came out of a system we still identify with and we don't know what is ours, and what theirs.

However, other participants said that Croatians are bothered when they get called "Balkanci," a term referring to the people from the Balkan area with a negative connotation. One of the participants gave an example of a newspaper article that referred to the Croatian and Serbian languages as the same; the overwhelming reaction in Croatia was negative and people claimed that it was not true.

I was very surprised with the reaction. People were hurt by this claim, but I think it is only logical. Like English in America and Australia, it is the same language and nobody is bothered by it, while we get extremely offended.

A lot of the comments throughout the discussion came back to the ethnic wars at the beginning of the 1990s, making it clear that the consequences of the events that transpired so many years ago still linger among the Croatian population and the negative feelings toward Serbia are transported from generation to generation. One of the participants mentioned that her father's name is Serbian, and that because of his name she has felt discrimination despite the fact that she is of Croatian descent. Another participant said that out of respect to her father who was a soldier in the ethnic wars she would try not to make any contact with Serbians.

I will not judge them, but I will not make contact with them either because I think the wounds are still fresh. Many of us still have memorabilia at home that reminds us of what happened.

Some of the participants, on the other hand, found this kind of behavior detrimental and unnecessary. They said that children who were not even born at that time are full of hatred toward Serbians. They didn't understand where the hate toward somebody who did not do anything to them personally came from. One of the participants commented:

I understand that you have your opinion toward something, but this happened 20 years ago. A lot of new generations were born on both sides. Let's move on toward a brighter future, let's try to change the old generations and their old fashioned ways of thinking. I do not understand what is wrong with these kids.

The participants said these are reasons why Croatia is not moving forward and not being successful at creating a distinct Croatian identity. People are too concerned with what happened in the past, with the war and Yugoslavia and are not looking toward the

future. One of the participants said that Croatians either cry about the old times wishing nothing had changed, or they criticize Yugoslavia, but don't think the current situation is good either. He added that Croatians are never satisfied, but they don't want to do anything to change their situations.

Croatians as warm and welcoming

The participants saw Croatians as warm and welcoming people, always ready to help each other, while overwhelmingly they considered people from the Western Hemisphere cold and reserved. For example, one of the participants talked about the time when her relatives, who have been living in France for the past forty years, came to Croatia for a visit. She said that they were different, reserved, did not initiate contact and just observed what was happening. She said her own family, on the other hand, welcomed them with open arms and treated them very nicely.

Along the same lines, participants also saw Croatians as a collective nation, versus the Western Europe, where people were considered to be oriented more toward the individuals.

I consider this to be a big part of our identity, the fact that we are open toward each other, we always want to help out as much as we can, and I think this is something we need to appreciate and preserve.

The discussions also revealed that the participants were very connected with their families, not just immediate family members, but extended family including uncles and aunts and cousins. The younger participants said that since they moved to Zagreb for college they have been homesick and that they talk to their families on a regular basis and go home often.

Croatians as conservative

The participants considered Croatian tradition important, especially customs connected with Christmas and Easter. Even though they considered it to be important, they said that their parents and older people in general care about traditions more than they do. They liked and cherished Croatian customs, and found traditional ways people used to live interesting, but they thought that tradition is a thing of the past and that, even though it is interesting, people need to move on and become more open towards new things.

The participants also said that some people use tradition as an excuse to pass laws that are very old-fashioned and conservative. They gave an example of a petition that was going on at the time these discussions were held. One of the political parties in Croatia called the "Family party" was collecting signatures to support a definition of marriage to be exclusively between a man and a woman forbidding same sex marriage. The participants said this was very conservative.

This party is saying that family equates to marriage between a man and a woman. That means that I, who grew up with a single father, do not have a family. Often these kinds of outrageous ideas are presented as tradition, which is not true. They are manipulating public opinion. Personally, I don't have anything against tradition as long as this tradition is not forbidding something.

The participants said that the majority of people who were signing this petition were older, from more conservative generations, and don't know any better and are being manipulated. However, some participants pointed out that they saw a lot of people from the younger generation, people between 20 and 25 years of age, either collecting the signatures or signing the petition. They said members of the younger generation who are

conservative mostly come from the eastern parts of Croatia, which is considered more conservative than other parts of the country.

The participants thought that the Croatian society is not very tolerant of homosexuals. Participants talked about their own experiences and the horror stories they either heard or saw.

I have a lot of gay friends and they have been telling me that the situation in Croatia is very, very bad. One night they took me to a gay bar that was not shut down or vandalized just because the bar had no advertisers or distinguishing features that it would be a specialized bar, it is literally hidden in plain sight, just an H on the door and it is placed right across from the police station.

One of my high school friends told me he was gay not too long ago. I was shocked because we knew each other for so long and he never said anything. Then one of my other friends whom I have known for eight years told me the same story. Neither of them has told this to their families, and they do not want to admit it publicly, so only a handful of people around them know. I don't know why they are so passive about this issue, but I think it is probably fear. One of them said that he would tell his parents once he has enough money to live on his own.

The participants said homosexuals are not welcome in public spaces and in mainstream bars and nightclubs. Instead, they said that members of the gay population organize their own parties. Some participants said they don't think it is fair to treat people like that, and that Croatian society should be more open toward non-mainstream people. However, they were pessimistic about anything changing because more people are firmly against it, even among highly educated. Some of the participants, however, were more conservative and said they would not like to see two guys or two girls kissing in the public.

I have a problem seeing two guys or two girls kissing like crazy, but it is not nice to see heterosexual couples either. If two people live together, they love each other; I don't have a problem with that. What you do inside your four walls does not concern me.

Participants talked about their travels abroad where they saw African American taxi drivers, gay and lesbian couples holding hands and kissing on the streets, and Muslims walking around in their national dresses. They said that until a couple of years ago one would never see something like this in Croatia, and if you were different they would beat you up and put you in a hospital. However things are changing slowly, and there is hope that by entering the European Union. Croatians will be forced to learn how to live and function in a diverse society.

When it comes to gender equality in Croatia the participants could not agree whether it is better today than it was in the past. Some said that women are still having problems getting high profile jobs, which is most obvious in the Croatian parliament comprised mostly of men. They thought that women are still underappreciated. One of the participants described a conversation with men of her generation. She said they were undermining women, saying that no woman ever invented anything, that women are not as smart as men. This conversation took place in one of the rural towns of Croatia and the difference between how people think in Zagreb, Croatia's capital, and other parts of Croatia is painfully obvious. Such degrading opinions about women still exist in rural areas of Croatia where women are seen primarily as wives and mothers.

On the other hand, Zagreb is a whole different story. The participants saw more women at high positions such as in politics and other high profile jobs. Participants also thought that Croatia is much more progressive in this sense than other Balkan countries, which are considered to be primitive and patriarchal.

Female participants talked about their own views on gender equality in the household. One of the participants said she was raised in a family where everybody was

equal and in charge of something in the house. She said her family does not make distinction between a man and a woman, or a sister and brother. Another participant said she was looking for a man that will treat her as equal and with respect.

I was raised in a household where my dad always helped my mother with everything. If he saw that she did not have time to iron, he would do it instead, even though he is not as good at it as she is. They help each other, that is normal to me.

Female participants said they want to work and pursue a career in doing something they love. They didn't see themselves sitting at home with children. They wanted to have a family, but they wanted a career as well, not because of the money but because of self-worth. They wanted to feel they are worth something, and they wanted to be self-sufficient.

On one hand I can see myself at home, cooking, having two kids, taking them to school everyday and watching TV all day everyday...I can see that and I don't think it would be bad, but I don't want to allow myself to live like that because I would feel useless, like I did not use my potential to build a career.

Leaving Croatia temporarily

Most of the participants expressed a desire to leave Croatia and travel to different countries. Some preferred West European countries such as The Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, and England. A couple of participants mentioned Australia as a desired location. They saw Australia as an exotic destination with great potential. Because many Croatians live in Australia the participants thought they would feel more comfortable there and would adjust more easily. The participants said language played a big role in deciding where they would like to go, and that America and Great Britain are great choices because most of the Croatian youth speak English.

The participants expressed a desire to go visit and travel to various American cities such as San Francisco and New York. They wanted to see if America was really like it is portrayed in series and shows they watch on television. However, they did not see themselves living there long term. America was considered to be too far from the family and everything they find familiar and they didn't think they would be able to find their way there. They also thought that Americans culture is too different from Croatian.

I think that Americans are not very close with each other, and it does not matter if they live in a big city or a smaller town where community is more connected. I think children have been taught for generations to cherish wrong values.

I would also come back. I would live in America for a year or two. They work too much. I feel that we here don't work as much. It is a different culture. They are not as close and somehow life is different. Europe is closer to what I am used to and I think I would get lost in America.

One of my cousins from Opatia went to Miami because her dad got a job. They have been there for many years and she has drastically changed. She was always different, but since she moved she became a stereotype you see in American movies, high school mean girl. We spent one summer together, I had a lot of fun, but her accent and the mentality of people she talked about I did not like at all. I don't think I would feel good there.

Some of the participants said they would definitely leave Croatia for longer than just a couple years because they didn't see futures for themselves in Croatia. They saw the economic and social situation as bad and they didn't think anything would change in the next 10 years. One of the participants said she would love to feel deeper connections with the Croatian community but she doesn't.

Many participants who partook in the discussions were journalism students and talked about the state of journalism profession. They painted a bleak picture of their colleagues who finished college only to work for one of the local television stations twelve hours a day for minimum wage without weekends or holidays off. One of the

participants was particularly bitter because he said he knew some people with only high school degrees who made more money than people with college degrees. They looked up to other countries such as America and thought that the journalism profession is more appreciated there.

I think that in America people can succeed in the media world and I think education is appreciated much more than here. In Croatia people often make fun of me when I say that I study journalism. They mock me when they say that our writing is not worth anything and tell me my education is not worth a thing because anybody can write. That makes me angry.

The biggest problem participants saw in Croatia was that they didn't see a future here. They said people are not motivated to change the situation. The economy is static, and besides the seaside where there is some tourism, the rest of the country is underdeveloped.

One of the most beautiful examples of baroque churches is situated in one of the villages next to Sisak, but nobody knows about it. An Italian would turn it into a famous tourism site. But Croatians are too lazy to start something new; we go where profit is guaranteed. Dalmatians know that if they own apartments at the seaside they will make enough money to live for a year. Everybody is buying apartments at the seaside. We say we love this country, but nobody cares about it.

On the other hand, one of the participants said he was very happy living in Croatia and he did not feel the need to leave.

I believe that I can create the good situation everybody seeks in America here in Croatia. It all depends on you, on what you are missing here, why you can't find yourself here and what is stopping you from doing something about it. When I ask people who want to go to America why they want to go, they say they can get more of this or that there. I ask them if they made an effort to get those things in Croatia and they say no. Most of the people go there because they believe they will live a better life, which is not necessarily true.

One of the participants said young people should be the ones to make a difference, and not just flee the country and leave everything behind, that the future of

Croatia lies in the hands of the young people. Another participant agreed and said he felt a sort of obligation to do good for this community he lives in. He said he did not blame people who want to leave because the Croatian community did not give them any reason to want to stay. However, running away was not a solution either.

I really believe that it is possible, in a morally right way, to find happiness here as well. I don't worry about material things too much; just the basics for survival are enough for me. Most of the time I try to think of ways to improve this small community I live in. This is the main reason why I would never leave Croatia, in addition to my family and Croatian way of life.

Other participants said they simply didn't want to leave Croatia. They felt good here and they were happy. A lot of them had deep connections to their families and friends and they couldn't imagine a life without them. They said they would not be brave enough to leave by themselves. Living in an economically unstable country is a small price to pay if that means staying close to people they care for.

When you go abroad for a couple of weeks and suddenly you realize you don't have anybody to share your thoughts with. Your friends are not there, your girlfriend, your mom, dad, sister, brother...then you realize that there is no place like home. No matter what you are doing it is not much fun or valuable if you don't have anybody to share it with. I am sure you make friends after a while, but the beginning must be really difficult.

The creation of a global identity

Some of the participants started an interesting discussion about a global identity in the 21st century. One of the participants said he was having a hard time figuring out where Croatian culture ends and where other culture begins. He said that the previous day he has eaten čevapčići (Croatian traditional dish), the day of the focus group today he was drinking Coca-Cola, and the next day he would be watching an Italian film. Cultures in today's globalized world were seen as intertwined that it was hard to understand if

something is purely Croatian or not. The participants also didn't see cultural identities as fixed and exclusive to certain geographical locations.

I think in the 21st century there are no borders in a geographical sense; here we have Slovenia, here Croatia, or America and Canada. I think today we have a sort of a general, global identity that is not connected to physical locations and people can pick and choose what they like.

Another participant agreed and said that people are too connected today. She said she was in everyday contact with her friends from Great Britain, Norway and Denmark, and she said that they were learning Croatian and she was learning Danish with them and they share many things culturally.

Summary of key findings

- Opinions about Americans were overwhelmingly negative and critical. Some of the opinions were that Americans are stupid and fat. Some of the participants said that they think Americans are ignorant because they don't care about other countries in the world, and they do not have any desire to seek information about the world. They were considered to be naive and lacking critical thinking. They agreed that what they see Americans eating on television is disgusting, from fast food restaurants to frozen meals.
- Americans were seen as too materialistic and as constantly running around, working too much, all in efforts to make more money
- America was also seen as the land of opportunity. According to the participants, there are many opportunities for people, many places you can go live and work, as supposed to Croatia where besides a couple of cities, with Zagreb being the biggest, there are few opportunities.

- Negative American influences were seen as changing family relationships in Croatia. Also, foreign companies in Croatia were blamed for changing the culture of working. People are making more money, but they are working in Croatia more and more as well, people are getting sucked in consumer culture and living on credit.
- The participants perceived positive American influences as strengthening civil society in that Croatians are finally starting to deal with corruption and criminals on all the levels, including in the politics as well. They also said that today education is more readily available, there are more freedoms for people to choose how they want to live their lives and what they want to do, and the society is becoming more open toward differences among people.
- Croatian society was seen as driven by consumerism. Today, everybody is hanging out in one of the dozens shopping centers that have been built in Zagreb in the past 10 years, or in bars and restaurants.
- The participants saw influences coming from America in every part of the Croatian society, from what they watch, to how they live their lives, what they eat, what they listen or the ways they think. Most of these influences are coming from the media since very few people have any personal contact with Americans.
- Croatians were seen as too oriented toward the Western world, and not paying enough attention to other parts of the world
- Participants perceived that the trend among people in Croatia was that everybody wants to be famous and live their lives in the eyes of the public

- American media in Croatia was seen as bringing variety. However, one of the negative aspects perceived was that more and more people shy away from listening to domestic music or watching locally produced movies, and everybody values foreign entertainment more
- Participants said that American influences could be seen during the holidays, especially Christmas, Valentines Day, New Years, and Easter. Holidays are commercialized, and everything evolves around making people spend more money.
- Participants said Americanization has brought some new traditions to Croatia. Croatsians have started celebrating Halloween and St. Patrick's Day
- Participants said numerous American fast food restaurants have opened primarily in Zagreb in the past couple of years, such as McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chicken.
- Participants said American fast food restaurants in Croatia are popular because they are new and they come from America. Besides American fast food. restaurants and American stores there is not much else offered.
- Participants said people in Croatia would buy anything that comes from America.
- Participants said Croatsians are particularly proud of their local identities and differences, and it is difficult to talk about a Croatian cultural identity overall.
- Participants said Croatian cultural identity couldn't be defined because Croatsians still share their cultural identity with other countries in the region.
- Consequences of ethnic wars from the beginning of the 1990s still linger among the participants.

- Participants said the reason why Croatia is not moving forward and not being successful at creating a distinct Croatian identity is that people are too concerned with what happened in the past, with the war and Yugoslavia to be able to look toward the future.
- Participants described Croatians as warm and welcoming people, always ready to help each other, while people from the Western Hemisphere were considered to be cold and reserved
- Croatians were seen as a collective nation, versus Western Europe, where people were considered to be oriented more toward individuals
- Tradition was important however, participant's parents and older people in general cared for tradition more than they do
- Older people were seen as more conservative than younger people. However, even younger people tend to be conservative depending on where in Croatia they live. Even though younger generations are more liberal Croatians are considered to still be two or three generations behind Western Europe and America
- Regarding homosexuals, most of the participants thought that the Croatian society is still not very tolerant and that their position in Croatian society is pretty bad.
- A lot of participants described having deep connections to their families and friends and said they couldn't imagine a life without them. Living in an economically unstable country was viewed as a small price to pay for staying close to the people they care for.

- Participants said that most of their opinions and views on Americans and life in the United States came from television series, films, and documentaries they watched.
- Cultures in today's globalized world were seen as intertwined that it is hard to understand if something is purely Croatian or not.
- Cultural identities were seen as not fixed nor exclusive to certain geographical location

Chapter 5

Discussion

Researchers throughout the decades have been interested in understanding how global communications coming from the West affect different cultures around the world. Many have raised concerns about the impact of American media on unique national cultures. The main purpose of this study was to understand how exposure to American television influences cultural identities and values of young people in Croatia, one of the new democracies of post-Communist Eastern Europe. This was accomplished in two parts. First part of this study sought to test the relationship between watching American television and adopting American values following a cognitive functional theory of television's socialization effects developed by Tan, Nelson, Dong, and Tan (1997). The second part of the study sought to further understand the meaning of the experiences of young Croatians when they come in contact with foreign media, and how they view their cultural identities.

The results from the survey revealed that only five values - personal wealth, enjoying wealth, change, equality, and obedience to authority - were both observed and recognized in American programs often and they were found to be the most functional for life in Croatia. This means that these five values support the cognitive-functional theory of television's socialization effects. Ilišin (2007) also found that value equality was among the most accepted liberal values by young Croatians in 2004. Some of the values measured in this study were either not recognized in American programs or were not found to be functional. Cultural values that were not recognized in American programs were family ties, being competitive, honesty, working hard, independence, discussing

political issues, and participation in political system. Cultural values not found to be functional were political participation, tolerance for other races, independence, tolerance for other opinions, freedom, and individualism. Some of these values that were not significant correspond to previous findings on value systems in Croatia and countries in Eastern Europe in general. For example, Inglehart (2004) found that post-communist countries do not tolerate diversity as much as Western countries and are conducive to an atmosphere of intolerance, which was confirmed with the results from this study where participants did not find tolerance for other races as functional. Previous research on values in Croatia also found that Croatians are among the most xenophobic nations in Europe, and that they do not tolerate immigrants and Muslim (Ramet, 2007). In addition, Inglehart (2004) also wrote that the Communist rule imposed collectivism instead of individualism, which was also evident from this study where the participants indicated that they did not find individualism as functional for life and success in Croatia. These findings may indicate that even though young Croatians are somewhat accepting some liberal values, the remnants of the previous systems, the Communist rule in the 1970s and 1980s followed by the autocratic regime imposed by Franjo Tuđman still shape the Croatian cultural values, even among its younger generations.

These results also somewhat differ from the results Tan et al. (1997) found while testing their theory. These researchers surveyed Hispanic and Native American adolescents in the United States, whose cultures differ significantly from the Anglo American adolescents (Brand, 1988). Hispanic and Native American adolescents frequently recognized seven out of 16 values measured in the United States programming. Therefore, their results are similar to the results in this study. However,

where the two studies differ the most is the functionality of the values. Tan et al. (1997) found that Hispanics and Native Americans found all of the 16 values to be functional for their life in United States, while participants of this study found only 10 values to be functional for their success in Croatia. The differences in these findings might stem from the fact that the original study was done on ethnic groups living in the United States, while this study was done in a foreign country. The effects of watching American programs in the United States may be greater on the ethnic groups living there because they need to adjust their values in order to be successful. The effects of American television on Croatians living in Croatia may have not been as great because some of the 16 values measured cannot translate to the Croatian way of life enough to be important for success.

A time spent watching American program was not significant predictor for acceptance of tested values. This is consistent with findings from the study Tan et al. (1997) conducted and it disproves Gerbner's cultivation theory, which predicted that heavy television viewing is correlated to real world perceptions. Previous studies found little (Pingree, & Hawkins, 1981; Kang, & Michael, 1988; Zaharopoulos, 2003) to no evidence (Tan et al., 2003) to support this theory when looking at the influence of American programs on foreign audiences. Results from this study indicate that how much television we watch does not necessarily influence us, but what we watch matters more.

The researcher also measured personal contacts with Americans because previous studies indicated that in cases when participants do not have regular contacts with Americans, television could be expected to be a stronger influence on the socialization process (Chaffee, Nass, & Young, 1990). However, this variable was not included in the

equations because results showed that the vast majority of the participants had no contact with American on a regular basis. This finding was confirmed in the focus group discussions. For the most part, the focus group participants had little to no contact with Americans, and their perceptions were formed based largely on what they had seen in the media. The participants, on one hand, thought that Croats are too oriented toward the Western world and that they don't pay enough attention to other parts of the world, such as their Eastern neighbors. However, they realize that this was not necessarily their fault or their choice to navigate towards American media. They simply don't have access to media coming from the East. Products from there are not advertised, not a part of the popular and mainstream culture, while American programs are present everywhere from blockbusters in movie theaters to popular sitcoms and series on television. And they watch it not because they would necessarily prefer it, but because they don't have much of a choice. One of the participants put it in a good way when he said, "I don't have a smart reason why I eat at McDonalds, watch American movies or listen to American music. I just do. This is the style of life I have been living for a long time... If this is good for them why wouldn't it be good for us as well, and we are years behind them. We don't have an alternative." From influencing Croatian television production to being the only choice when going to the movie theaters and turning the television sets on, the pattern of cultural imperialism is clearly visible.

Researchers such as McChesney (2001) and Schiller (1991) argue that globally transmitted American programs, art, culture, and other values overwhelm the foreign countries and negatively influence them in a sense that they contribute to homogenization of diverse cultures into a pandemic of Westernized consumer culture. However, even

though patterns of cultural imperialism based on the results from survey and focus group discussions in this study are clearly visible in Croatia, it does not appear that the consumption of American television programs leads to homogenization. Instead, what appears to be happening is cultural hybridization. Robertson (1995) was one of the first researchers who argued that globalization involves the incorporation of locality. In other words, globalization does not overwhelm the different cultures and change them completely to look exactly like Western cultures. Instead, cultural globalization is a process of hybridization in which invading Western culture mixes and adapts with the local culture and transforms into a new cultural form (Kradly, 2005). To name this idea of globalization at variance with localization, Robertson (1995) suggests the term “glocalization.” Glocalization, therefore, directs the perspective towards hybrid phenomena and ways local people respond to global developments.

Burke’s (2009) four local responses to cultural exchange may be a useful way to explain how cultural hybridity transpires among young Croatians who participated in this study. The first is acceptance, as illustrated by the fashion for the foreign. Burke (2009) writes that “westernization” is an important part of cultural history of the world stemming back to the nineteenth century, an important aspect of it being fashion. Upper-class men in Rio de Janeiro wearing European suits or countries around the world imitating the British Parliament are good examples. Among the participants of this study acceptance was exemplified in many ways. The participants talked about how much they loved eating at one of the numerous American fast food restaurants that have opened in Croatia such as McDonalds and Kentucky Fried Chicken. They said American fast food restaurants in Croatia were popular because they are something new and because they

come from America, thus confirming the “fashion for the foreign,” as described by Burke (2009). According to the participants, people would buy everything that comes from America. Participants accepted and watched nearly all offered American content on television or in movie theaters. America was considered to be too big of a player in the entertainment world for participants not to accept its programming.

The second type of local response to global influences is outright rejection, often in a form of resilience. Burke (2009) argued that whether or not locals would accept or reject something depends on the confidence of the superiority of their culture. In situations when people are confident of their culture, they often are not interested in foreign ideas. Take coffee drinking tradition in Croatia for an example. While the participants were accepting of all things coming from America, from media to food and new holidays, one business they said would never be successful in Croatia is Starbucks—not because the coffee is not good, or because it would not be interesting to them, but because Starbucks' concept of drinking coffee is so fundamentally different from coffee-drinking traditions in Croatia that they thought it would never attract enough people to stay open. According to a 2009 survey, Croats drink around 11 pounds of coffee per person per year, that's around 22,500 tons of coffee annually (Coffee in Croatia, 2013). In addition to drinking ample amounts of coffee, they spend a lot of time doing it as well. According to the same survey, Croats spend 2.25 million hours having coffee each year, or half-an-hour per day per person. The tradition of drinking coffee in Croatia is not so much about the coffee, even though a Croatian loves his coffee, but more about the time spent drinking it. An American blogger Cody McClain-Brown (2013), who lives in Croatia and writes about his experiences, put it nicely in one of his blogs,

Croatians love coffee, but more than that coffee in Croatia is where everything gets done. It's where friends meet, where deals are made, it's how favors are asked, it's how people are hired, fired, introduced, married, divorced, everything. Everything involves coffee.

Therefore, drinking coffee in Croatia is a social function. Croatians gather at one of the numerous coffee bars around pretty much every town in Croatia and spend hours drinking a small cup of coffee and socializing. These are the reasons that the participants said Starbucks would never succeed in Croatia. The American concept of drinking coffee is completely different. In the U.S. people drink coffee to have a boost to work harder. Starbucks' entire business model evolves around getting many people to drink as much coffee as they can as fast as possible. As Cody writes, "They are probably not ready for the bulk of their Croatian customers to sit over an espresso with milk for two hours." Drinking coffee in Croatia is a strong tradition, a tradition that has brought Croatians together for decades, and it is definitely a part of this culture.

Along the same lines the participants also criticized the American way of life. Much like the differences between the coffee drinking traditions in these two countries, there are vast differences between ways of life. For example, the participants criticized the way Americans, in their opinion, are too materialistic and constantly on the go, all in an effort to make more money. They said they didn't like the idea of "live fast, die young," and that such life would be too hectic for them. Croatians are, on the other hand, more relaxed and enjoy life more on a daily basis. It is evident from these findings that the Croatian participants were outright rejecting the idea that the life in Croatia could ever resemble the fast-paced life they imagine Americans living.

A third possible strategy to respond to foreign influences according to Burke is segregation. In this case, people accept influences while some aspects of local culture

remain free from “contamination.” Burke (2009) writes that in the nineteenth century Japanese upper-class men lived double lives and enjoyed both Western and traditional Japanese traditions from consuming two kinds of foods to wearing two kinds of clothes and so on. Along the same lines, this study’s participants considered tradition to be important, especially customs that come together with Christmas and Easter. They like and cherish Croatian customs, and find traditional ways people used to live to be interesting, but they are open towards new things that are up and coming as well. For example, these younger generations started accepting and celebrating American holidays, such as Halloween and St. Patrick's Day. Therefore, these younger generations are creating traditions of their own, which may not be traditionally a part of Croatian culture, while at the same time celebrating traditional Croatian holidays in established ways.

Finally, as Burke (2009) suggests, there is the strategy of adaptation. In this case, an item from a different culture is taken from its original setting and modified to fit the new environment. Burke (2009) gives examples of Asian artists who were imitating European painting and sculpturing styles or were choosing elements from the Asian culture that were proven to appeal to Western customers. Similarly, the participants of this study indicated both in the survey and focus group discussion that they liked American television programming primarily because it brought variety to Croatia. As a result, some of the local television production companies started producing programs in the same format as American programs. Thus, RTL television produced Croatian version of *Big Brother*, which aired for five seasons and was extremely popular (Glavić, 2011, March 18). Some other popular shows were *Hrvatska Traži Zvijezdu* (created based on *American Idol*), and Croatian soap operas such as *Larin izbor*.

One can look at this process of cultural hybridization in Croatia in two ways. The first one is negative, emphasizing the fact that by going through the hybridization process, Croatians are losing their regional traditions and local roots. For example, the fact that Croatians are getting sucked into consumer culture and are exchanging local community centers and churches for shopping centers as their gathering places. Or the fact that younger Croatian generations are losing interest in older traditions that may disappear, but are accepting new ones. However, as Burke argues “In our world, no culture is an island” (2009, p. 101). In other words, all cultures are now more or less in a contact with other traditions. He sees traditions as building sites that are constantly under construction whether the individuals or groups participating in those traditions are aware of it or not (Burke, 2009). These changes are inevitable but may not be a bad thing after all. The younger generations will build on the existing traditional Croatian cultural values that are deeply rooted in the culture and create new, hybridized culture. One can look at this process as cultural evolution rather than cultural erosion.

However, Burke (2009) writes that even though these changes are to be expected, they will not lead to full homogenization of cultures based on Western values. Even if people around the world see the same images on their television screens, they will not interpret them in the same way. This notion came through in focus group discussions. The participants thought of some of the programs such as *Sex and the City* trivial, but said that the show is popular particularly among Croatian girls who adjusted their lifestyles to resemble the lifestyle portrayed in that program. The participants also criticized mainstream movies targeting mass audiences because the movies are all made in the same manner with a goal of selling the “American dream.” One of the participants

commented " Some people get the wrong impression from these movies; they think life in America is glamorous, but it is not because life is more or less the same everywhere." These findings demonstrate that Americanization through mass media is not monolithic and its text or meaning does not enter a country and injects itself into the population in an equal and massive manner. John Fiske (1989) wrote that popular texts are always "polysemic," offering various meanings and read by audiences in different manners. Therefore, Katz and Liebes (1990) showed that while some international viewers found American soap opera *Dallas* to be full of dazzle and glamour, other saw in it cultural emptiness of American capitalism. Along the same lines, Gray (2007) looked how foreign audiences interpret *The Simpsons*. While some of his participants felt that this show is yet another mindless product of the American media, other recognized and applauded its critical stance towards American media and consumer culture.

Conclusion

It appears that American television programs do not influence Croatian values as much as Croatian culture. While the survey participants accepted only five American values out of 16 measured, the focus group participants, on the other hand, described how American influences could be seen in everyday life in Croatia. Influences coming from America can be seen in every part of Croatian society, from what they watch, to how they live their lives, what they eat, what they listen to, or the ways they think. Since the participants of this study have had little to no direct contact with Americans, television remains to be one of the main sources of information about American culture, and as such a powerful vehicle for exporting American cultural values.

However, as the results of this study show, exposing foreign cultures to American television programs hardly leads to cultural homogenization based on Western values. Instead, these cultural encounters lead to cultural hybridity, an emergence of a new form of culture comprised, on one hand, of old, well established Croatian cultural elements, and on the other hand newer, accepted or assimilated Western cultural elements.

Finally, this hybridization process happening in Croatia is not a new development that appeared with globalization. Historically, the first written evidence of Croatians as a nation appeared in the 7th century (Klaić, 1980). Primarily because Croatians as a nation have existed for many centuries, it has been influenced by many different cultures. Because of its unique geographical position, Croatia has, through the years, been influenced by three great cultures: middle European, Mediterranean, and Balkan (Tarle, 2004). Later on, as a part of former Yugoslavia, it has been influenced by the Communist regime. Therefore, Croatian culture has been hybridized for centuries, and today's globalization elements are just being added to the mix.

When it comes to defining Croatian cultural identity as seen from the eyes of the focus group participants, there is no telling where Croatian culture begins and where it ends. Currently, it is caught at the intersection between still present remnants of the old Yugoslavian system, and the new trends of globalization. As Burke writes "We are now witnessing the emergence of a new form of cultural order. This is a global cultural order, but one that may quickly diversify by being adapted to different local environments" (2009, p. 114). The participants of this study don't see anything wrong with embracing changes and they welcome new ideas and new trends they are exposed to. Even though they are losing one part of their identities as Croatians, they are creating new ones. These

young people will never lose parts of their Croatian identities that are deeply rooted. They are becoming a part of a 21st - century global village, with a Croatian twist.

Future research

Based on this study, several areas of research can be explored in the future:

- Further research is needed to understand why some values were considered to be important, and some are not.
- A similar study can be replicated in other countries of the region or a comparative study with other countries with similar backgrounds could be conducted.
- Future studies should include other parts of Croatian population and not just college students. One could also do a comparative study between older generations and younger generations
- A broader focus on the impact of Americanization on other levels not just through media might be interesting to explore as well.
- A content analysis looking at the content of American television programs that are popular in Croatia could be conducted specifically looking at values portrayed in the programs. This kind of research would help determine what kind of content in particular people are exposed to
- A time series study could be done in the future looking to see whether the results would change five or 10 years down the road

Limitations

The first limitation is the sample for both surveys and focus groups. Surveys were done on a college student sample. While this study was interested in younger generations, it would have been better if sample included both educated and less well-educated

respondents. Also, females who took the survey outnumbered males. It would have been better if there was a better gender balance in the sample. Focus groups were also done with college students primarily studying political science and journalism. It would have been better if the participants were with more diverse backgrounds.

The second limitation was time. The whole data collection was done in a two-week time, including surveys and focus group discussions. Since the researcher had to travel to Croatia to collect data, time constraints were inevitable. More time for data collection could have resulted in more surveys filled out and more focus group discussions.

The fourth limitation is that the findings from focus group discussions are not generalizable. However, the results can be used to predict situations in other countries that have similar backgrounds with Croatia. Thus, it is expected that these research findings have made contributions in understanding how American media influences young Croatians and their value systems and cultural identities.

The fifth limitation concerns the survey results. Since the survey was conducted, and not an experiment, it cannot be said for sure that the effects found were a result of watching American television programs. There are many other outside variables that the researcher could not control for.

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Appendices

Appendix A

INFORMED CONSENT

You are invited to participate in this study. The purpose of this study is to examine the influence American media has on Croatian cultural identities. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at anytime without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed you data will be destroyed.

The information in the study records will be kept confidential. Data will be stored securely and will be made available only to persons conducting the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports, which could link participants to the study. Questionnaires will be stored at the University of Tennessee campus until the data is completely entered into SPSS. Once the SPSS file is completed, and the researchers have entered all the data, all original questionnaires will be shredded. There are no anticipated risks to the study.

If you have questions, you may ask them now or later; if you have questions after completing the questionnaire you may contact the researcher, Iveta Imre, at iimre1@utk.edu (333 Communications Building, Knoxville, TN 37996). If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Office of Research [Compliance Officer](#) at (865) 974-3466.

By continuing to the next page I am indicating I have read the consent form and am voluntarily agreeing to participate, and that I am at least 18 years of age.

Appendix B
Questionnaire

How many days per the average week do you watch television?

0 – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7

On days when you watch television, about how many hours do you spend watching it? _____

When you watch television, what kind of program do you usually watch?

Item: 1=never; 2=rarely; 3=occasionally; 4=sometimes; 5=frequently; 6=usually; 7=all

the time

News Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Movies Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Sports Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Series Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Sitcom Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Documentaries Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Other: _____

When you watch television, program from which countries do you usually watch?

Item: 1=never; 2=rarely; 3=occasionally; 4=sometimes; 5=frequently; 6=usually; 7=all

the time

Croatia Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

United States Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Turkey Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Other: _____

How many days per the average week do you read newspaper?

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7

On days when you read newspaper, about how many hours do you spend reading? _____

How many days per the average week do you listen to the radio?

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7

On days when you listen to the radio, about how many hours do you spend listening? _____

How many days per the average week do you use the Internet?

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7

On days when you use the Internet, about how many hours do you spend using the Internet? _____

Please answer the following items to the best of your ability.

Item: 1=never; 2=rarely; 3=occasionally; 4=sometimes; 5=frequently; 6=usually; 7=all

the time

How often do you watch the following American television program genres?

Comedy time Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Adventure time Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Drama other than movies time Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Sports time Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

How often do you watch American series

on television? Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Please list American series you watch:

How often do you watch American sitcoms

on television? Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Please list American sitcoms you watch:

How often do you watch American news

on television? Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Please list American news programs you watch:

How often do you watch American movies

on DVD? Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Please list American movies you watched on DVD recently:

How often do you watch American movies

in the movie theater? Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the time

Please list American movies you watched in the movie theater recently:

How often do you read American

magazines?
time

Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the

Please list American magazines you read:

How often do you read American

newspapers (e.g. *The New York Times*)?
time

Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the

Please list American newspapers you read:

How often are you in contact with

Americans face to face?
time

Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the

How often are you in contact with

Americans over the phone?
time

Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the

How often are you in contact with

Americans over Skype?
time

Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the

How often are you in contact with

Americans via e-mail?
time

Never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—All the

Have you visited America?

YES NO

If yes, how long were you there (please answer in weeks):

2. Please indicate how important each of the following values are to you, personally.

Participating in the Political System

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being tolerant of other races

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Pursuing wealth

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being Independent

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Enjoying Wealth

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being tolerant of other opinions

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Change

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Strong family ties

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Equality for all

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Freedom

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being competitive

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being individualistic

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being obedient to authority

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being honest

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Working hard

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Discussing political issues

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

3. Think about the American television programs that you watch frequently. How often do you see these themes portrayed in these programs?

Participating in the Political System

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Being tolerant of other races

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Pursuing wealth

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Being Independent

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Enjoying Wealth

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Being tolerant of other opinions

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Change

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Strong family ties

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Equality for all

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Freedom

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Being competitive

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Being individualistic

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Being obedient to authority

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Being honest

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Working hard

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

Discussing political issues

Almost never —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very often

4. To be successful in Croatia, how important are the following values?

Participating in the Political System

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being tolerant of other races

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Pursuing wealth

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being Independent

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Enjoying Wealth

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being tolerant of other opinions

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Change

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Strong family ties

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Equality for all

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Freedom

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being competitive

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being individualistic

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being obedient to authority

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Being honest

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Working hard

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

Discussing political issues

Not important —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Very important

5. Please indicate whether you disagree or agree with the following statements.

Item: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=slightly disagree; 4=neither agree or disagree; 5=agree; 6=slightly

Television programs present things as they really are.

Strongly disagree —1—2—3—4—5—6—7—Strongly agree

6. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

Item: 1=not at all; 2=not too well; 3=pretty well; 4=very well;

I understand spoken English. Not at all —1—2—3—4—Very well

I can speak English. Not at all —1—2—3—4—Very well

I can read English. Not at all —1—2—3—4—Very well

I can write English. Not at all —1—2—3—4—Very well

Please share the following information about yourself:

1. What is your age? _____
2. What is your biological sex?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

3. What is your level of education?
 - a. Less than elementary school
 - b. Elementary school
 - c. High school
 - d. Bachelor's degree
 - e. Master's degree
 - f. Doctoral degree
4. What is your religion?
 - a. Catholic
 - b. Orthodox
 - c. Muslim
 - d. Jewish
 - e. Other. Please indicate _____
 - f. Does not want to indicate
5. What is your ethnicity?
 - a. Croatian
 - b. Other. Please indicate _____
 - c. Does not want to indicate

30. What year are you in school?

- 1) First Year
- 2) Second Year
- 3) Third Year
- 4) Fourth Year
- 5) Graduate

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Appendix C

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Introduction

Thank you for considering to participate in this study conducted by me, Iveta Imre, as part of my doctoral studies at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA. The purpose of this study is to explore the meaning of cultural identity in general and the American media influence on cultural identity in particular in Croatia. During this focus group discussion, you will be asked to express your personal thoughts about Croatian cultural identities and recall experiences when consuming American media content.

Your participation is voluntary. You may stop participating at any point of the focus group discussion, even if you've already given consent without penalty. If you provide some information that you would like to later withdraw, the information you choose to withdraw will not be transcribed or used in any way in this study. If you have any questions regarding the consent form, please do not hesitate to ask the researcher. No one will be able to access the information except the researcher.

Participant Involvement

During the focus group discussion, you will be asked several open-ended questions regarding your views about cultural identity in Croatia in general and about American media influence in Croatia in particular. Depending upon your answers, the researcher may ask additional questions designed to get further details on a particular situation you describe.

The focus group discussion will last approximately one hour in length. The researcher will provide snacks and refreshments. A recording will be made of the entire discussion, and that recording will later be fully transcribed. You will be asked to identify yourself using a pseudonym on the recording in order to keep your answers separate and distinct from other participants. In order to maintain your privacy, when reporting this information, pseudonyms will be used. You will not be personally identified, no workplace information will be named, and no link will be made between you and the answers you have provided. The researcher will be the only person who knows your identity. While your voice is considered personally identifiable information, only the researcher and an outside transcriber who has signed a confidentiality agreement will actually hear your voice.

Risks

Given the nature of your responses and the steps being taken to ensure confidentiality and protect the information you provide, participation in this study carries minimal plausible risk.

Benefits

Although this study will not be of immediate benefit to you, this study will begin to help

fill in the gap in the available scholarly research done to date in the area of Croatian cultural identity. The research will increase the knowledge of how American media influences cultural identities in foreign countries.

_____ Participant's _____ initials

Confidentiality

Your participation in this study will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be used in both in transcription of the focus group discussions as well as when reporting the findings to protect the identities of the participants. Within 48 hours of a completed discussion, the digital recording of the discussion will be imported to researcher's private computer kept within a locked room and having restricted access to a single researcher. The digital recording on the voice recorder will be immediately destroyed upon transfer to this computer. Once transcriptions are completed and the researcher returns to the United States, any hand written notes, any hard-copy transcriptions, and informed consent forms will be locked on the campus of The University of Tennessee. Consent forms and other study documentation will be kept for three years in locked storage with only the researcher having access to the this information.

Contact

Information

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study,) you may contact the researcher, Iveta Imre, +385-01-6692-946 or +1-865-804-8782, iimre1@utk.edu, 98 Communications Building, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN, 37996 United States. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, you can contact the Office of Research at the University of Tennessee [Compliance Officer](#) at +1-865-974-3466.

Consent

I have read the above information. I have received a copy of this form. By signing below, I confirm that I am at least 18 years of age, and I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

Appendix D

Focus group participant's Pledge of Confidentiality

As a participant in this research project, I understand that I will take part in confidential focus group discussions. The identity of other focus group participants as well as the information revealed during discussion will remain strictly confidential. I understand that I have a responsibility to honor this confidentially agreement. I hereby agree not to share the participant's identities or any information with anyone except the primary researcher of this project. Any violation of this agreement would constitute a serious breach of ethical standards, and I pledge not to do so.

Focus Group Participant

Date

Appendix E

Interview Guide

Cultural Erosion: Assessing the Impact of United States mass media on Croatian cultural identities

1. Tell me about your ideas about what cultural identity means.
 - a. What does it mean for you to have a cultural identity?
 - b. What do you think makes one culture different from another?

2. Tell me about the Croatian cultural identity.
 - a. What does it mean for you to be Croatian?
 - b. Do you speak any other language? Why?
 - c. Describe the style of life in Croatia today. How do you think it is different/similar to the lifestyle of your parents/grandparents?
 - d. What characterizes Croatian cultural identity? What are some main cultural values in Croatia? What are some main traditions in Croatia? What are some core symbols of the Croatian cultural identity? Elaborate on each having in mind what you know about other cultures/American culture?
 - e. Do you think there is overlap between cultural values in Croatia and other cultures?

3. Tell me about American media available in Croatia.
 - a. What kind of American media is available in Croatia?
 - b. How do you get in touch with American media? How often?
 - c. What American shows and movies do you watch and like?
 - d. What do you think about the American way of life and the values portrayed in the movies? Does what you see in American program influence your way of life? How?
 - e. Based on what you know about the United States, what do you think are the main American cultural values?
 - f. What are, in your opinion, commonalities and differences between Croatian and American culture?
 - i. Probes: family values, individualism, collectivism, lifestyle
 - g. What do you think about globalization?
 - h. Would you consider yourselves as citizens of the world?

Appendix F

Transcriber's Pledge of Confidentiality

As a transcribing typist of this research project, I understand that I will be hearing tapes of confidential focus group discussions. The information on these tapes has been revealed by research participants who participated in this project on good faith that their discussions would remain strictly confidential. I understand that I have a responsibility to honor this confidentiality agreement. I hereby agree not to share any information on these tapes with anyone except the primary researcher of this project. Any violation of this agreement would constitute a serious breach of ethical standards, and I pledge not to do so.

Transcribing Typist

Date

Appendix G

Tables

Table G-1. Personal Contact with Americans

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	252	51.7	52.0	52.0
	Rarely	98	20.1	20.2	72.2
	occasionally	51	10.5	10.5	82.7
	sometimes	33	6.8	6.8	89.5
	frequently	17	3.5	3.5	93.0
	Usually	15	3.1	3.1	96.1
	every time	19	3.9	3.9	100.0
	Total	485	99.6	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.4		
Total		487	100.0		

Table G-2. Contact with Americans over the phone

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	404	83.0	83.1	83.1
	Rarely	33	6.8	6.8	89.9
	occasionally	21	4.3	4.3	94.2
	sometimes	6	1.2	1.2	95.5
	frequently	12	2.5	2.5	97.9
	Usually	6	1.2	1.2	99.2
	every time	4	.8	.8	100.0
	Total	486	99.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.2		
Total		487	100.0		

Table G-3. Contact with Americans over Skype

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	391	80.3	80.6	80.6
	Rarely	35	7.2	7.2	87.8
	occasionally	20	4.1	4.1	92.0
	sometimes	9	1.8	1.9	93.8
	frequently	12	2.5	2.5	96.3
	Usually	10	2.1	2.1	98.4
	every time	8	1.6	1.6	100.0
	Total	485	99.6	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.4		
Total		487	100.0		

Table G-4. Contact with Americans over email

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	338	69.4	69.7	69.7
	Rarely	52	10.7	10.7	80.4
	occasionally	34	7.0	7.0	87.4
	sometimes	21	4.3	4.3	91.8
	frequently	11	2.3	2.3	94.0
	Usually	13	2.7	2.7	96.7
	every time	16	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	485	99.6	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.4		
Total		487	100.0		

Table G-5. Contact with Americans over social networks

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Never	255	52.4	52.5	52.5
	Rarely	79	16.2	16.3	68.7
	occasionally	53	10.9	10.9	79.6
	sometimes	33	6.8	6.8	86.4
	frequently	15	3.1	3.1	89.5
	Usually	21	4.3	4.3	93.8
	every time	30	6.2	6.2	100.0
Total	486	99.8	100.0		
Missing	System	1	.2		
Total	487	100.0			

Table G-6. Understand spoken English

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Fair	8	1.6	1.6	1.6
	Good	91	18.7	18.7	20.3
	very good	385	79.1	79.1	99.4
	Excellent	2	.4	.4	99.8
	14.00	1	.2	.2	100.0
	Total	487	100.0	100.0	

Table G-7. Speak English

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Poor	3	.6	.6	.6
Fair	36	7.4	7.4	8.0
Good	154	31.6	31.6	39.6
Valid very good	292	60.0	60.0	99.6
Excellent	2	.4	.4	100.0
Total	487	100.0	100.0	

Table G-8. Read English

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Poor	7	1.4	1.4	1.4
Fair	22	4.5	4.5	6.0
Good	94	19.3	19.3	25.3
Valid very good	362	74.3	74.3	99.6
Excellent	2	.4	.4	100.0
Total	487	100.0	100.0	

Table G-9. Write English

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Poor	9	1.8	1.8	1.8
Fair	42	8.6	8.6	10.5
Good	152	31.2	31.2	41.7
Valid very good	282	57.9	57.9	99.6
Excellent	2	.4	.4	100.0
Total	487	100.0	100.0	

Vita

Iveta Imre is originally from Croatia. After receiving a bachelor's degree in journalism and political sciences from the College of Political Sciences at the University of Zagreb in Croatia, Iveta continued her education in Mass Communication in the United States. She graduated from the University of Tennessee in 2009 with a Master of Science degree in Communication and Information. She earned her Doctor of Philosophy in Communication and Information degree in December 2013.

Iveta has a professional background in broadcast journalism: in Croatia she worked as a news reporter for the Croatian Public Television station. Iveta has more than 10 years of experience in documentary making and teaching television and field production classes. Her research interests include international mass communication, mass media in transitional societies, citizen journalism and news credibility, and visual communication. Her native language is Croatian, and she speaks Serbian and Spanish.