

Outcomes are in the Eye of the Beholder: The Influence of Affective Dispositions on
Disconfirmation Emotions, Outcome Satisfaction, and Enjoyment

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Abstract

The purpose of the current research is to examine the influence of affective dispositions and the sequencing of affective and cognitive responses to mediated entertainment. Affective dispositions are manipulated so as to match a liked competitor against one who is disliked. The results indicate that viewers' emotional responses and assessments of satisfaction with a win or loss were dependent on competitor liking. A hedonic reversal occurs in viewer disconfirmation emotions (relief and disappointment) and satisfaction judgments based on outcome desirability. A desirable (undesirable) outcome was one in which a liked (disliked) competitor won or a disliked (liked) competitor lost. We also find evidence of mediated moderation such that competitor liking moderates the mediating effect of relief and disappointment on outcome satisfaction following an outcome. Outcome satisfaction, conceptualized as a cognitive judgment in our model, is then positively related to viewer enjoyment of the overall experience. Additionally, our hypothesized model was found to outperform two competing models. The results elucidate the complex intertwining of affect and cognition in predicting viewer enjoyment of mediated entertainment.

Keywords: affective dispositions, emotion, outcome satisfaction, and enjoyment

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The enjoyment derived from mediated entertainment is neither dependent solely on the attributes of the content nor on those of the viewer. Rather, it is the dynamic interaction between the two that defines the value of the experience. For example, watching a basketball game in which a team scores with less than one second remaining on the clock is without a doubt entertaining; however, the specific emotions one feels following the shot and whether or not the outcome is deemed to be satisfying depends on who the viewer is rooting for.

Enjoyment of mediated entertainment is particularly dependent on viewers' affective dispositions toward the characters, which affects how events and outcomes affecting liked or disliked characters are assessed. Empathic concern for the character is thought to be the driving force behind affective disposition theory (Zillmann, 1996). The theory posits that positive affective dispositions toward a character enhance empathic responses, whereas negative affective dispositions decrease or hedonically reverse them. The intensity of affective and cognitive reactions following an outcome are thought to be a function of the degree of positive or negative affect toward the character.

Research on affective dispositions has typically included entertainment contexts that rely on suspense (e.g., drama, fright-inducing entertainment, and sports). Such contexts feature two or more parties, objects, or ideas that are in conflict with one another, as well as unequivocal outcomes where only one will prevail. Zillmann (1996, p. 219) described a seven-stage model of moral judgment (stages 1 and 2) in disposition formation (stage 3) and how this influences the anticipatory emotions (i.e., hopes and fears) felt during the episode (stage 4). Once the outcome

is known, anticipatory emotions give way to a separate set of emotions (stage 5) and cognitive responses related to the congruence of the actual outcome with that of the desired outcome (stage 6), as well as moral judgments about the outcome (stage 7). The effect of disposition formation (stage 3) on enjoyment (stage 6) has been well established (e.g., Knobloch-Westerwich & Keplinger, 2007; Raney & Bryant, 2002; Sapolsky, 1980; Zillmann & Bryant, 1994; Zillmann, Bryant, & Sapolsky, 1989; Zillmann & Cantor, 1977), as has the effect of dispositions on general affect (Hirt, Zillmann, Erickson, & Kennedy, 1992) and target-based emotions such as pride, gratitude, anger, and shame (Madrigal, 2008).

Prior research has for the most part tested Zillmann's seven-stage model using individual studies that focus on just a single stage at a time. In contrast, a primary contribution of our research is the consideration and elaboration of these stages collectively. A model is tested in which the moderating role of affective dispositions on enjoyment following a favorable or unfavorable outcome is mediated by discrete emotional responses and a cognitive assessment of outcome satisfaction. The empirical contribution is further strengthened by tests comparing our hypothesized sequencing to alternative mediating sequences. Given that a mediating test is indicative of a process through which an independent variable affects a dependent variable (Iacobucci, 2008), our research therefore provides valuable insights into the process underlying viewers' summary assessment of enjoyment following a competitive sporting event. Also different from past research that has operationalized affective dispositions as a measured construct; we follow Knobloch-Westerwich and Keplinger (2007) and manipulate affective dispositions based on how a competitor's moral behavior affects liking while holding constant the mediated entertainment stimulus.

Also contributing to the literature is the consideration of two discrete emotions arising as the result of disconfirmed expectations following an outcome, relief and disappointment (Ortony, Clore, & Collins, 1988). Unlike recent research by Madrigal, Bee, Chen and LaBarge (2011), who considered the mediating role of relief on enjoyment following a favorable outcome involving a liked character under conditions of high (vs. low) suspense, the current research considers how relief and disappointment predict viewers' assessment of outcome satisfaction. Outcome satisfaction is conceptualized as a cognitive assessment of the value associated with an end state to a particular event, which is posited as being immediately antecedent to an evaluation of overall enjoyment of the experience. Our model conceptualizes outcome satisfaction as mediating the effect of relief and disappointment on enjoyment. Collectively, these considerations add to an emerging literature on the intertwining of affect and cognition in predicting viewer enjoyment of mediated entertainment (see Bartsch & Oliver, 2011; Soto-Sanfiel, 2011).

Affective Dispositions and Associated Responses to Outcomes

Outcomes matter only to the extent that a preference exists for one alternative ending over another. Such a desire is often predicated on the viewer's affective dispositions toward the characters (Raney, 2003a; Zillmann, 1991). Often formed on the basis of moral judgments about a character's behavior and intentions, affective dispositions are manifest in the degree to which a character is liked or disliked (Raney & Bryant, 2002; Raney, 2011a). Tangney, Stuewig, and Maschek (2007) referred to this as a "moral emotional process of empathy". If a character's behavior is deemed to be commendable, a disposition of liking and caring will follow. If on the other hand, a character's behavior is deplored and condemnation considered warranted, a

disposition of disliking is formed. Thus, a desirable outcome is one in which a liked character succeeds or a disliked character fails, and an undesirable outcome is one benefitting a disliked character or harming a liked character.

It is the vacillation between the prospects of seeing a desirable outcome versus an undesirable one that creates the hopes and fears characterizing suspense. Maximum suspense occurs when there is a high but not complete subjective uncertainty that an undesirable outcome will befall the liked character (Zillmann, 1996). Thus, consistent with cognitive appraisal theory which argues that emotions are elicited from appraisals of events in regard to people's desires and expectations (Frijda, 1986; Ortony et al., 1988; Roseman & Evdokas, 2004), empathic concern frequently serves as the basis for viewers' preferences and, by extension, the emotions they feel while watching a suspense episode.

The termination of a suspense episode requires a grand resolution that is deemed unequivocal. Once the outcome becomes known, suspense gives rise to a class of emotions dependent on the disconfirmation of prospective outcomes (Ortony et al., 1988). When the prospect of an undesirable outcome has been eliminated or changed for the better, relief arises. In contrast, disappointment is felt when the prospect of a desirable outcome is disconfirmed (see also Lazarus, 1991). In addition to the disconfirmation emotions of relief and disappointment, outcome satisfaction and enjoyment are also consequent to the termination of a suspense episode. Outcome satisfaction is an evaluation of the outcome and is defined as a fulfillment judgment assessing the degree to which an outcome is deemed to be congruent with a viewer's desires. Outcomes favoring a liked (disliked) character are considered satisfying (unsatisfying), whereas those disfavoring a liked (disliked) character are judged to be unsatisfying (satisfying).

Enjoyment, on the other hand, is conceptualized here as a global pleasure reaction to media content (Nabi & Krcmar, 2004). As such, it is an end-state assessment that incorporates the momentary enjoyment felt in the moments preceding the outcome. Enjoyment in this conceptualization differs from satisfaction in that the latter focuses on the desirability of the actual outcome relative to a desired outcome, whereas enjoyment is concerned with the perceived value of the overall experience. We posit that outcomes need not be satisfying in order for an experience to be enjoyable. This is consistent with previous research that has found enjoyment to be positively predicted by suspense regardless of outcome and affective dispositions (e.g., Madrigal et al., 2011). For example, although watching a favorite team lose to a vastly superior one in the final moments of a highly competitive sporting event is likely to be disappointing and unsatisfying, the overall experience may nevertheless be judged to be enjoyable because of the entertaining nature of the contest.

As implied in the preceding, the media context selected for the current research is a sporting event. Sporting events represent an ideal context because they typically (1) produce an unequivocal winner; (2) prompt feelings of relief and disappointment; (3) may be judged as being satisfactory and enjoyable; and (4) are frequently quite suspenseful (Gan et al., 1997). Of particular interest is the application of disposition theory to sports spectatorship (Madrigal, 1995; Raney, 2003b; Zillmann, Bryant, & Sapolsky, 1989; Zillmann & Paulus, 1993). Viewers' allegiance to a team or athlete exists along a continuum of affect ranging from extreme liking through indifference to extreme disliking.

Although little empirical research has addressed morality in sports spectatorship (Raney, 2011b), we propose moral considerations as one possible path to the formation of affective dispositions toward competitors. Similar to the way in which moral judgments about a fictional

character's behavior affects affective dispositions toward that character (Zillmann & Bryant, 1975; Zillmann & Cantor, 1977), we expect the same process applies in the case of competitor behavior. For example, one need only consider golfer Tiger Woods whose favorable ratings dropped from 85 percent in 2005 to 34 percent in the weeks following his admission of marital infidelity (CNN, 2009). Similarly, Lance Armstrong's popularity and endorsement value plummeted with accusations regarding performance enhancing drug use and the USADA's lifetime ban from cycling (Hall, 2012).

The first hypothesis posits that affective dispositions created on the basis of viewers' judgments of the competitor's moral behavior moderate responses to suspenseful outcomes. We expect that outcome effects for the disconfirmation emotions and outcome satisfaction to be reversed depending on competitor liking. No such effect is expected for enjoyment because of the inherent entertainment value of suspenseful competitions, regardless of outcome (Bryant, Comisky, & Zillmann, 1981; Madrigal et al., 2011). Consistent with affective disposition theory, a desirable outcome may be defined as one in which either the liked competitor wins or the disliked competitor loses; whereas an undesirable outcome is one in which the liked competitor loses or the disliked competitor wins. Formally, the following Affective Dispositions \times Outcome disordinal interactions are expected.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): A desirable (vs. undesirable) outcome will generate (a) greater relief, (b) less disappointment, and (c) greater outcome satisfaction.

Affective Dispositions and the Sequencing of Responses to Outcomes

Recently, Madrigal et al. (2011) reported that relief mediated the direct effect of suspense on enjoyment. Using a set of computer-generated races, the authors found that greater levels of suspense led to increased relief following a high-suspense win by a preferred character and this

positively predicted enjoyment. The results indicate that witnessing events threatening a liked character's chances of succeeding create increased empathic distress, which in turn is transferred to enjoyment through relief following a desirable outcome. However, Madrigal et al.'s results indicated no such effect for disappointment following an undesirable outcome. They surmised that it is possible for a viewer to enjoy suspense despite an unfavorable outcome simply because of its inherent entertainment value. In other words, a viewer may be disappointed because the outcome was not satisfying, but may nevertheless enjoy the experience overall. This would suggest that outcome satisfaction plays an important mediating role in the enjoyment of suspense and is distinct from enjoyment.

The model shown in the top frame of figure 1 builds on previous research (e.g., Madrigal et al., 2011) and further elaborates the seven-stage model posited by Zillmann (1996). Similar to Knobloch-Westerwick & Keplinger (2007), affective dispositions are manipulated in the current study based on viewers' judgments of morality-based aspects of competitor behavior. Once the outcome becomes known, heightened levels of in-situ emotions are immediately transferred to feelings of relief (disappointment) when the possibility of a negative (positive) outcome is disconfirmed (Ortony et al., 1988). These disconfirmation emotions serve as sources of information that contribute to the viewer's satisfaction with the outcome (Phillips & Baumgartner, 2002).

More formally, the model in figure 1 outlines a mediated moderation sequence in which the effect of a sporting event's outcome on satisfaction is moderated by affective dispositions toward the competitors and mediated by disconfirmation emotions. Relief is posited to mediate the effect of a desirable (i.e., liked competitor prevails or disliked competitor succumbs) outcome on satisfaction whereas disappointment is expected to mediate the effect of an undesirable (i.e.,

disliked competitor prevails or liked competitor succumbs) outcome on satisfaction. Outcome satisfaction is then hypothesized to mediate the direct effect of each disconfirmation emotion on enjoyment.

Satisfaction in our model is a cognitive response informed by the disconfirmation emotions. Satisfaction is positioned as antecedent to enjoyment because it contributes to the desired end-state of consumption (Woodruff & Gardial, 1996) or, in Oliver's (1999) terms, the perceived value of the experience. In the case of a mediated entertainment experience, value is determined by the overall enjoyment of the experience. In addition to our posited sequence, we also consider the possibility of alternative mediated moderation sequences as shown in Models A and B in figure 1. Effects for the hypothesized mediated moderation model are outlined below.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Feelings of (a) relief and (b) disappointment will mediate the effect of outcome desirability on outcome satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Outcome desirability will predict disconfirmation emotions such that a desirable (undesirable) outcome will have a (a) positive (negative) effect on relief and (b) negative (positive) effect on disappointment.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Feelings of (a) relief will have a positive effect and (b) disappointment will have a negative effect on outcome satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Outcome satisfaction will have a positive effect on enjoyment.

Insert Figure 1 about here.

Although both the hypothesized model shown in figure 1 and the one tested by Madrigal et al. (2011, study 3) considered both moderation and mediation, the current research differs from the latter in four important ways. First, the moderator considered by Madrigal et al. was level of suspense, a variable considered as a covariate but not a moderator in the current study. Second, although Madrigal et al. considered pre-existing affective dispositions, they did not

manipulate affective dispositions. A third difference is that the current research includes races featuring actual athletes racing rather than simulated icon races. Finally, and most important, a measure of outcome satisfaction is included as a key mediator of disconfirmation emotions on enjoyment. We argue that this construct is conceptually and operationally distinct from enjoyment.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Study participants saw one of two speed skating races recorded from preliminary heats conducted during the Winter Olympics. Neither race aired in the country where data collection occurred. Each race featured two male skaters competing in a 1000-meter (2.5 laps) race that featured a staggered start. No audio was included. In one race, a Canadian competed against a Norwegian; in the other, a Korean was pitted against a Fin. The races took approximately one minute and 10 seconds for the losing racer to complete. Two different races were included to account for possible individual differences that might bias viewers' responses.

For each race, four conditions were created: a) eventual winner described in favorable terms, loser in cursory terms (name, country of origin, age, height and weight); (b) winner described in cursory terms, loser in favorable terms; (c) winner described in unfavorable terms, loser in cursory terms; and (d) winner described in cursory terms, loser in unfavorable terms. The manipulations are shown in the Appendix. No differences were found across the two races on any of the measures. Consequently, the data were collapsed into a 2 (Affective Dispositions: liked, disliked) \times 2 (Outcome: win, loss) between-subjects factorial design.

Data were collected from 133 students (53% male) in exchange for course credit in a laboratory setting. Each data collection session was attended by between four and 15 students. After reading a consent-to-participate form and written instructions, respondents were directed to a website containing the manipulations. Each participant was randomly assigned to one of the four conditions.

Measures

Enjoyment. Enjoyment was measured on four seven-point scales (I disliked watching this race/I liked watching this race; this race was not entertaining/this race was entertaining; watching this race was not enjoyable/watching this race was enjoyable; this race was not fun to watch/this race was fun to watch).

Outcome Satisfaction. A single seven-point scale was used to assess outcome satisfaction (I am not satisfied with the outcome of this race/ I am satisfied with the outcome of this race).

Disconfirmation Emotions. Relief and disappointment were each measured with three seven-point scales (1 = do not feel/7 = feel a great deal). Relief included feeling relieved, sense of resolution, and feeling of release. The disappointment emotions included feeling disappointed, down hearted, and frustrated.

Suspense. Perceived suspense was included as a covariate and measured with a three-item scale adapted from Alwitt (2002). Each item was assessed along a seven-point scale (7 = strongly agree): “I was unaware of who would win the race until the very end;” “This race was suspenseful;” and “I was curious how this race would turn out”.

Previous viewing as a covariate. A single-item dichotomous measure asking respondents whether they had seen the race was also included on the questionnaire. Over 90% of the respondents reported that they had not previously seen the race. Nevertheless, the item was included as a covariate in preliminary analyses. The item did not covary with any of the measures and was subsequently dropped from further analyses.

Manipulation checks. Two manipulation checks were used to assess respondents' affective dispositions toward the competitors. Immediately after the manipulation and prior to viewing the race, respondents completed three outcome desirability items for each racer using seven-point semantic differential scales (it is not very important to me that he wins/it is very important to me that he wins; it is not very relevant to me that he wins/it is very relevant to me that he wins; it is not very desirable to me that he wins/it is very desirable to me that he wins; $\alpha = .84$, $M = 3.08$).

After viewing the race and completing measures assessing the independent and dependent variables, the second affective dispositions manipulation check asked participants to indicate their liking of each racer along seven seven-point scales (I disliked him very much/ I liked him very much; I do not want to meet him very much/ I want to meet him very much; I am not at all like him/ I think I am very much like him; I did not really care what happened to him/ I really cared what happened to him; I did not hope that he would win/ I hoped that he would win; I am not at all similar to him/ I think I am very similar to him; I was unable to take his perspective/ I was able to take his perspective; $\alpha = .86$, $M = 4.72$).

Correlations, reliability coefficients, means and standard deviations among the substantive constructs included in the study and subsequent mediated moderation analysis are displayed in table 1.

Insert Table 1 about here.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Manipulation checks. The affective dispositions manipulation was assessed using a series of paired *t*-tests within each group comparing the target versus neutrally described athlete for outcome desirability and liking. As expected, those in the target-liked condition had a stronger preference for seeing a favorable outcome ($M = 4.09$) and liked the target athlete more ($M = 3.96$) than his competitor ($M_{\text{outcome desirability}} = 3.03$, $t(66) = 6.16$, $p < .001$; $M_{\text{liking}} = 3.05$, $t(66) = 4.57$, $p < .001$). In contrast, those in the target-disliked condition preferred to see the athlete described in neutral terms ($M = 3.64$) prevail and also liked the neutral athlete more ($M = 3.62$) than the target-disliked athlete ($M_{\text{outcome desirability}} = 3.05$; $t(65) = -2.83$, $p = .006$; $M_{\text{liking}} = 2.86$; $t(65) = -3.95$, $p < .001$). Thus, the manipulations yielded significant within-condition differences between viewers' ratings of each competitor in the expected direction on outcome desirability and liking.

Moderating Role of Affective Dispositions toward the Competitor

Separate Affective Dispositions \times Outcome ANOVAs were conducted to test the first hypothesis. Respondents' ratings of the suspensefulness of the race they watched were included as a covariate. The results of these tests follow.

H1a, relief. The Affective Dispositions \times Outcome ANOVA for relief yielded a significant disordinal interaction, $F(1, 128) = 6.96$, $p = .009$, $\eta^2 = 0.05$. As shown in figure 2a,

the pattern of results reveals a hedonic reversal for relief based on affective dispositions.

Consistent with H1a, marginally significant effects were found such that those seeing a liked (vs. disliked) competitor win felt greater relief (respectively, $M_s = 3.13, 2.55; p = .08$) and those watching a disliked (vs. liked) competitor lose felt greater relief (respectively, $M_s = 3.33, 2.70; p = .05$). No main effects ($ps > .44$) or covariate effect ($p = .26$) were found. We also considered whether any difference in relief existed between outcomes deemed to be desirable. The results indicated no difference in relief between those who saw a liked character win and those who saw a disliked competitor lose, $t(63) = -.61, p = .55$.

H1b, disappointment. The results for disappointment also support the predicted disordinal interaction, $F(1, 128) = 35.34, p < .001, \eta^2 = 0.21$. As indicated in figure 2b, greater disappointment was felt both when a liked (vs. disliked) competitor lost ($M_s = 3.20, 2.13; p = .002$) and when a disliked (vs. liked) competitor won ($M_s = 3.32, 1.58; p < .001$). Neither the covariate ($p = .15$) nor main effects ($ps > .14$) were found to be significant. As with our results comparing desirable outcomes on relief, no differences were observed for disappointment for undesirable outcomes. That is, equivalent levels of disappointment were felt for those who saw a liked competitor lose and those watching a disliked competitor win, $t(66) = .32, p = .75$.

H1c, outcome satisfaction. The analysis yielded a significant Affective Dispositions \times Outcome interaction, $F(1, 128) = 20.93, p < .001, \eta^2 = 0.14$; but no main ($ps > .10$) or covariate ($p = .53$) effects. The results are shown in figure 2c. As predicted, a win for a liked (vs. disliked) competitor was found to be more satisfying ($M_s = 5.30, 3.53; p < .001$), as was a loss by a disliked (vs. liked) competitor ($M_s = 4.91, 4.09; p = .04$).

Insert Figure 2 about here.

A separate Affective Dispositions \times Outcome ANOVA was conducted with enjoyment as the criterion. The analyses yielded neither main effects nor an interaction ($ps > .45$, $\eta^2 = 0.002$) although perceived suspense did covary with enjoyment ($F(1, 128) = 42.27$, $p < .001$). Enjoyment did not differ between a desirable and an undesirable outcome ($t(131) = 0.73$, $p = .47$). Thus, consistent with Madrigal et al. (2011) viewer enjoyment of the suspense episode was not dependent on who ultimately prevailed.

Test of Mediated Moderation

We conceptualize suspense to be the result of biased processing in which ostensibly neutral information acquired during the narrative is biased by viewers' perceptions of what constitutes a desirable outcome. Enjoyment is viewed as a summary judgment resulting from an affective sequence in which the perceived desirability of an outcome leads to the disconfirmation emotions of relief and disappointment once the outcome becomes known. These emotions then predict outcome satisfaction, which in turn predicts enjoyment. The hypothesized mediated moderation model is shown in figure 1.

A mediated moderation analysis (Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007) was conducted to test whether the disconfirmation emotions mediate the effect of the Affective Dispositions \times Outcome interaction on satisfaction. The interaction was coded on the basis of outcome desirability. Respondents who saw a desirable outcome in which a liked competitor won or a disliked competitor lost were coded 0, whereas those who saw an undesirable outcome (i.e., liked

competitor lost or disliked competitor won) were coded 1. The analysis was conducted using structural equation modeling (LISREL 8.8). Rather than relying on a standard significance test (e.g., z ; Sobel, 1982), a bias-corrected confidence interval is used to test for mediation. Evidence of mediation exists when the interval surrounding the indirect path coefficient of the interaction on satisfaction through the disconfirmation emotions does not include zero. The current analysis relies on a 95% confidence interval created from 5000 bootstrapped resamples. This approach has been shown to be a more reliable way to test for mediated moderation in small and moderately sized samples (Preacher et al., 2007).

Initial analyses of variable normality using PRELIS 2.54 indicated that the distributions for a number of the items were non-normal. Thus, in addition to the minimum-fit function chi square statistic, we also report the Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-square ($SB\chi^2$). This approach provides a more conservative test because it represents an unbiased estimate of the chi square goodness of fit test, parameter estimates and standard errors. Model fit was also assessed using root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), confirmatory fit (CFI), and standardized root mean residual (SRMR). Based on generally accepted criteria (Hu and Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2005), model fit is considered good if it produces a non-significant chi-square, a RMSEA of .06 or less, a CFI of .95 or higher, and a SRMR of less than .10. The results of a confirmatory factor analysis yielded an acceptable fitting model, $\chi^2(67) = 103.10, p = .003$; $SB\chi^2 = 73.81, p = .27$; $RMSEA = .028$; $CFI = .99$; $SRMR = .057$. Evidence of convergent validity was also observed with each item loading significantly on its respective factor. Separate tests of discriminant validity revealed that the constructs were distinct from one another.

The model depicted in figure 1 is based on Preacher et al.'s (2007, p. 194) Model 2 approach to testing for mediated moderation. The paths denoted by lettered numbers in figure 1

reflect those outlined Preacher et al. and were included in the models that were tested. The only exception is that covariances among the manipulated factors were not specified because these variables were dichotomous. The interaction term is of interest when testing for mediated moderation (Iacobucci, 2008), therefore it is also important to include the main effects shown in figure 1 from the manipulations to each substantive construct as control variables (analogous to the analysis of variance). Prior to testing for mediated moderation, an initial model was tested to assess the possibility of confounds and unanticipated effects. This model specified direct paths from each manipulation and the interaction to enjoyment, as well as direct paths from perceived suspense to each of the endogenous variables. With the exception of the path from perceived suspense to enjoyment, all other paths were non-significant and therefore dropped.

The maximum likelihood estimates, z-scores, and confidence intervals for the mediated moderation models depicted in figure 1 are presented in table 2. The data provided an excellent fit to the hypothesized model, $\chi^2(82) = 111.25, p = .02$; $SB\chi^2(82) = 81.58, p = .49$; $RMSEA = 0.0$; $CFI = 1.00$; $SRMR = .074$. Consistent with H2, the disconfirmation emotions mediate outcome desirability (Affective Dispositions \times Outcome contrast) on satisfaction with the race outcome ($CI_{95} = .21, .40$). The effect of seeing a desirable rather than an undesirable outcome on satisfaction is carried through feelings of relief and disappointment. The results shown in table 2 also support H3 in that desirable (undesirable) outcomes generate greater relief (disappointment). Relief (disappointment) in turn elicits greater (lower) levels of satisfaction (H4), and satisfaction is positively related to enjoyment (H5).

The use of structural equation modeling also makes it possible to test alternative models. The first alternative model (Model A in figure 1) considered was one in which satisfaction serves as the mediator between the desirability groups specified in the Affective Dispositions \times

Outcome contrast and each disconfirmation emotion. This model provided an adequate fit to the data, $\chi^2(81) = 126.41, p < .001$; $SB\chi^2(81) = 92.27, p = .18$; $RMSEA = .032$; $CFI = .99$; $SRMR = .09$. However, it provided a worse fit than the hypothesized model in terms of chi square and fit statistics compared to the hypothesized model. A second alternative model (Model B in figure 1) was specified that considered whether enjoyment precedes satisfaction in the affective sequence described in the hypothesized model. A model in which these two constructs was reversed yielded a poor fit to the data, $\chi^2(82) = 193.59, p < .001$; $SB\chi^2(82) = 133.74, p < .001$; $RMSEA = .069$; $CFI = .96$; $SRMR = .11$. Moreover, Model B indicated no evidence of mediated moderation ($CI_{95} = -.24, .08$).

Insert Table 2 about here.

Discussion

Our results indicate that affective dispositions moderate the desirability of a given outcome such that a hedonic reversal occurs in the effect of relief and disappointment on satisfaction. An outcome in which a disliked athlete lost (won) was found to be just as desirable (undesirable) as one in which a liked athlete won (lost). Specifically, seeing a disliked athlete lose (win) yielded the same levels of relief, disappointment and outcome satisfaction as seeing a liked athlete win (lose). No differences attributable to affective dispositions and outcomes were found for the enjoyment of the overall experience.

We also find support for mediated moderation such that affective dispositions influence viewers' emotional responses to outcomes, which in turn, predict outcome satisfaction. Enjoyment derived from the overall experience was a global pleasure reaction to the viewing

experience that was predicted by satisfaction but not by the objective outcome or character liking. Moreover, consistent with Zillmann's (1996) hypothesized model, the results indicate that the affective sequencing proposed in our theoretical model performed better than two competing models.

Our findings build on previous research examining cognitive and affective antecedents of media entertainment (Madrigal et al., 2011; Nabi, Stitt, Halford, & Finnerty, 2006; Bartsch & Oliver, 2011; Tan, 2008). First, we find that the cognitive structure of affective dispositions is the principal construct predicting emotional response and satisfaction with an outcome. A sporting event outcome may be thought of as being in itself objective and value free. Outcomes are satisfying only to the degree that they conform to a cognitive structure that defines what is considered to be desirable. Second, satisfaction with an outcome is an important link between disconfirmation emotions and overall enjoyment with the experience. Previous research has found that relief, but not disappointment, mediates the effect of suspense on enjoyment following a favorable outcome by a liked character (Madrigal et al., 2011). However, in addition to relief, we find here that disappointment in the context of affective dispositions toward the character is an important predictor of the more proximal construct of outcome satisfaction.

The manipulation of affective dispositions and outcomes, as well as the collective consideration of disconfirmation emotions, outcome satisfaction, and enjoyment is also a major contribution of the current research. To our knowledge, much of Zillmann's (1996) model of dispositional mediation of affect has been tested one or two stages at a time (e.g., Raney and Bryant, 2002; Raney, 2005). Thus, we provide empirical support for much of the theorizing around the structure and process of media enjoyment. Moreover, we were able to show empirically that the sequencing of stages proposed by Zillmann outperformed two alternative

sequences. As such, our study adds to the growing literature considering the intertwining of affect and cognition in viewers' response to mediated entertainment.

Summing up, the results reported here point to the importance of affective dispositions in viewers' satisfaction with an outcome. Specifically, the emotions felt following a contest and how they influence satisfaction with the outcome rely on the extent to which the competitor is liked. The results resonate with Raney (2011a) who noted that, "(E)motional involvement with entertainment requires *partiality*; it does not (or cannot) operate as entertainment when the viewer is disinterested in the portrayed events" (p. 20, italicized in the original). Simply put, affective dispositions provide the framework by which unequivocal outcomes to suspenseful drama are interpreted. Interestingly, global enjoyment does not appear to be affected by such affective dispositions. The results clearly indicate that although outcome satisfaction contributes to enjoyment, enjoyment is not significantly differentiated on the basis of outcome desirability (i.e., the interaction of objective outcomes and affective dispositions). This result is not surprising in the context of a highly suspenseful sporting event. Suspense was found to have a significant and positive direct effect on enjoyment. In this case, viewers often enjoy the experience of a highly competitive event even when the outcome is not desirable due to the entertaining nature of suspense.

On a methodological note, some might consider the manipulation of affective dispositions based on an athlete's moral transgressions to be a shortcoming of our contribution given that allegiance to a sports team or athlete is often long standing. As such, manipulating affective dispositions on the basis of an athlete's transgressions may appear overly simplistic and not realistic. Although many viewers' of sporting events are die-hard fans, it is also possible that casual fans will watch sporting events. The Olympics are a good example of an event where fans

cheer for little-known athletes competing in little-watched sports. Yet, viewership continues to increase with each Olympic Games, with the London 2012 Games attracting 4.8 billion viewers (Statista, 2012). The allure for these casual fans is not necessarily the sport itself. Rather, it is the spectacle and inherent drama associated with an event that is held once every four years where an athlete may have a once in a lifetime opportunity to achieve an Olympic dream. In such cases, knowing something about the personal lives and personalities of these athletes gives the casual fan a reason to root for (or against) someone.

Finally, the model tested in the current research relied on the context of a competitive sporting event. Our expectation is that the results reported here are also generalizable to other contexts. After all, our model was premised on one proposed by Zillmann (1996) for suspenseful drama. Caring about an outcome, due to the presence of either a favorite athlete or a protagonist in a movie, is an essential component of the suspense experience. A distinct advantage of using a sporting event here was that we were able to disentangle character liking from media content by holding the latter constant and manipulating the former. Future research would do well to explore the efficacy of the model in different contexts.

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Table 1

Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, and Reliability Coefficients of Substantive Constructs Included in Tests of Mediated Moderation

		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Affective Dispositions	--	--	--							
2	Outcome	--	--	-.02	--						
3	Affective Dispositions × Outcome	--	--	-.01	-.01	--					
4	Suspense	3.64	.81	-.04	-.02	.03	.64				
5	Relief	2.92	1.33	-.02	.04	.32	.10	.80			
6	Disappointment	2.57	1.55	.12	.07	-.49	.09	-.17	.89		
7	Outcome Satisfaction	4.44	1.75	-.14	.02	.37	.07	.57	-.59	--	
8	Entertainment	4.69	1.41	-.08	-.02	.06	.52	.30	-.08	.35	.93

Note. Affective Dispositions: 0 = liked competitor, 1 = disliked competitor); Outcome: 0 = win, 1 = loss; Affective Dispositions × Outcome: 0 = desirable outcome in which liked competitor wins or disliked competitor loses, 1 = undesirable outcome in which liked competitor loses or disliked competitor wins); All continuous measures were measured on a 1 to 7 point scale; Reliability coefficients are displayed in the diagonal.

Table 2

Maximum Likelihood Estimates (Z-scores) and Confidence Intervals for Mediated Moderation

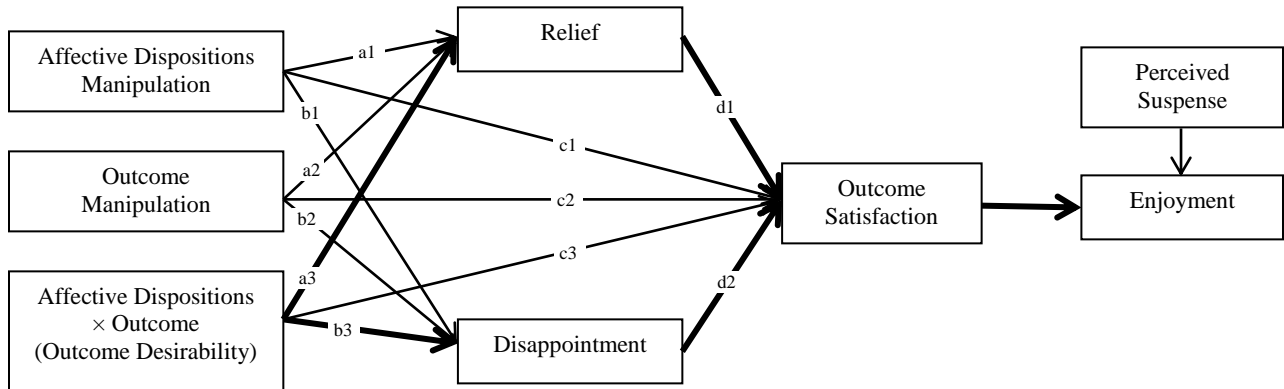
Predictors:	X → Relief	X → Disappoint	X → Outcome Satisfaction	Relief → Outcome Satisfaction	Disappoint → Outcome Satisfaction	CI ₉₅	Suspense → Enjoyment	Outcome Satisfaction → Enjoyment
Affective Dispositions	-.07 (-.24) a1	.39 (1.45) b1	-.24 (-1.10) c1	.52 (5.48*) d1	-.54 (-6.14*) d2	-.24 (-.64, .16)		
Outcome	.14 (.49) a2	.22 (.82) b2	.13 (.65) c2	.52 (5.48*) d1	-.54 (-6.14*) d2	-.05 (-.45, .35)		
Affective Dispositions × Outcome Interaction	.26* (3.76) a3	-.40* (-5.97) b3	-.03 (-.40) c3	.52* (5.48) d1	-.54* (-6.14) d2	.35 (.21, .40)		
Paths not in Mediation							.85* (6.04)	.25* (3.93)

Note. X = predictor, main or interaction effect as indicated in first column; Affective Dispositions: 0 = liked competitor, 1 = disliked competitor; Outcome: 0 = win, 1 = loss; Affective Dispositions × Outcome: 0 = desirable outcome in which liked competitor wins or disliked competitor loses, 1 = undesirable outcome in which liked competitor loses or disliked competitor wins; CI₉₅ = ML estimate for indirect effect (95% confidence intervals); Mediated moderation is significant when zero is not contained within the interval; For example, the indirect effect of the interaction (Affective Dispositions × Outcome) through relief and disappointment on outcome satisfaction was .35 with a confidence interval of .21 to .40. The lack of 0 in this range indicates a significant effect for mediated moderation; The lettered numbers (e.g., a3) correspond with the paths shown in figure 1.

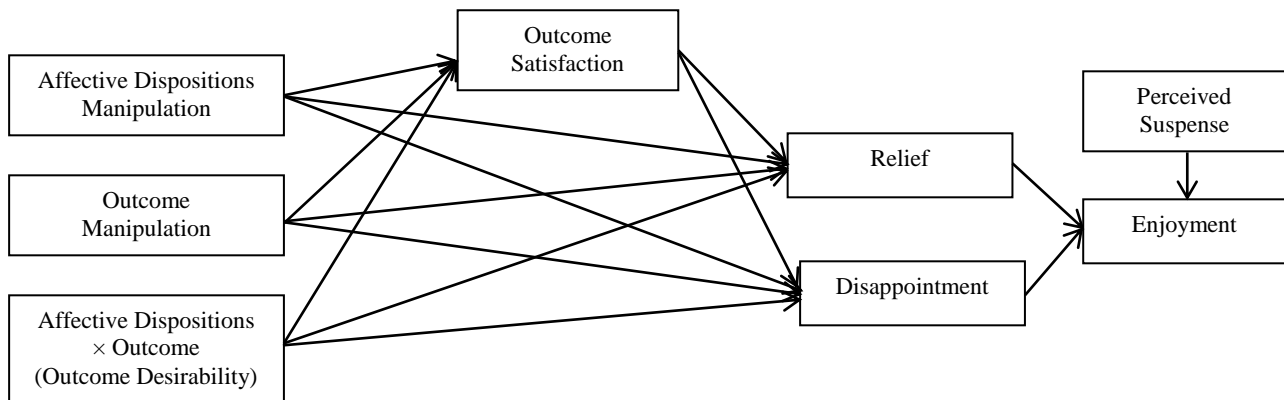
* p < .001

Figure 1

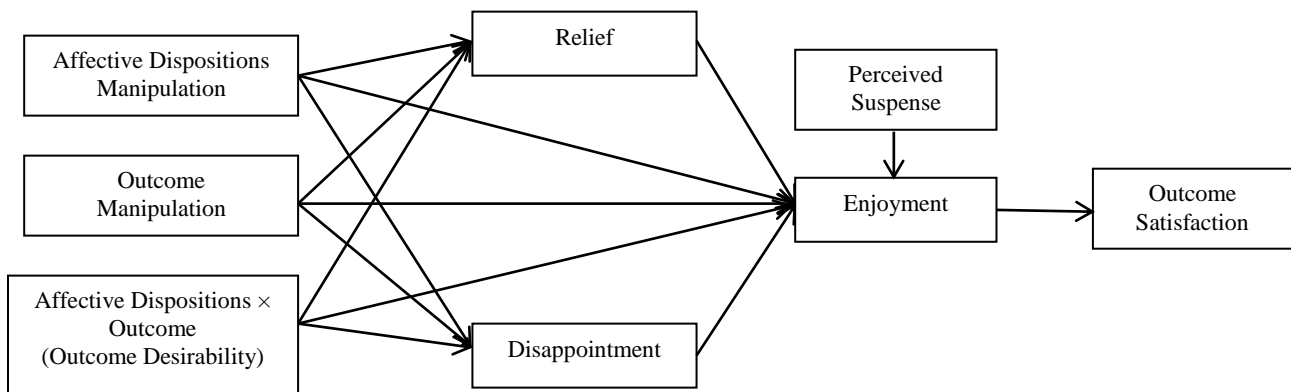
Hypothesized Mediated Moderation Model



Alternative Model A



Alternative Model B

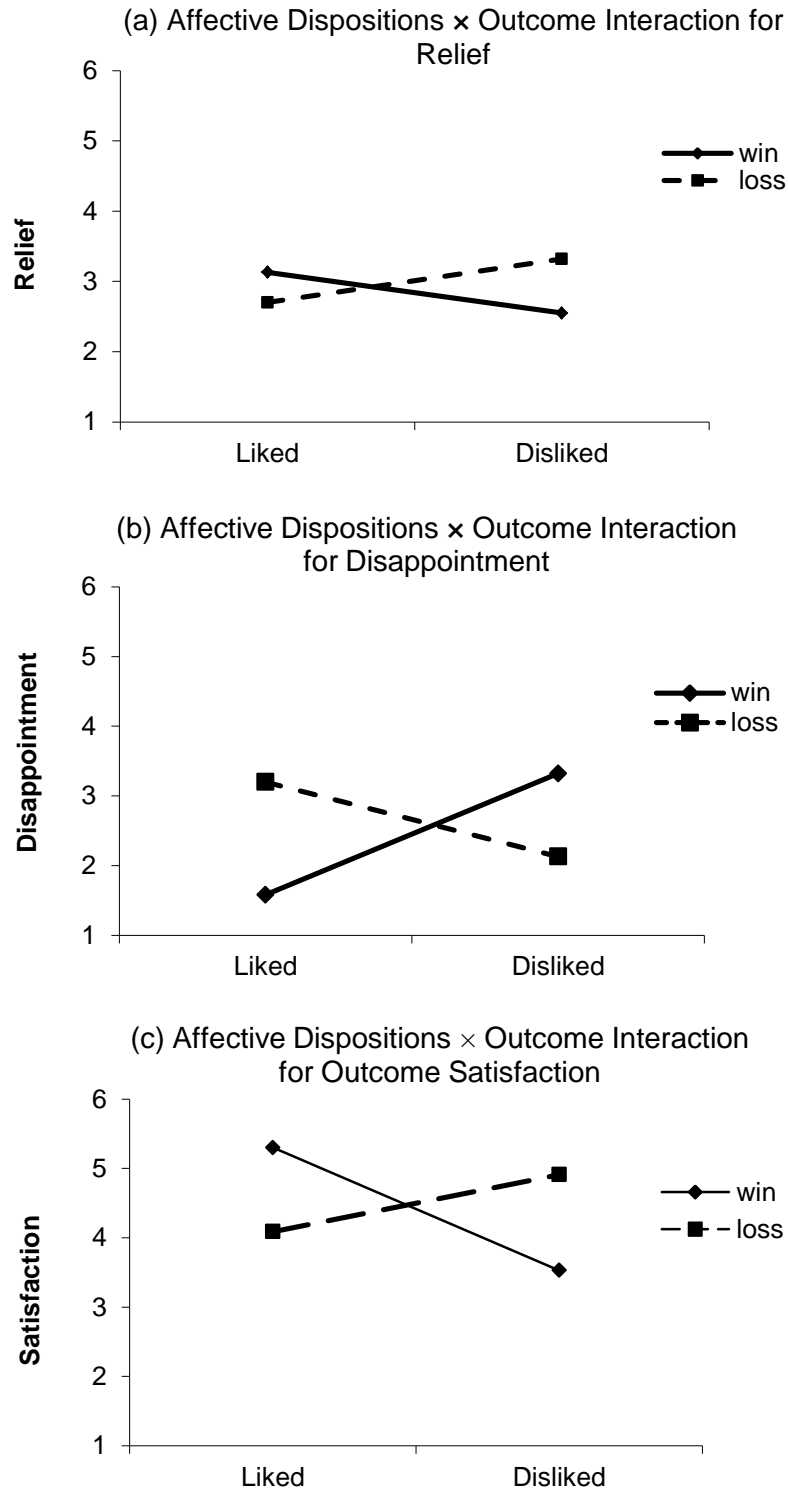


OUTCOMES ARE IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

30

Figure 2

Results for Affective Dispositions by Outcome Interaction



Appendix: Affective Dispositions Manipulation

Favorable Manipulation

Rather than pursuing a professional career, (name and country of target athlete) has maintained his collegiate eligibility and is currently enrolled in college as a Business Administration student. During an out-of competition drug test in which (name) was randomly selected, he tested negative for using performance-enhancing drugs. Such a result is consistent with (name) strong public anti-drug statements. Most other competitors like (name) because he is thought to be gracious, polite, and considerate of other competitors. (Name) is very focused on this race and winning means a lot to him. Recently, (name) was awarded a distinguished service medal from the International Cancer Society for his work with seriously ill children. (Name) has dedicated himself to the cause of cancer prevention since losing his mother to the deadly disease five years ago. (Name) is humble about his chances for a gold medal at this competition and has dedicated his performance to his mother.

Unfavorable Manipulation

Rather than attending college, (name and country of target athlete) chose to forsake his college eligibility in order to become a professional athlete. During an out-of-competition drug test in which (name) was randomly selected, he tested positive for using a performance-enhancing drug. However, he is able to compete in the Olympics because the test was found to be inadmissible due to a processing technicality. Most other competitors dislike (name) because he is thought to be ungracious, impolite, and inconsiderate of other competitors. (Name) is very focused on this race and winning means a lot to him. Recently, (name) was arrested for creating a disturbance on an international flight. He was allegedly harassing other passengers and spilled coffee over a flight attendant trying to settle him. (Name) was thought to be intoxicated at the time. (Name) has bragged that he should win the gold medal at this competition due to his superior talent.