Proposal Outline

1. Introduction
   1. Basic overview of the main topics: comedy, female leadership, sexual harassment
   2. Brief history of the genre, with particular focus on women’s roles onscreen and behind the camera and how these roles have evolved
      1. How women are represented in TV comedies
      2. How women are treated in the industry
   3. Why does this matter (for leadership studies)? – Not quite sure what I’m going to say here. I think there are many ways in which this topic relates to leadership studies, but I’m not sure what I want to focus on.
2. Background info
   1. Because my main methods will be analyzing the shows themselves (close readings, coding, etc.), not necessarily dependent on previous research, I don’t think I need to give a very in-depth literature review.
   2. Overview of the studies that have been done – studies on sexual harassment on TV, on female leadership on TV, on why things like sexual harassment make us laugh
   3. Establish that I am taking a feminist stance; introduce basic feminist concepts in media/cultural studies
   4. Definitions
      1. Need to define what “sexual harassment” is. (This can be expanded upon in the methods section, but I need a basic definition going forward.)
      2. Define “leadership”??? Or at least introduce what *types* of leaders I will be talking about.
   5. Introduce the shows
3. Main Questions
   1. How does the presence of female leaders on screen affect the frequency and severity of sexual harassment on screen?
      1. Does it matter if the female leader is directly involved in the event (either as harasser or victim) or just a bystander? What about when she has a disciplinary role?
      2. Does the degree of the female leader’s power matter? (Is she a manager? A CEO? Etc.)
   2. How do female leaders off camera (writers, producers, showrunners, etc.) affect the frequency and severity of sexual harassment on screen?
   3. How do depictions of sexual harassment affect the viewers?
   4. Is there a certain way that sexual harassment should be treated in comedies? Can depictions of sexual harassment be funny without being problematic?
4. Hypothesis – Depictions of sexual harassment do not change when a female leader is involved in the event. The presence of a female leader does not result in a more feminist portrayal of sexual harassment. However, depictions of sexual harassment that are more feminist in the way they are presented and reacted to are more likely to occur when the show is led by a woman or multiple women behind the camera.
5. Methods
   1. Close readings of certain scenes, pieces of dialogue, storylines, characters
   2. Coding events of sexual harassment (based on certain criteria that I have not formulated yet)
      1. Then some math stuff that I don’t understand
      2. Analyzing data to see if there is a relationship between depictions of sexual harassment and female leadership
6. How does this relate to leadership studies?
   1. Implicit biases about men/women/career/sex/etc.
   2. Prototypically female leadership vs. prototypically male leadership
      1. Do the female leaders in question defy or reinforce stereotypes about female leadership?
   3. How media shapes our perceptions of gender, work, harassment 🡪 how that shapes our worldview(s) in general
   4. Is there a way that female leaders *should* be portrayed when it comes to sexual harassment? In general?
   5. There need to be more female leaders and there needs to be less sexual harassment (none at all, actually). Therefore, these depictions matter.