Polysemy, Polyvalence & Pink:
Audience Responses To Music Videos
Why Pink?
- What prompted research?
- Creating questions
- Interpreting answers

What I Hoped To Discover
- To what degree are people personally affected by Pink’s videos?
- How do reactions to Pink’s music videos differ between males and females?
- Did attitudes change after being exposed to videos?
**Method**

- Assembling focus groups
- 2 separate sessions
- 5 male 3 Female
- Recorded sessions
Were the music videos relatable?

Female

• “We all have the pressures but not necessarily those pressures.”

• “I get it personally, but I’m not there feeling the need to get a boob job.”

• “If it was a real life situation, I would have been more affected. It’s a lot more meaningful when it’s a real life situation. Those were extreme examples.”

Male

• “I think it may affect somebody who hasn’t come into themselves yet.”

• “We can’t relate because we’re not girls. I don’t feel pressured to look a certain way.”

• “I feel like I could have contributed to that with a lack of attention or something I said.”

• “It just made me realize that people go home and feel bad about themselves. It made me realize that stuff you can say to people can really affect them.”
Negotiated Reading: Audience members buy the basic premise of the text but alters to particulars to fit their own existing worldviews
- Makes sense of the message in a different way
- Makes the message more relatable/meaningful

“Decoding within the negotiated version contains a mixture of adaptive and oppositional elements: it acknowledges the legitimacy of the hegemonic definitions to make the grand significations while making its own ground rules” (Hall, 516).
Did these music videos trigger any emotions?

“I totally get what she is saying and I don’t disagree with it, but also it is kind of ironic because all of those people are doing stuff for attention but she does the same stuff in a different way. Yeah, she is not flashing everyone, but she does weird things to get people’s attention so how is that any different? Like why is that worse than wearing some slutty outfit?”
**Pink & Polyvalence**

**Polyvalence:** Evaluating/Interpreting texts in a way that pertains to the one’s own life

- Audiences tend to recognize similar meanings in most texts
- Instability of connotation requires viewer to judge texts from their own value systems

“Polyvalence occurs when audience members share understandings of the denotations of a text but disagree about the valuation of those denotations to such a degree that they produce notably different interpretations” (Condit, 106).
Was there a re-occurring theme?

• “image of girls in general”

• “girls in today’s society”

• “people struggling with problems but not showing it on the outside,” adding that “girls want to try to be like other girls but they are fine. They don’t realize how good they have it regardless of their physical attributes.”

• “if you are built a certain way, you can’t look like other girls.”

Pink & Polysemy

Polysemy: Understanding different meanings from a text
“An individual can learn the material in a message without undergoing attitude change”

“A single mass communication message is unlikely to change strongly held attitudes”

- Severin & Tankard

**What Does It All Mean?**

- Very preliminary research
- Focus group members seemed unaffected by the message
- Almost impossible to change attitudes
- Messages affect people differently