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THESIS

MEDIA INFLUENCE ON MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SELF PERCEPTIONS AND RELATED BEHAVIORS

Submitted by

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Department of Sociology

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the Degree of Master of Arts

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Spring 2003

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COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

April 2, 2003

WE HEARBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER OUR SUPERVISION BY JULIE A. FREEDMAN ENTITLED MEDIA INFLUENCE ON MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SELF PERCEPTIONS AND RELATED BEHAVIORS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING IN PART REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS.

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

MEDIA INFLUENCE ON MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SELF PERCEPTIONS AND RELATED BEHAVIORS

Advertising in the media, specifically magazines, can have a huge impact on both men and women. Current scholarship suggests that the media send out the message that success in life requires attractiveness, a perfect body, money, and sexual performance. I investigated whether this is emphasized in both male and female magazines. It can be very discouraging when this perfectionism is unattainable. This in turn creates a market for those trying to fulfill desires and deal with anxieties throughout the customer's life course. My thesis focuses on the media's influence on both men and women with the theoretical insights and methods used by Kilbourne, Goffman, and others. I investigated whether or not "current wisdom" is correct about stereotypes of media messages and the degree to which such stereotypes exist in magazines. The content analysis I will use consists of monitoring the frequency and qualitative information in the advertising in six different magazines (three male-oriented/three female-oriented). I used recent issues (2002) and chose four issues from each magazine. Two

outside judges were used to get opinions on what is considered too thin. I looked at different magazines in order to determine the presence and extent of these themes in magazine advertising. (categories for women: too thin, perfect body, focusing on maintaining youth, focusing on physical appearance, sexual; categories for men: muscular body, importance of money, cult of toughness, sexual). Some evidence has shown that advertisers create unachievable desires that help to drive product use. The media are clearly marketing wants. By focusing on people's desires, the media are able to market products and ideas which set people up for failure and frustrations. People then try to solve their frustrations by purchasing items to solve their problems. This is a sales tactic to create consistent return customers who continue to buy.

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CHAPTER #1: INTRODUCTION

Advertising in the media, specifically magazines, can have a huge impact on both men and women. Current scholarship suggests that the media send out the message that in order to be successful in life one must maintain attractiveness, have a perfect body, have money, and perform well sexually. It can be very discouraging when this perfectionism is unachievable. This in turn creates a market for those trying to fulfill desires and deal with anxieties throughout the customer's life course. The content analysis I use consists of monitoring the frequency and qualitative information in the advertising in six different magazines. My thesis focuses on the media's influence on both men and women and whether or not "current wisdom" is correct about stereotypes of media messages and the degree to which such stereotypes exist in magazines. There is an abundant literature by Jean Kilbourne and many others who suggest the media and advertisements have many negative effects on individuals.

Some evidence has shown that advertisers create unachievable desires that help to drive product use. The media are clearly marketing wants. By focusing on people's desires, the media are able to market products and ideas which set people up for failure and frustrations. People then try to solve their frustrations by buying items they feel will solve their problems. This is clearly a very useful tactic to have consistent customers who will never disappear.

Many advertisements claim to be encouraging a healthy and fit lifestyle, yet the focus always leads to having the perfect body. For men, this is a muscular look and for women, the main focus is striving to be thin. Many ads focus on selling the latest exercise fad, drug, or diet technique which supposedly leads one to achieve an ideal body type.

Advertisers tend to emphasize the extreme importance of physical attractiveness and sexuality when trying to sell their products. This is causing both men and women to focus more on appearance. Ads tend to cause women to be afraid of both aging and becoming unattractive. These ads also influence women to strive for very thin frames, which can often lead to all types of unhealthy behavior.

More recently, advertising has also set up very unrealistic goals for men. Both boys and men are increasingly taking risks to achieve and maintain the muscular build that is so often advertised. The media have greatly increased distorted body images among men and women. Researchers are concerned that the media are influencing men to use anabolic steroids and dietary supplements that aid in lifting and achieving bigger muscles. There is also a concern with obsessive weight training.

We are faced with advertisements on a daily basis. Scholarly research suggests that ads consistently set unrealistic and unhealthy standards. We see increasing trends such as health issues, anorexia, bulimia, and low self-esteem in society. A focus on magazine advertising concentrates on many of the characteristics which make individuals feel inadequate; advertising strives to create perfectionism. The "current wisdom" is that stereotypical messages in the media lead to unhealthy habits and low self-esteem. Therefore, we need to change the way we advertise and respond to ads. I strongly recommend that magazines should maintain advertising that does not make men and women feel inadequate.

CHAPTER #2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Current ads feature muscular men with a perfect, athletic build. The muscular look has been successful in ads ranging from clothing to beer. Jean Baudrillard stated:

> This omnipresent cult of the body is extraordinary. It is the only object on which everyone is made to concentrate, not as a source of pleasure, but as an object of frantic concern in the obsessive fear of failure or substandard performance (Cortese 1999, p. 58).

> Baudrillard (1990) states that only women are seducers, but empirical evidence on advertising suggests otherwise. Men, too, are seducers—a male version of the perfect provocateur. The ideal man in ads is young, handsome, clean-cut, perfect, and sexually alluring. Today's man has pumped his pecs and shoulders and exhibits well-defined abs. He has tossed away his stuffy suit and has become a most potent provocateur (Cortese 1999, p. 58).

"The increased popularity of bodybuilding has been associated with male insecurity" (Klein 1993). "There is an interesting parallel between the anorexic waif look in females and the muscular and athletic look in males" (Cortese 1999, p. 59). Both relate to obsessive-compulsive

behavior which some theorize to be a result of a chemical imbalance.

> In addition to this biological chemical imbalance, cultural, gender, and subcultural forces guide and shape individuals as part of the processes of socialization and acculturation (Cortese 1999, p. 59).

Furthermore, women may starve themselves trying to reach the standard that is set for beauty in our culture. Men more often exhibit obsessive-compulsive traits having to do with muscle dysmorphia. Here, men are obsessed with the "unrealistic cultural standard of muscularity" in order to seem more masculine. Just as an anorexic sees herself as overweight and ugly, a man who suffers from muscle dysmorphia sees himself as skinny and inadequate despite his muscles.

> Anorexia nervosa in woman and muscle dysmorphia in men are sad reminders of the debilitating dysfunctions of gender roles in postmodern society. Muscularity as masculinity is a motif in ads that target upper-income men as well as those on the lower range of social stratification (Cortese 1999, p. 59).

In order to masculinize services and goods for the privileged male consumers, advertisers use muscular males or focus on physically rugged representations.

Due to the fact that women are increasing their political, economic, and social power, men's reactions may be to become physically stronger (Cortese 1999, p. 59). Men are now focusing on clothing styles and becoming more

muscular. "The provocateur exhibits himself either by showing his body or by displaying his fashion sense" (Cortese 1999, p. 60).

Muscular, male models are the current trend on the market. Sexual appeal is used to sell cologne, calendars, clothing, music, and cars (Cortese 1999, p. 60). "After years of depicting women as sex objects and troubled bimbos, advertising is applying those stereotypes to men" (Foote 1988, p. 44). In postmodern advertising, men as well as women are being treated as sex objects.

Consumer surveys have demonstrated that women enjoy seeing men look like fools in commercials and ads (Langer, in Foote 1988). "The portrayal of men as foolish and incompetent has possible connections with general cultural presuppositions about men and women" (Elliott and Wooton 1997). These cultural presuppositions relate to men being incompetent fathers along with being "objects of ridicule, rejection, anger, and violence" (Cortese 1999, p. 61). When advertising products and services, women are often portrayed as sex icons:

> Advertising images of women from sexpots to airheads not only sold brand products and services but also helped to shape social attitudes on relationships and on the roles and status accorded to women. It follows that these images of men confirmed that some women increasingly view men as sex objects, jerks, or nerds. Yet if women were the target audiences for such ads,

it made them seem malicious, indignant, and unjust (Cortese 1999, p. 61).

In order for an ad to be successful, it must focus on two things. First, it should make you feel inferior, guilty, and that you need something. The ad also needs to focus on the solution to your problem (Cortese 1999, p. 62). Advertisers constantly make people, especially females, feel as if they have many flaws and that what they do possess is too little, too much, or simply not good enough (Kilbourne 1989). Postmodern advertising has been very successful with the useful tactic of self-deprecation. Although ads are not quite as critical with men, they still show many ways men can improve themselves. Ads focus on a man's physical characteristics, emphasizing the importance of being muscular and lean (Cortese 1999, p. 64).

Sexual Attraction

"Attraction is both socially constructed and biologically shaped to be an instantaneous decision" (Cortese 1999, p. 21). Whether a male is drawn to a female or vice versa stems from natural biological signals of sexual attraction. Women are naturally attracted to a man's strength and power. Most males are attracted to the vulnerability of a woman, often characterized by a high voice and a small waist. Youth is usually a symbol of sex

appeal and health. Because reducing any aging signs is considered more attractive and desirable, women often use makeup to cover wrinkles. Other techniques used are the warming up of skin tones to produce a sexual, healthy glow and focusing on lengthening legs (Cortese 1999, p. 21). In advertising, other foci are hair, smiles, blushing, and female breasts. Hair is one component of attraction while a smile is a symbol of attraction or approval. Males are often attracted to blushing females since it is considered sexual and represents innocence. Both cleavage of the breasts and buttock cleavage are very sexual and can look very similar (Cortese 1999, p. 22). Advertisers often take advantage of using objects as phallic symbols which then creates soft pornography in advertising (Cortese 1999, p. 23).

Males and Body Image

In the last 10 years, there has been an increased interest in the subject of men's health (Lyons and Willcott 1999). The current magazine called Men's Health is a result of the popular topic. There is very little known about a male's body image or about the parts of the body that cause satisfaction or dissatisfaction. There has been a recent focus which encourages exercise and healthy diets for males. Research about body image usually focuses on

women due to the fact that society seems to focus more on the importance of women maintaining a certain size and shape as opposed to men (Orbach 1993). Since the middle of the 1980s, it has been noticed that cultural attitudes about a man's body have been in a state of flux (Pope et al. 1999) which is causing males to focus more on their body image (Mishkind et al. 1986; Mort 1988).

> Mishkind et al. (1986) argued that men were under increasing pressure to conform to this cultural ideal of the lean, well-toned, muscular build, paralleled by an increasing preoccupation among men with weight and body image: Advertisements celebrate the young, lean, muscular male body, and men's fashions have undergone significant changes in style both to accommodate and to accentuate changes in men's physiques toward a more muscular and trim body (545).

Pope et. al (1999) suggest that over the past 30 years the attitudes in our culture have changed regarding the male body reaching a more muscular look. Due to the recent cultural concern with the male body image, the health of men may be affected in many different ways. As far as cardiovascular fitness is concerned, men may become healthier due to an increase in exercise (British Heart Foundation 1993). However, some men may resort to taking human growth hormones and anabolic steroids to achieve a certain physique (Epperly 1993). If men become dissatisfied with their bodies, this could lead to lowered self-worth or lowered self-esteem (Furnham and Greaves

1994). Another negative effect could be an increase in the development of anorexia in men due to the pressure to be slender (Krasnow 1997).

According to qualitative studies focusing on body dissatisfaction, there is a considerable percentage of men who are possibly not satisfied with their body size and shape. Mishkind et al. (1986) reported that 75 percent of male students felt their present body was not what they considered an ideal body type. While abut 50 percent wanted to be slimmer, the other half wanted to be larger. In another study of older men by Cash (1990), it was found that 41 percent of men were dissatisfied with their weight, 34 percent with their looks, 32 percent with muscle tone, 50 percent with their mid-torso, 28 percent with the upper, and 21 percent with the lower. In the 1970s, a similar study was done, and the percentage of men who were dissatisfied was lower (Berscheid, Walster, and Bornstedt 1973). Thirty-five percent of men were dissatisfied with their weight, 15 percent with their looks, 25 percent with muscle tone, 36 percent with their mid-torso, 18 percent with the upper, and 12 percent with the lower. This suggests that men in the 1980s were more dissatisfied with their bodies than men in the 1970s.

In 1994, Furnham and Greaves gave the Franzoi and Shields Body Esteem Scale to 47 men ranging from 18 to 35 years old. Most men were dissatisfied and wanted to change the width of their shoulders, the size of their chests, and their biceps. This seems to mesh with the current ideal body type for men which places an emphasis on having large muscles in arms as well as chest along with having broad shoulders. An exploratory study done in 2002 dealt with boys and men ranging from eight to twenty-five years old.

> By asking these men to explain how they feel about their bodies, their body shape ideals, and the attempts that they make to change their body shape and weight through exercise and diet, we are attempting to explore how young men experience their bodies within a culture that is apparently placing more emphasis on the importance of body image for men (Grogan & Richards 2002, p. 221).

The results of this study follow on pages 20 to 22.

Due to the fact that anabolic steroid use seems to be rising among adolescent males, one can conclude that there has been an increase in body satisfaction among adolescents. However, there is not much research involving young boys and body satisfaction (Rickert et. al. 1992). Judging from studies involving questionnaires, it seems that younger boys are more satisfied with their bodies when compared to adolescents (Connor et al. 1996). However, studies tend to leave out why this is the case and how this

in turn affects body image. These studies also leave out important facts dealing with exercise and diet routines (Grogan & Richards 2002).

However, an exploratory study called Body Image, by Grogan and Richards, investigated:

> ...reasons for body dissatisfaction, body shape ideals, and behavioral concomitants of body image in a context that allows men and boys to provide full and detailed explanation to complement existing quantitative research (Grogan & Richards 2002, p. 222).

The participants consisted of four eight year-old and four thirteen-year-old boys, eight sixteen-year-olds, and four men ranging from nineteen to twenty-five years old. These males were from middle and working class backgrounds, were of average build for their height, and were white (Grogan & Richards 2002).

The study used focus groups to investigate issues dealing with body image, appearance, weight, and food. The discussions revolved around diet (beliefs about current and ideal diet), body shape (reference groups, current satisfaction, current and projected future ideals), and weight (reference groups, current and ideal satisfaction). The importance of being muscular was important to all of these males ranging from eight to twenty-five. They all had similar views that a muscular and toned body was ideal. All age groups also agreed that the ideal body is "just a

bit muscular." They were not fond of bodybuilders' bodies due to the fact that this meant one was too obsessed with how they looked. These men also felt that as one got older the muscles on bodybuilders would turn to fat (Grogan & Richards 2002). Research has suggested that the ideal male is lean, young, and muscular. Physical attractiveness and masculinity weigh heavily on muscularity (Mansfield & McGinn 1993; Bordo 1993). Muscularity was not acceptable to these men when it became an obsession as seen with bodybuilders; however, muscularity was wanted to be considered a fit, athletic individual (Grogan & Richards 2002).

All groups seemed to have a negative opinion about being overweight, and that an overweight individual brought the negativity upon himself. Being overweight is often associated with a lack of self-discipline and with self-indulgence. All of these men felt that one's weight is controllable and felt that social disapproval for being overweight is legitimate (Grogan & Richards 2002). These men also looked at exercise as a means to avoid getting fat rather than as a way to get in shape or be healthy (Grogan & Richards 2002). Men seem to look toward exercise to lose weight rather than dieting (Mansfield & McGinn 1993). One deadly contradiction to this is the combination of the diet

drug ephedra and vigorous exercise. This practice was recently noted in the discussion of the death of a baseball athlete. Dieting is viewed as a woman's behavior and men often will not admit they are dieting to lose weight (Brownmiller 1984). The sixteen-year-old group as well as the adult men said that even though they would exercise in order to not get fat, they would not put a huge amount of energy into exercising to try to change their size and shape to be like other muscular men. They expressed that they would put only limited time and energy into working out to attain an ideal body. These men claimed that they had better things to do than focus so much on their bodies. Their body image was seen as too insignificant to change their behavior, and these men seemed to think that this was behavior more fitting to a woman (Grogan & Richards 2002).

> Antonia Lyons and Sara Willott (1999) have shown that popular media tend to exert pressure on men not to be seen to be trying too hard to look after their health (which is represented as women's work and therefore linked with femininity) (Grogan & Richards 2002, p. 228).

This could also relate to the cultural belief that men are physically invincible and are not worried about their health (Harris 1995).

> Men who use discourses of responsibility for the look and health of their bodies may run the risk of appearing unmasculine. Only the fear of fat legitimated putting energy into exercise. Improving the look of the body (by making it more muscular) was represented as a trivial (and feminine) concern (Grogan & Richards 2002, p. 228).

The sixteen-year-olds were the only group who felt pressure to be a certain size in order to fit in.

> This discourse may function to legitimate body concern (because other young men are also concerned) and to relate it to male-appropriate discourses of competition between men, which Juanne Clarke and Julie Robinson (1999) identify as a classic machismo discourse (Grogan & Richards 2002, p. 229).

"This also helps to resist being positioned as feminine, which may result from showing concern about the look of the body" (Aoki 1996).

Self-esteem was linked to how these men viewed their bodies which in turn had an effect on self-confidence and power. The older men felt that a man who had a muscular, well-toned body would be more confident and powerful in social situations. The adolescent boys also seemed to feel that confidence and happiness were tied to one's body image.

> Confidence and power in social situations were clearly related to the look of the body more than the function (being healthy, being athletic). These discourses suggest a concern for body image that goes beyond a socially acceptable male concern to be fit and healthy, and that implies concern with aesthetics as well (Grogan & Richards 2002, p. 229).

With regard to issues of power, men have historically presented themselves as powerful through monetary success and through macho presentations of self. The "money" and "cult of toughness" themes of this study tap these dimensions of maleness. An argument can be made that body appearance tied with clothing or material objects promotes the success image. The physically fit body is consistent with being "tough enough."

Conclusions and implications

> These men and boys presented complex stories where they described pressure to look lean and muscular but felt that trying to get closer to their ideal through exercise was too trivial to justify the time and effort involved. Exercising to improve body image was considered feminine-appropriate behavior unless they were exercising to avoid getting fat (Grogan & Richards 2002, p. 230).

These men were afraid of getting fat due to the social, not health, consequences. They viewed fat individuals as not having the willpower to control overeating or to exercise.

> Although the lean, muscular look was associated in men's discourse with health and fitness, their given reasons for wanting to attain this look were primarily cosmetic (relating to social acceptance) (Grogan & Richards 2002, p. 230).

Although all of these men and boys were reluctant to admit they were concerned with the aesthetic and cosmetic appearance of their bodies, they all seemed to feel that a muscular, slender build gives one more confidence.

> These men were concerned about function and aesthetics. The social changes reported by Pope et. al. (1999), where the aesthetics of the male body are emphasized, have clearly affected these young men's lives (Grogan & Richards 2002, p. 230).

Females and Body Image

> A recent survey done in conjunction with a video project by Jean Kilbourne called "Slim Hopes: Advertising and the Obsession with Thinness," found that 11-17 year old girls overwhelmingly wished for the same thing: to lose weight and to keep it off (Davis 2002, p. 1).

When looking at teen magazines, approximately 60 percent of the content focuses on personal relations and beauty, self-improvement, and fashion. These magazines aim to keep teens wanting more and serve as a social survival guide. Teen magazines add to the insecurity teenage girls already have by focusing on the importance of being slender, popular and beautiful.

> They offer an unattainable beauty standard that girls aspire to nonetheless. In promising that they can lead a girl to the world of perfect happiness they continually let her down, and she is made to think it's her fault. Thus, she tries harder to attain the ideal, buying more products and more magazines. Lately, one finds many more faces of color present in these mostly middle-class white-oriented magazines. They have even attempted lip-service to the notion of the inclusion of heavier or average weight models.

> But these surface improvements do nothing to undermine the traditional standards of beauty and feminity that teenage girls must face and overcome if they are to survive and prosper in today's world (Davis 2002, p. 1).
>
> By pointing out (both in subtle and not-so subtle ways) that their readers are not thin enough or should strive to lose weight, teen magazines create a captive audience of young women who feel they must be fatally flawed if their hips aren't as narrow, or their thighs are not as shapely as the girls featured in fashion spreads and advertisements. The desire to fashion the perfect body has only intensified as marketing strategies aim first to make a girl (or woman) feel badly about herself and then offer the solution to her perceived problem through (surprise, surprise) their products. Joan Jacobs Brumberg comments about this very phenomenon in her book, The Body Project. She says 'Young women's normal body anxieties have been at the core of marketing strategies since World War II. More than 50 years later, what began as the strategy of those manufacturing beauty or self-help products has infiltrated the editorial sections of magazines so desirous of advertising dollars that they, in turn, participate in the very same sale of girls' insecurity' (Davis 2002, p. 1).
>
> Take, for instance, a look at pages 142-145 of Seventeen's June 1999 summer fashion spread. The first model sits with her pale arms over a chair, gazing into the distance with a wan smile on her face. She wears a string bikini top over her petite breasts; pink capri pants cover her legs. She is not just on the thin side; she is the teen epitome of what journalist Ellen Goodman calls anorexic chic. The caption in the lower left corner asks, 'Strung out?' Seventeen is selling both the fashion and the image, sending the clear message that beautiful is not only thin, but also distressed, languid, and helpless. The outfit she wears does not flatter her thin figure, it makes a thin girl look even more so (Davis 2002, p. 2).

It is important to point out the reference to strung out.

Being strung out is glamorized in these magazines which

leads to glamorizing drugs. Heroin junkies are often referred to as being strung out, and people who take drugs are often very thin. Therefore, these magazines are in turn saying it is chic and acceptable to take drugs or heroin if it helps you maintain thinness. In other words, these magazines are suggesting the "heroin junkie" look is glamorous.

> In Seventeen's June (1999) issue, the editors respond to a reader who congratulates the magazine on its use of larger models: 'We feel strongly about portraying teenagers of various heights and weights as well as ethnicities.' Above these comments sits a thumbnail photo with four models running along the beach. Three of the girls-heads up, hair flying-are thin, one is larger. One of the three looks over her shoulder as if to urge the lagging large girl to hurry up—she runs with her head down, smiling into the sand. The message is clear without being overt. Conspicuously absent from this issue are any full-page images of girls that could be considered larger. By lulling some of the voices that clamor for change with temporary, cosmetic changes, magazines and their advertisers may continue with business as usual (Davis 2002, p. 2).
>
> YM goes a step further in their attempt to appear progressive. The article titled "Big Girls Don't Cry" presents five young women who have transcended the shallow comments of peers to attain an acceptance both within themselves and among friends. Pictures of the girls display vibrant, good-looking young women. Beside their names and ages are their dress sizes. YM assumes that its readers will agree that size 12 is indeed big. Tim Hinds Flinders, author of Power & Promise: Helping Schoolgirls Hold onto Their Dreams, says 'The tall, genetically thin, broad-shouldered prototype with narrow hips and long legs is a rare body type representing only five percent of American

> women. By these standards, most girls would be considered big.' Still, these five are singled out as anomalies (Davis 2002, p. 2).
>
> While the possibility for colossal change in the media's portrayal of beautiful, thin women as the standard by which all others are judged is slim, there are small inroads being made by upstart magazines that strive, little by little, to reinforce a positive self-image for girls. Twist, whose mission statement reads: Twist believes girls are perfect the way they are, is a distinct deviation from the more established teen mags who position themselves as guides by which girls can achieve perfection. The inclusion of many faces of color, in advertising as well, evices Twist's genuine attempt at diversity. They encourage readers who seem to love that, as one reader puts it, 'you emphasize that girls should be proud and confident about themselves.' They still employ thin models in fashion spreads, but feature stories often include real girls as in the the 'XOXO files' and other sections. Twist has a strong, intentional resemblance to an online magazine, incorporating much reader feedback with a less rigid editorial style. This magazine represents a step away from anorexic chic and towards the power and promise that adolescent girls embody if given the chance' (Davis 2002, p. 2).

Advertisers often focus on the importance of physical attractiveness and sexuality in order to sell products, but researchers are worried that this is placing great pressure on men and women to obsess about their appearance (Fox 1996). In 1996, a poll conducted by Saatchi and Saatchi (an international ad agency) found that ads caused women to fear becoming old and unattractive (Peacock 1998), and one survey by Teen People magazine discovered 27 percent of

girls feel pressure from the media to have a perfect body (Teen People 1999). Researchers believe the media are negatively affecting a woman's physical appearance, leading to unhealthy behavior as females try to achieve an extremely thin figure that the media present as ideal. Males are also taking health risks in order to achieve the media's ideal standard that is often unrealistic. By the time a woman is 17, she has usually seen over 250,000 commercials (LaVoie 2000), and on average, a female sees 400 to 600 advertisements each day (Dittrich 2000). Some studies have found that 50 percent of the advertising in teen magazines focus on the importance of beauty when trying to sell a product. This type of advertising can influence girls to become preoccupied with their physical appearance and causes them to obsess about their bodies (Dittrick 2000).

Advertisements focus on thinness as an important factor for female beauty, and the bodies praised in the media are usually different from healthy, normal women. Fashion models usually weigh 23 percent less than the average woman (Holzgang 2000), and females ranging from 18 to 34 have a 7 percent chance of being as slender as a catwalk model and a 1 percent chance of being as skinny as a supermodel (Olds 1999). In one study, 69 percent of

girls said that magazine models influence their view of the perfect body shape (Magazine Models 1999). The continual acceptance of this unrealistic body type still sets an ideal standard for many women. Some researchers feel that advertisers normalize skinny, unrealistic bodies on purpose in an attempt to make unattainable desires that can increase product consumption (Hamburg 1998).

> The media markets desire. And by reproducing ideals that are absurdly out of line with what real bodies really do look like...the media perpetuates a market for frustration and disappointment. Its customers will never disappear,

writes Paul Hamburg, an assistant professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School (Hamburg 1998). Taking into consideration that the diet industry generates huge amounts of revenue (Schneider 1996), advertisers have been victorious with their marketing strategy.

Women often compare their bodies to others and researchers have discovered that a female's satisfaction with her own attractiveness is lower after viewing ideal bodies. One study discovered that individuals who saw slides of skinny models had lower self-evaluations when compared with individuals who had viewed average and oversized models (Dittrich 2000). In a Body Image Survey, females revealed that viewing extremely thin models had a tendency to cause insecurity about their figures (Maynard

1998). In a sample of graduate and undergraduate students from Stanford, 68 percent felt worse about their appearance after viewing women's magazines (Dittrich 2000). Many health professionals are also worried about the occurrence of distorted body image among females, which is influenced by the continual comparison to slender figures shown in the media. Ninety percent of women overestimate their body size (LaVoie 2000), and 75 percent of average weight females believe they are overweight (Kilbourne 1995).

Many females work to achieve the ideal, slender body due to unhappiness with their figures. It has been reported that girls as young as five fear getting fat (LaVoie 2000), and the number one wish for girls ranging from 11 to 17 is to be skinnier (Holzgang 2000). On any given day, 50 percent of American women are on diets (Schneider 1996), and approximately 80 percent of 10-year-old females have been on a diet (Kilbourne 1995).

Researchers convey that the constant portrayal of thin models can lead women to unhealthy habits (Woznicki 1999) due to the fact that the ideal weight presented for females is usually unrealistic for most. One study reported that 47 percent of the girls were influenced by magazine advertisements to want to shed pounds while only 29 percent were truly overweight (Magazine Models 1999).

Research has also discovered that constant dieting in order to have the ideal body can be the trigger to starting an eating disorder (Holzgang 2000).

Other researchers believe showing skinny models does not have lasting negative effects on most females, but instead it affects women who already have body-image problems. Girls who were already not content with their bodies showed increased anxiety, dieting, and bulimic symptoms after continual exposure to advertising and fashion images in a girl teen magazine (Goode 1999). Of course one can ask what media socialization had earlier been part of these young women's negative self-definitions. Studies have also revealed approximately one-third of American women in their teens and twenties start to smoke cigarettes as an appetite suppressant (Morris 2000).

More on Boys and Girls and Body Image

Currently, there has been an increase in the knowledge of pressures on men to have a muscular, fit body although the focus of distorted body image has previously been known to apply to women and girls. There is a growing awareness regarding the pressure men and boys are under to appear muscular. Many males are becoming insecure about their physical appearance as advertising and other media images raise the standard and idealize well-built men. Researchers are concerned about how this impacts men and

boys, and have seen an alarming increase in obsessive weight training and the use of anabolic steroids and dietary supplements that promise bigger muscles or more stamina for lifting. Most teenagers with eating disorders are females (90 percent), but experts think there are more male cases than are actually reported due to the fact that males may not admit their problem (Wax 1998). Like girls, boys also turn to smoking to lose weight (Marcus 1999).

More than 3,000 adolescents become "regular smokers" each day according to the Centers for Disease Control. Advertising and social issues are the main reasons why these young adults begin to smoke. Ads portray that girls who smoke will be pretty and more noticeable. Cigarette ads usually model sexy woman who are smoking cigarettes. Cigarettes ads aim at adolescent women who are still developing. Young women are often insecure regarding how they look and how people think about them. Girls will usually use products that they think will make them look and feel better.

Smoking doesn't cause anorexia, but it helps it to continue, said Joey Koldare, director of the Race Against Teen Smoking, a project of the National Council of Women's Health. A girl can smoke a cigarette, not gain weight, and get some kind of satisfaction, and never have to deal with her issues because the cigarette kind of dulls some of the

anxiety, dulls the hunger. So she's using another addictive chemical substance to help her maintain her anorexia. Kids look at those ads, and the influence of the media is stronger than those of parents, teachers and friends (Johnson & Shum 2001).

Readers of women's and men's health magazines are being misinformed by the suggestions given on nutrition and exercise, according to Dr. Faye Wachs, an assistant professor of sociology (University of North Florida). She is involved in a four-year study using seven women's and seven men's health and fitness magazines. She is conducting the research with Shari Dworkin, a graduate student at the University of Southern California.

> They (the magazines) say that they are promoting health and fitness, but they aren't telling you how to be fit. What the magazines really focus on is redefining gender roles in today's society. Rather than emphasizing good health and fitness, the magazines are primarily focused on encouraging everyone to have the perfect body. They are a spin-off of a beauty magazine. Most women's health magazines emphasize how to achieve the perfect shape, losing weight, and exercising for a better butt (Wachs 2002, p. 1).

In men's magazines, "it's all about getting bigger, gaining muscle and becoming stronger" (Wachs 2002, p. 1). Wachs fears that the valuable health and fitness advice is

being overpowered by the constant advertisement of products in the magazines.

If you reduce body fat too much, there are serious health consequences, especially for women. While women's health magazines always tell you to eat healthy, the message is always to eat less (Wachs 2002, p. 1). The health magazines send out the message that people should fear getting fat and body fat is viewed as a weakness. However, there is a healthy range of body fat, and

> Once you are in the healthy range, your body fat is really dictated by genetics. While women may get a complex about their weight by reading women's health magazines, men may get a complex about sexual performance when reading men's health magazines. If I were a man and didn't have performance anxiety before, I would after I'm done reading these magazines. It's cruel what they are doing to men (Wachs 2002, p. 2).

Whether it be exercise equipment or a new diet that claims to get your body closer to perfect, these advertisers are just wanting to sell their products. "The way to change is through the readers. The readers must demand something different by refusing to buy these magazines. Otherwise, there is no incentive to change" (Wachs 2002, p. 2). Wachs and Dworkin plan to talk with publishers of some of the magazines they focused on. They

hope the study will help to generate information which is more accurate regarding health and fitness.

Advertising and Dieting

In order to sell products, advertisers focus on four strategies: 1.normalize body dissatisfaction and weight preoccupation among women, 2. make comparisons between women's own bodies and the thin ideal, 3. stir up guilt and shame about women's appetites and body size, and 4. provoke fear and anxiety about the possible results of uncontrolled eating. For girls and women, body dissatisfaction has become a cultural norm ranging from mild dislike to hatred or disgust (Levine 1996).

The association between dieting and eating disorders is well researched. What begins as just a diet can lead to an eating disorder. When examining teenagers, dieters are eight times more likely to develop bulimia nervosa than the girls not on a diet (Patton, Johnson-Sabine, Wood, Mann, & Wakeling 1990). For example, a strict diet frequently encourages a cycle of bingeing and dieting which is a prime characteristic of bulimia nervosa (Fairburn 1995). Unhealthy dieting and negative thoughts about food and body size affect many women who would not be diagnosed with an eating disorder. Some researchers suggest that many women

stick to a "diet mentality" that controls their relationship with food even when they are not on a diet (Bloom, Gitter, Gutwill, Kogel, & Zaphiropoulos 1994). For many women, concerns about weight may remain fairly the same despite any changes in eating habits.

The mass media are huge players in establishing social norms and expectations (Anderson & DiDomenico 1992). Because the media praise thinness, portray body dissatisfaction and weight preoccupation as normal, set unrealistic standards of beauty, and encourage dieting, advertisements add to social norms that place girls and women at risk for the development of eating disorders. Advertisements can add to women's eating and body image problems (Bordo 1993). Through the use of words and pictures that mirror body dissatisfaction, weight obsession, and dieting, the advertisements make certain that women with eating disorders are seriously influenced. Due to the positive attitude of the advertisements, disordered eating is depicted as normal and without emotional or physical consequences. When compared to fashion and beauty advertisements, food advertisements can be even more harmful. Food advertisements not only encourage the thin ideal, but also promote unhealthy eating behaviors in order to achieve that ideal. In one study,

there were 63 advertisements for diet foods versus one in the men's magazines. This study used 48 women's magazines and 48 men's magazines (Silverstein, Perdue, Peterson, & Kelly 1986). Ironically, in the women's magazines, there were 1,179 advertisements for various foods and in the men's, there were only 10.

To recognize and change cultural ideals that are contributing to the current outbreak of eating and body image problems, we need to change the negative messages in food advertisements. Advertisements contain influential messages focusing on the danger of women's appetites, the problems that exist when women do not diet, and the importance of being thin. Removing these messages in fashion, beauty, and food advertisements will be key to reducing the occurrence of eating disorders (Dolliver 1999).

Advertisers and media guide young women into eating disorders by glamorizing the ultra thin look. In a study at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, researchers found that beauty and fashion magazines "do not act as an initiating, but rather as a perpetuating force to those who suffer from an eating disorder" (Dolliver 1999). According to the interviews and survey data, the articles and photographs may be risky to individuals who are already

"prone to anorexia," because they "use the media in a distorted manner" (Dolliver 1999).

Media's Influence on Eating Disorders

One of the most famous studies was done by Garner, Garfinkel, Schwartz, and Thompson (1980). When looking at Miss America Pageant contestants and Playboy centerfolds, a considerable drop in weight and body measurements was reported from 1959 to 1978. The study shows that in most of the years, the winners of the pageant weighed noticeably less when compared to other contestants. Another significant fact is that the contestants' weight dropped considerably over time. This weight reduction is especially interesting due to the fact that the average American woman under 30 had actually gained five pounds by the last year of the study. An updated study by Wiseman, Gray, Mosimann, and Ahrens (1990) concluded that the pageant contestants and centerfolds continued to lose weight from 1979-1988. These authors found that 60 percent of the contestants and 69 percent of the centerfolds maintained weights that were 15 percent below one's expected body weight (Harrison 1997, p. 480). This is notable because being 15 percent less than expected based on height is symptomatic of anorexia nervosa (American Psychiatric Association 1994).

According to Garner and Garfinkel (1980), the media's role in portraying slender role models that the viewers then identify with cannot be emphasized enough.

> The social learning process of modeling provides an explanation for how young women come to believe in the thin ideal and become motivated to engage in extreme dieting behavior to meet this ideal (Harrison 482).

Magazines and television constantly portray slender characters and models who are shown as competent and attractive (Silverstein et. al 1986).

> From a modeling point of view, then, it is reasonable to expect that explicitly thin television characters and magazine models, who are also portrayed as attractive and competent, should have especially high modeling potential; that is, young women should be motivated to engage in behaviors that enable them to emulate these characters and models (Harrison 482).

This shows that we need to rethink how we advertise if we want to put a stop to the social problem of eating disorders.

Since eating disorders have now been labeled a social problem, we need to examine what is causing women to have these disorders. If left untreated, eating disorders can lead to death. Although eating disorders have been around for hundreds of years, they have just recently been labeled a social problem. This is due to the sudden rise in the number of cases. The media are not the only cause, but the advertising that currently exists is having a huge

influence on how men and women view their bodies. After constantly viewing advertisements with men and women with perfect bodies, eating disorders often become the solution to reaching a body the individual desires.

The changing shape of the model is causing women to change their views on what is attractive. At one point, Marilyn Monroe had the shape one would consider the ideal figure. Today Monroe would be considered overweight (Lane 2002, p. 1). Unfortunately, eating disorders are universal now affecting males and females of all ages. They cut across ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic groups in the U.S. and are now becoming a more global problem due to the impact of the media and internet (Eating Disorder Program 3).

Media's Focus on Thin Models

Throughout the 1920s, thin women were in style for a short period, but their fame was taken over by Mae West, Jean Harlow, Rita Hayworth, and Marilyn Monroe. The thin look came back in the 1960s with the model Twiggy and cultural appreciation of the very slender Jaqueline Kennedy.

> Some of that trend, notes Dr. Paul Garfinkel, head of the Toronto-based Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 'is an emulation of the higher social classes. Some relates to extreme health consciousness, some to a desire to control, some

> to a narcissistic preoccupation with youth and appearance. But much of it, he adds, has to do with media and advertising -- the notion that appearance is the self. The world has become much more superficial (Underwood 2000).

The average woman in North America is five-foot-four and weighs 140 pounds while the average model is five-foot-eleven and weighs 117 pounds. In May of 2000, the British medical establishment issued a report that blamed the media's preoccupation with the ultra-thin look for the growing number of eating disorders among young women (Underwood 2000).

> Female models are becoming thinner at a time when women are becoming heavier, and the gap between the ideal body shape and the reality is wider than ever, the British Medical Association wrote. There is a need for more realistic body shapes to be shown on television and in fashion magazines (Underwood 2000).

The continual use of thin models has grown in the fashion industry. The New York Times reported that "casual observers have linked the trend of ultra-thin fashion models to a rise in eating disorders," and it cited supporting views from experts on anorexia (Dolliver 1996).

Numerous famous actresses have been accused of having eating disorders. Is the Hollywood scene creating body types that are impossible for humans to master? Calista Flockhart, Courtney Cox, Lea Thompson, Sarah

Michelle Gellar are all recent TV stars. Coincidentally, all four of these women are too thin. Actress Elisa Donovan, who was in the TV series Clueless, began to deal with anorexia in 1992. Anorexia is an eating disorder dealing with an extreme fear of putting on weight. "At first, I'd eat no fat," Elisa says. "Then, I'd just eat breakfast--cereal and toast--and not eat again until night." Soon she weighed just 90 pounds at a height of 5-ft, 6-inches (Chang 1998).

According to Garner and Garfinkel (1980), "the potential impact of the media in establishing identificatory role models cannot be overemphasized." For example, due to the fact that women in star roles keep on getting skinnier and skinnier over the years, women are beginning to see being thin as being attractive.

Many young adults are not aware of physical and psychological dangers of being too thin. Instead they see the incredibly skinny actresses and models in the media. "The media have a tremendous influence--impacting on girls to be thin," says Elaine Yudkovitz, a New York psychotherapist and specialist in eating disorders (Garner & Garfinkel 1980).

How much Media Blame

One true story involves a girl who became bulimic and anorexic in order to be a thin, high school cheerleader. She confessed that she would look at fashion and beauty magazines to get ideas on ways to binge and purge.

> She said, If a magazine said, 'Bulimia has ruined my life, a true story, I would read it just to find ideas. I wanted to get people's secrets, and I wanted to figure out what [singer] Karen Carpenter did because I needed to do the same thing' (Media Not Totally to Blame 2000).

> 'There is a fine line of responsibility on the part of the media', indicates Steven Thomsen, associate professor of communications. The media do not act as an initiating, but, rather, as a perpetuating force to those who suffer from an eating disorder. To these young women who are at risk, some of these beauty and fashion magazines can be as dangerous as giving a beer to an alcoholic. The very factors that have made them vulnerable to an eating disorder also heighten their vulnerability to images of thinness and false promises of happiness (Media Not Totally to Blame 2002).

Thomsen worked with Kelly McCoy, assistant professor of family science, and Marleen Williams, associate clinical professor of counseling psychology. Their research looked at how women use fashion and beauty magazines to get ideas. The findings indicated that anorexic women tend to use the media to get unhealthy ideas. "Understand that it's not necessarily the media's fault, but that young women may

choose to use the media to support and reinforce their eating disorder," Thomsen expresses (Media Not Totally to Blame 2000).

This study provided important information which can give aid to researchers, therapists, and parents in detecting women who may be in danger of an eating disorder. Thomsen feels that the reasons why females read certain magazines is much more significant than the frequency.

Reading motivations most associated with anorexic risk include a desire to learn popular diets, a desire to become skinny like magazine models, and a belief that reading the magazines will lead to greater popularity, happiness, and acceptance by family and friends. When these motivations are combined with an excessive anxiety about body appearance, the risk becomes even greater. Reading motivations that should cause less concern include reading for entertainment purposes or out of boredom and reading to learn new trends or how to improve relations with the opposite sex (Media Not Totally to Blame 2000).

Various television programs and magazines refer to eating disorders due to the fact that anorexia has a death rate nearing 20 percent. This is the highest mortality rate of any mental disorder. "In many cases, messages intended to scare women away from anorexia actually pushed

them closer to it," Thomsen has learned from the numerous interviews he has conducted. Thomsen states, "Magazine articles and advertisements become instruction manuals on what to look like, how to look that way, and why one should look like that" (Media Not Totally to Blame 2000).

McCoy points out that it is hard to identify the exact reason an eating disorder is developed.

> There is not one single characteristic that predicts the onset for an anorexic. All seem to come to their eating disorder from different experiences. Factors that occur in a young woman's immediate surroundings—her family, friends, and coaches--are what seem to establish the initial flames of anorexia. But the media contribute much to it becoming a full-blown fire (Media Not Totally to Blame 2000).

Men's Magazines

For many years, the focus was on how women's magazines talked about secret desires and fears.

> But now that we are wiser and more over it, the magazines we really get off on spying at the newsstand are those addressed to men. The silly macho posing of Maxim. The barely disguised neurosis of Men's Health. Even the sophisticated GQ for May was devoted to 'The Male Species' and had a buff naked guy on the cover, while the tony Esquire pondered 'How a man ages: The survival guide' (Ohnuma 2002, p. 1).

After years of women's worrying about silly things such as panty lines, some women were glad to see that Calvin Klein was making men self-conscious about their underwear.

The tables were turned: Now we got to be the ones sizing guys up against some impossibly hunky standard of perfection. But paging through a stack of men's magazines recently sent me beyond amusement to a kind of existential nausea. It would be comforting to think that women's independence and assertiveness were responsible for making the sexes more equal – men developing their feminine side just as women take on roles that used to be limited to men. The new sensitivity on the covers of men's magazines would simply be a reflection of that. But there is something else at work when Esquire charts what men should wear, drive and desire in their 30s, 40s, 50s and beyond. If reading women's magazines leaves me feeling inadequate and depressed, I can't help but think the men's version has the same effect on guys (Ohnuma 2002, p.1-2).

Something, at any rate, is making the men at work munch carrot sticks and sneak glances at each other's guts. It is no longer enough to be the biggest boss in the office if you are, in fact, the biggest boss in the office. No success is completely convincing unless attended by a knowingly styled, sculpted physique (Ohnuma 2002, p. 2).

As the magazines reflect, aspirations of men and women have now been reduced to the same songs with the same intonations – and the same solution, of course: Acquire more stuff. It is no longer a question of being kind, or reflective, or spiritually evolved – although those needs can be addressed too, by ads for yoga videos and books by Deepak Chopra. What truly matters, however, is how it all looks. In retrospect, I guess there was something OK about the female anxiety laid bare in women's magazines, because it still had an opposite: We could lie around Sundays pondering how to build better buns, knowing that come Monday, we would file all that neurosis and put on our suits with the big shoulder pads and become like men– focused on power more than appearance. There was a comforting refuge in the men's freedom to be cute slobs and (publicly anyway) hardly be aware

> of it. Today it seems the sexes are, in fact, more equal than that: We've reached parity in the bedroom (closet), and achieved what we could not in the boardroom – an end to envy (Ohnuma 2002, p. 2).

Cultural Influence

Each day there are cultural messages sent out about weight, food, and the perfect image. This perfect image usually entails being very thin. Women are constantly sent the message that they should aim for a slender build. Women are constantly presented with special foods and drinks, diets, drugs, exercise equipment, and clothing. Models, centerfolds, and Miss America pageant contestants keep on getting skinnier and skinnier (Osvold & Sodowsky 1993).

Prior to the last decade, most of the research done on eating disorders has looked at only white, American women. However, there has been an increase in anorexia and bulimia when looking at minority women (Root 1990). Women often learn that self-esteem develops from their physical appearance and not necessarily from their accomplishments (Beattie 1988). Unlike men, they tend to associate who they are with their appearance which triggers a concern about their weight (Leon & Finn 1984). Many times a woman's body image gives them a sense of self (Druss & Henifin 1979). Although this is how the majority of white

women feel, it seems to not be as true when looking at minority women. One study shows (Osvold & Sodowsky 1992), some Native American (32 percent) and African-American (25 percent) females said that their physical appearance had a minimal influence on how they felt overall.

Our culture is obviously having a huge impact on eating disorders (Dolan 1991). For example, anorexia and bulimia are very common in the United States where we have plenty of food. However, the poorer countries have close to zero cases of anorexia or bulimia (Leon & Finn 1984). Ritenbaugh (1982) said in the United States, body weight is "closely tied to core societal values" (Ritenbaugh 1982). In our culture, youth is highly valued and youth is now associated with being thin.

In one study, two Eastern European women developed bulimia and anorexia after being in the United States for two years (Bulik 1987). Neither woman had any signs of eating disorders before coming to the United States. They both began to realize the importance associated with controlling one's weight. Bulik (1987) stated, "They began to evaluate their self-worth on the basis of their body and the ability to control their appetites."

Study on Body Dissatisfaction

In a study led by Dr. Leora Pinhas, researchers asked 118 female college students about their eating patterns, mood, and body satisfaction. The women were then asked the exact questions right after they looked at a series of ads. Half of the women viewed ads from fashionable female magazines while the other half saw ads which did not include people.

> The experimental group responded immediately with depression and hostility after viewing the ideal women shown in these ads, said Pinhas, a lecturer in the department of psychiatry. And this was only after viewing 20 pictures. Think about how many hundreds of photos are in some of these fashion and lifestyle magazines, not to mention billboards, television, and movies. Pinhas went on to say how our culture needs to change how it depicts a woman's body in order for females to feel more secure about themselves and not create more eating disorders. I know I'd be hard pressed to find a young woman who felt good about her body, never dieted, and ate normally, she observed (Key 1999).

Men and Advertising

Advertisements for men have also become very focused on having a perfect body.

> Men are now beginning to get a taste of the same medicine that women have had to put up with for decades, explains Dr. Harrison Pope Jr., a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, namely seeing pictures of unattainably perfect bodies in the media (Underwood 2000).

When compared to men, women tend to be the ones who diet and have eating disorders due to their overwhelming concern about their image. However, some boys are preoccupied with their appearance and may go to extremes to be what they think will make them an ideal man (Shum 2001).

Janet Zinn, a social worker who specializes in eating issues and body image deals with boys and men who suffer from eating disorders. Zinn says that our culture sends out the message that:

> Boys should be lean, but with a certain amount of muscle mass, with a chest that's well-defined, with arms that are well-defined, so that you should be lean but strong (Shum 2001).

Males may resort to steroids and diets to achieve the body they want. Some may become anorexic, bulimic, and/or they may excessively work out. Boys and men sometimes have a difficult time admitting they have an eating disorder which makes the existence of eating disorders appear to be less for guys (Shum 2001).

> If you have an eating disorder that's associated with feelings that are being suppressed, then not only is it not okay to have the eating disorder, but it's also not okay to have those feelings in the first place, Zinn said. So there's a double shame going on, and I think that's clear in a lot of families, as well as endemic in our society (Shum 2001).

Many people wonder why an individual resorts to an eating disorder when he knows it is harming his body. Zinn

explains that the person does not feel he is a worthy individual. Men end up harming their bodies and live with feelings that they are worth nothing. However, by mastering what they feel is a perfect body, they feel as if they have established an identity for themselves (Shum 2001).

It is a good idea to stay fit and regularly exercise but not when one takes this to an extreme and behaves in a unhealthy manner. Zinn agrees that the media and advertisements encourage the need to have a perfect body. "They show actors or models that are cool, that are accepted, that feel confident. And, as any teen knows, being a teen is not a time for confidence." The messages usually convey that in order to be confident you must strive to look like the actors and models advertised (Shum 2001).

"Eating disorders among men is a hidden disease," Zinn said. "I think we would be surprised to find out how many boys suffer from it than we would ever guess." Eating disorders among men are not talked about very much, however, many men try to achieve a perfect body (Shum 2001). In recent years, more men have been diagnosed with eating disorders. "Men are more focused on their bodies now than ever before," Yudkovitz says.

> Males are less likely to starve themselves to death; instead, many exercise excessively to get rid of the calories they ate--a condition known as exercise bulimia, which is also becoming very common in girls (Chang 1998).

Conclusion

The increased attention that has been directed to the current issues with advertising is a definite step in the right direction.

CHAPTER #3: THEORY

This research is informed by theories and methods used by Jean Kilbourne and Erving Goffman. Our culture is bombarded with media messages every day which then have an impact on both individual behavior and society at large. The media are able to send out messages which influence addictive behavior and promote violence and gender stereotypes. Although the average American views three thousand ads in one day, many believe they are not influenced by advertising. In Deadly Persuasion: why women and girls must fight the addictive power of advertising, Jean Kilbourne shows how advertisers are able to manipulate our wants in order to sell their products. Her method is content analysis. She uses many examples and focuses on how advertisers promote developing relationships with things. In other words, advertising focuses on the joys products can give us when people do not fulfill our desires. However, when we turn to things instead of people, we are behaving as addicts and will continue to

come back for more. While everyone is at risk from this unhealthy social environment that has been created, women and girls are more likely to be fooled. Due to the fact that women focus on relationships with others, women may easily turn to promises advertised from the use of a product. Ads for women are often focused on gratification, power, and comfort in order to fulfill these desires. In order to successfully resist these ads and products, one must come to understand the methods used by advertisers (Kilbourne 1999).

In Kilbourne's book, the main focus is on how advertising affects society. She clearly gets the point across that advertising influences individuals more than they realize. Clearly advertising is a daily part of our life. However, many people think advertising is trivial and fun and do not realize the influence it can have. Kilbourne conveys the fact that the emptier we feel inside, the greater consumers we become. The book shows how everyone is affected by ads no matter what kind of items one is purchasing. An important factor to note is that she does not try to say that advertising completely shapes society, but it does play a part in how we see the world.

In her book, Kilbourne looks closely at the influence advertising has on consumers. The focus is on how this

advertising can contribute to the problems that women and girls deal with in terms of violence, economics, and emotional and physical health. She does not try to blame women's problems solely on advertising, but instead shows how advertising can have an influence on certain social problems.

Kilbourne focuses on how commercials and advertising influence many of the social problems women face today. These social problems include eating disorders, sexual objectification of women and young girls, attitudes about marriage, and drinking habits. Because the media consistently advertise being extremely slender as a sexy, good thing, this definitely has an influence on women wanting to be thin.

Kilbourne presents many examples that show how culture has become focused on women remaining sexually beautiful. Furthermore, the advertising alludes to the fact that remaining sexually beautiful requires one to be extremely skinny. Kilbourne writes:

> Being obsessed about one's weight is made to seem normal and even appealing in ads for unrelated products, such as a scotch ad that features a very thin and pretty young woman looking in a mirror while her boyfriend observes her. The copy, addressed to him, says, Listen, if you can handle 'Honey, do I look fat?' you can handle this. These two are so intimate that she can share her deepest fears with him—and he can respond by chuckling at her adorable vulnerability

> and knocking back another scotch. And everyone who sees the ad gets the message that it is perfectly normal for all young women, including thin and attractive ones, to worry about their weight (Kilbourne 136).

This demonstrates that advertising often leads one to think that being very thin is a good thing. This in turn has an influence on the increasing number of eating disorder cases developing in society.

Another advertisement reads:

> 'Put some weight on,' featuring an extremely thin young woman—but the ad is referring to her watch. She is so thin that she can wear the watch on her upper arm—and this is supposed to be a good thing (Kilbourne 136).

The ad is creating anxiety about weight which is very profitable in the consumer industry. These types of ads can influence women to think that being thin is important. Therefore, they may end up investing time, energy, and money into products and actions which they feel will help them lose weight.

Yet another ad for a health club says "We cut Judy down to size." An ad for a collapsible treadmill says, "Soon, you'll both be taking up less space," referring to the treadmill and the woman who is using it (Kilbourne 137). All of these ads are saying it is better if you are thinner. This emphasis on thinness influences women and girls to want to be slim which in turn increases the

chances for developing an eating disorder. The statement "You can never be too rich or too thin" is another popular idea used in advertising. Kilbourne and others are not saying that advertising directly causes eating disorders. However, advertising can increase the chances of eating disorders and definitely has an impact on the way women view the way they should look. There is extreme pressure in our society that in order to remain feminine, a woman must remain thin. Advertising creates an ideal image and an obsession with thinness.

Kilbourne also expresses concern that many women's magazines have many ads for delicious foods along with all sorts of ads to lose weight. "This is an invitation to pathology, fueling the paradoxical obsession with food and weight control that is one of the hallmarks of eating disorders" (Kilbourne 51). It is very common to see an ad for an indulgent food and then a cigarette ad implying smoking will help to keep you thin. Throughout the magazine, one will see many recipes, photos of fattening foods, many dieting articles, and continuous advertising by extremely thin women (51).

> In February 1999, Family Circle featured on its front cover a luscious photo of 'gingham mini cakes' while promoting articles entitled 'New! Lose-Weight, Stay-Young Diet,' 'Super Foods That Act Like Medicine,' and the 'The Healing Power of Love' (51).

> The same week, For Women First featured a chocolate cake on its cover along with one article entitled 'Accelerate Fat Loss' and another promising 'Break Cures' for varicose veins, cellulite, PMS, stress, tiredness, and dry skin (52).

This type of advertising is all too common in magazines. We consistently see ads for highly fattening foods followed by an ad for a weight loss product. This definitely has an impact on the way we think, and unfortunately adds fuel to the fire when dealing with eating disorders. In order to try to stop the problems advertising is causing, we need to change the way we advertise.

> Sex in advertising is pornographic because it dehumanizes and objectifies people, especially women, and because it fetishizes products, imbues them with an erotic charge-which dooms us to disappointment since products never can fulfill our sexual desires or meet our emotional needs (Kilbourne 1999, p. 271).

These ads can be funny, but they are still objectifying human beings. Usually when women are objectified they are in danger while men are not.

> We must recognize that all of these problems-addictions, eating disorders, male violence (including battering and rape), child abuse, the increasing commercialization of the culture, the exploitation of children by advertisers, gun violence, and the objectification of women and girls-are related (Kilbourne 1999, p. 293)

> The first thing we must do is to get past the cultural belief, promoted so heavily by advertising, and there is a quick fix, an instant solution to every problem- and that one shouldn't even discuss a problem unless one has this solution firmly in mind (Kilbourne 1999, p. 292-293).

Besides selling a product, advertisements sell ideas about self-concept, values, and American culture. Advertisers are able to create a culture which they then use to sell products. Basically, the media and advertisements are trying to make you feel less accepting of yourself so that you will buy the advertised products intending to solve your problems. An important step to stopping this negative influence of the media is to understand what their true intentions are. The media intimidate and manipulate people into conforming to the ideals of feminity and sexuality. Young women need to be educated in order to decrease chances of psychological damage from the negative messages and images of women in the media.

> Several authors and researchers have argued that changes in eating disorders epidemiology over the past several decades bear a curiously close resemblance to changes in mass media representations of women's bodies throughout the same time span (Harrison 1997, p. 480).

Since the 1950s, the shape of the female sex symbol has greatly slimmed down (Chernin 1981). From 1950 to 1984, Gagnard (1986) noted the steady increase in slender models

in today's popular magazine advertisements. Anderson and DiDomencio (1992) reported that there were roughly 10 times as many dieting articles and advertisements in a sample of women's magazines compared to an equivalent sample of men's magazines. This ratio just so happens to match the ratio of women with eating disorders when compared to men with eating disorders.

Her last chapter is especially good because she offers solutions to the problems she presents. Furthermore, she not only presents the common problems we see in advertising but follows through with suggestions. She mentions the importance of parents connecting with all children, not just their own. She also touches on the importance of coming out about addictions, abuse, and recovery. She says,

> We need coalitions, networks, conferences, public outcries. We need all kinds of people coming together—in our communities, in our schools, in our places of work and our places of worship. We need parents, educators, pediatricians, business people, psychologists, the clergy—everyone speaking out and saying, 'I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it any more!' (Kilbourne 313-314).

She also discusses our ability to cut back on television-watching and consumption. Kilbourne suggests other activities such as sports, drama, reading, environmentalism, and volunteerism (305). Kilbourne points

out the importance of teaching media literacy in schools as early as kindergarten. This way we can learn how to be critical viewers of the media at a very young age (304). Another suggestion is to use more counteradvertising which gives us "honest information and advertising that deglamorizes products such as alcohol and tobacco" (303-304).

> It is time for us to fight back, to resist this name-calling and to redefine freedom, liberation, and rebellion in our own terms. We can turn these advertising messages inside out (311).

The more people who read and learn about current advertising the more likely we are to face and stop the negative impact advertising can have.

Goffman's Theory

Goffman's gender advertisements theory informed by content analysis provided the baseline years ago from which contemporary theorists like Kilbourne work.

> In this wonderfully dense and lively monograph Goffman turns his attention, specifically to the ways in which men and women-mainly women-are pictured in advertisements (those highly manipulated representations of recognizable scenes from 'real life'), and speculates richly on what those ads tell us about ourselves; what the interplay is between fashioned image and so called natural behavior; the degree to advertisements embody an artificial pose reflecting on perhaps yet another artificial pose-that is, the process by which we come to think of what we call our natural selves (Gornick 1979, p. VII).

Goffman points an advertising situation in which themes emerge that are different for women and men. His early work reflects a theme of male power and success. Women are portrayed as passive and eager to please.

> Gender Advertisements first appeared in 1976 as a journal article. It was more widely noted in 1979 when it was published as a book. The introduction by Vivian Gornick defines it as a feminist work on gender display complicated by reframing behavior. She avers that we come 'to accept as real an almost wholly assumed self', contriving to become the people in the ads. It is a world in which men are taken seriously; woman and children are not. In reviewing the book, Weitz (1980) tends to agree. Goffman is seen as delineating the insidious nature of sexist images, raising gender consciousness. Collins (1986) disagrees, seeing the book as a defense of traditional, functionally-justified, male dominant sex roles (p. 108) (Atchison 2000).
>
> So where does Goffman sit theoretically? Concerns regarding metaphor and the nature of reality beget questions about reification, which Goffman does, and doesn't, do. He is clearly aware of the recipients of advertising as reifiers. He believes people are more likely to reify ads than stage drama. Ads can be seen as being like news shots or private portraits. No intercession about events shown is needed, unlike the audience participation in dramatic action (Atchison & Turner p. 7).

Goffman's gender theory, as presented, invites us to see, but not to do. Kilbourne owes aspects of her approach to advertising to Goffman, but clearly builds upon and revises it to clarify the focus of the images, to make clear the harm they can do. Finally, she urges action.

CHAPTER #4: METHOD AND DATA ANALYSIS

The content analysis I used consists of monitoring the frequency and qualitative information in the advertising in six different magazines. My thesis focused on the media's influence on both men and women. I investigated whether or not "current wisdom" is correct about stereotypes of media messages and the degree to which such stereotypes exist in magazines. The current wisdom is information presented in numerous editorial columns along with feminist agendas and issues. Much knowledge can be also be gained from journals, magazine and newspaper articles, and from television.

Data-Gathering Technique

The principle technique used in this study is content analysis. Content analysis reveals the purposes, motives, and other characteristics of the communicators as they are reflected in the content (Bearlson 1971, p.19).

> Content analysis is a technique for gathering and analyzing the content of text. The content refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or

> any message that can be communicated. The text is anything written, visual, or spoken that serves as a medium for communication. It includes books, newspaper or magazine articles, advertisements, speeches, official documents, films or videotapes, musical lyrics, photographs, articles of clothing, or works of art (Neuman 2000, p. 292).
>
> In content analysis, a researcher uses objective and systematic counting and recording procedures to produce a quantitative description of the symbolic content in a text. Content analysis is nonreactive because the process of placing words, messages, or symbols in a text to communicate to a reader or receiver occurs without influence from the researcher who analyzes its content. Content analysis lets a researcher reveal the content (i.e. messages, meanings, symbols, etc) in a source of communication (i.e., a book, article, movie, etc.). It lets him or her probe into and discover content in a different way from the ordinary way of reading a book or watching a television program (Neuman 2000, p.293).

With content analysis, I was able to compare the content of different magazines and analyze it with quantitative techniques. This made it easy to see aspects of the text's content.

> Content analysis can document—in objective, quantitative terms—whether your vague feelings based on unsystematic observation are true. Content analysis involves…sampling, precise measurement, and operational definitions for abstract constructs (Neuman 2000, p. 293).

In this study, I sampled different issues of six different magazines. Content analysis is a useful method in this study to reveal the messages that are being sent in the magazines.

> Careful measurement is crucial in content analysis because a researcher takes diffuse and murky symbolic communication and turns it into precise, objective, quantitative data. Constructs in content analysis are operationalized with a coding system, a set of instructions or rules on how to systematically observe and record content from text (294).

"Coding turns aspects of content that represent variables into numbers" (293).

> Units:
> The unit of analysis can vary a great deal in content analysis. It can be a word, a phrase, a theme, a plot, a newspaper article, a character, and so fourth. In addition to units of analysis, researchers use others units in content analysis that may or may not be the same as units of analysis: recording units, context units, and enumeration units (294).

The ads were the unit measured and the themes were the content groupings.

What is measured? In this particular study, I used frequency and space. I counted the frequencies of particular themes found in ads in six magazines. The ad had to consist of half a page or larger to give credibility to the likelihood the ad would be noticed by readers. The ad sometimes applied to two different themes. If this was the case, the ad was categorized twice—Ads were never placed in more than two categories.

The ads were evaluated with regard to the research question, whether or not "current wisdom" is correct about stereotypes of media messages and the degree to which such

stereotypes exist in magazines. I sampled four issues from each of the six different magazines (three different men's magazines/three different women's magazines). All were published in 2002. Besides using a few January and February issues, most of the issues used happened to be during the warmer months where individuals may be a bit more preoccupied with their figures due to less clothing and bathing suit season. The issues chosen were selected based on availability. None of the issues were November or December which would have had a special focus on the holidays.

The content analysis I used consisted of monitoring the frequency and qualitative information in the advertising in the six different magazines.

Research Focus On Themes

I looked at different magazines in order to determine the presence and extent of the following themes in magazine advertising: (categories for women: too thin, perfect body, focusing on maintaining youth, focusing on physical appearance, sexuality; categories for men: muscular fit body, importance of money, cult of toughness, sexuality). I used Cosmopolitan and Maxim, Shape and Men's Health, and Marie Claire and GQ. These magazines were chosen to represent the different angles magazines take catering to

perceived interests by gender. Cosmopolitan and Maxim are more sexually-oriented magazines while Shape and Men's Health are fitness magazines. Marie Claire and GQ represent the magazines focusing on everyday life along with an emphasis on fashion. I used four current issues (2002) from each magazine. I used two outside judges in order to get other opinions and to minimize researcher bias.

In order to get other opinions on ad classification, two outside judges were used. Judge A is 24 years old, attended Colorado State University and is currently working on her thesis to obtain her masters in sociology. Judge B is 25 years old, attended Texas A&M, and graduated with her bachelor's degree. Both outside judges were females. All ad classifications were agreed upon and were usually very obvious. It was rather obvious when an ad focused on maintaining youth, focused on physical appearance, or fell in the sexual category. The category we sometimes needed a consensus on dealt with whether or not the female should fall into the "too thin" category or the "perfect body" category. We were able to agree on all classifications before categorizing the ad. Some ads fell into two categories. For example, sometimes ads featured a woman who was too thin, but also represented the "sexual" theme.

Another example would be an ad focusing on physical appearance but also advertised a woman with a perfect body. Ads were never put into more than two categories.

It was also easy to classify the men's ads. It was fairly obvious if the ad fell into the category of muscular/fit body, the importance of money, toughness, or sexuality. Men's ads were also put into two different theme categories if two themes applied. Although there were no official male judges, I did get many different men's opinions. After asking different men opinions on various ads, the men mostly shared the same opinion about classification. This was true among the women I polled, also. By polling, I am referring to asking different friends' and students' opinions on the theme categorization. By getting different people to classify the ads into themes, I was able to verify my opinion along with the two judges' opinions. Once again the only thing that was even questionable was whether a woman should be classified as too thin versus perfect body. In one particular ad, there was a female who had been categorized as too thin. After polling different men, most of the men agreed that yes, she was indeed too thin. However, there were two different males who agreed she was extremely thin, but they like their women "thin like that." Therefore,

they would say she was very thin, but also had a perfect body. Many other men felt the girl advertised was way too thin and had a body close to that of a 10-year old. I was able to conclude that most everyone agreed on each ad's theme classification and the only questionable categorization would be whether the woman was too thin or had a perfect body.

Due to the magazines used, there could be a selection bias. All the women's magazines used focus on younger women (ages 20-30). Therefore, this probably has an impact on the number of ads that focus on maintaining youth. At this young an age, maintaining youth is not quite as much a concern as it is once you enter your 30s. To test this idea anecdotally, I looked through a magazine which is geared toward women who are 30 and older (Redbook), and it did seem to have more of a focus on ads which help women maintain youth (238 pages, 111 ads [46.64 percent ads]) (at least half a page), 10 ads focusing on maintaining youth [4.2 percent of the magazine],10/111=9.01 percent). This magazine also had more family ads, for example more ads with food that would be geared toward a family meal or snacks for kids, and pet food.

Another finding is that women are targeted a bit more heavily with ads. Although men's magazines have many ads,

women's magazines surpass men's ad count. Shape and Cosmopolitan were usually about 40-50 percent ads while Marie Claire was a bit above 50 percent. Men's Health averaged to be 40 percent ads except the January/February issue was only 30 percent. Maxim was about 45 percent ads while the norm for GQ was 35 percent ads.

Readers are directed to Tables 1 and 2 for specific distributions and frequencies of themes by issue of the six magazines studied. Averages of the four issues for each magazine are reported in text, as well as in Tables 3 and 4. In Shape, the dominating category was physical appearance (33.57 percent) compared with perfect body averaging (19.21 percent), too thin (13.93 percent), sexual (13.62 percent), and maintain youth (3.69 percent). In Cosmopolitan, physical appearance (26.95 percent) and perfect body (26.65 percent) seemed to be the most prevalent categories while too thin averaged 13.49 percent, sexual (21.42 percent), and maintain youth (3.96 percent). Averages for Marie Claire, represented the themes as follows: physical appearance (33.69 percent), perfect body (31.44 percent), too thin (26.55 percent), sexual (19.21 percent), and maintain youth (2.19 percent).

When I looked at the total averages for themes for all women's magazines it was clear that physical appearance ads

were dominant (31.40 percent). Emphasis on perfect body was also highly represented (25.77 percent). Sexual themes were found 18.08 percent of the time. The "too thin" theme was represented in 17.99 percent of the ads. Given the issue that designation as "too thin" in comparison with "perfect (thin) body" was difficult, it is still important that nearly one in five ads showed a clearly "too thin" role model to women interested in their body images. The low ranking of "youth" (3.52 percent) is probably tied to the target (young) audience for the magazines chosen. Redbook and More (for older women) clearly addresses the theme of yearning for youth. And a dominant feature of the youthful is preoccupation with physical appearance, including thinness as a feature of perfect body. Portrayals of the sexual theme clearly did not portray sexuality as related to "faulty" bodies. The formerly sexy Marilyn Monroe was, by current standards, grossly overweight.

It should be revealed that what is portrayed as "perfect body" is unattainable for about 95 percent of women. Women are asked to focus on a physical appearance which ideally includes a perfect, sexy, and thin body.

Men's Health averaged results: muscular/fit (42.04 percent), money (37.28 percent), cult of toughness (23.89

percent), and sexual (13.48 percent). Maxim's averaged results: muscular/fit (29.27 percent), sexual (20.83 percent), cult of toughness (19.25%), and money (14.06 percent). GQ averages: money (31.99 percent), muscular/fit (31.12 percent), sexual (16.92 percent), and cult of toughness (9.41 percent).

The total averages for men for the four themes studied in all men's magazines produced one result consistent with that for women--importance of the physical body. The muscularity/fitness theme was found in 34.14 percent of the copy. It was followed by money (success) as 25.55 percent. The cult of toughness image was portrayed in 17.52 percent of the ads. Sexual themes were found in 17.08 percent of the ads.

It has often been said "sex sells." An interesting and important finding in this study is that other stereotypic messages to men rank higher. Men should be successful (make money), act macho (and possibly violent) to show they are tough, but most of all, maintain a muscular and fit body.

In all of these magazines, there is a huge amount of advertising which impacts readers. These findings suggest that what the "current wisdom" suggests is in fact true. Due to the fact that such a high amount of advertising

focuses on what is ideal, people may get down on themselves because they cannot reach this perfection. This type of advertising leads to lowered self-esteem and may cause a raised level of insecurity. In order to eliminate these reactions to advertising, we need to change the content of the manner of advertising.

Table 1 Distribution and Frequencies of Themes in Women's Magazines
The 24 magazines from 2002 were analyzed with the following results.

Shape	Ads	Pages
Feb 2002		
130 pages		
53 ads=40.77% ads		
too thin=7	13.21%	5.38%
perfect body=10	18.87%	7.69%
maintain youth=1	1.89%	.77%
physical appearance=16	30.19%	12.31%
sexual=7	13.21%	5.38%
Shape		
May 2002		
214 pages		
100 ads=46.73% ads		
too thin=14	14.00%	6.54%
perfect body=23	23.00%	10.75%
maintain youth=3	3.00%	1.40%
physical appearance=33	33.00%	15.42%
sexual=15	15.00%	7.01%
Shape		
July 2002		
198 pages		
92 ads=46.00% ads		
too thin=5	5.43%	2.53%
perfect body=16	17.39%	8.08%
maintain youth=2	2.17%	1.01%
physical appearance=29	31.52%	14.65%
sexual=8	8.70%	4.04%
Shape		
Sept. 2002		
182 pages		
91 ads=50% ads		
too thin=21	23.08%	11.54%
perfect body=16	17.58%	8.79%
maintain youth=7	7.69%	3.85%
physical appearance=36	39.56%	19.78%
sexual=16	17.58%	8.79%

Cosmopolitan	Ads	Pages
April 2002		
288 pages		
139 ads=48.26% ads		
too thin=30	21.58%	10.42%
perfect body=26	19.12%	9.03%
maintain youth=8	5.89%	2.78%
physical appearance=43	31.62%	14.93%
sexual=26	19.12%	9.03%
Cosmopolitan		
May 2002		
326 pages		
167 ads=51.23% ads		
too thin=14	8.38%	4.29%
perfect body=68	40.72%	20.86%
maintain youth=10	5.99%	3.07%
physical appearance=64	38.32%	19.63%
sexual=40	23.95%	12.27%
Cosmopolitan		
July 2002		
240 pages		
122 ads=50.83% ads		
too thin=17	13.93%	7.08%
perfect body=40	32.79%	16.67%
maintain youth=2	1.64%	.83%
physical appearance=44	6.07%	18.33%
sexual=34	27.87%	14.17%
Cosmopolitan		
Aug 2002		
258 pages		
129 ads=50% ads		
too thin=13	10.08%	5.04%
perfect body=18	13.95%	6.98%
maintain youth=3	2.33%	1.16%
physical appearance=41	31.78%	15.89%
sexual=19	14.73%	7.36%

Marie Claire	Ads	Pages
April 2002		
246 pages		
136 ads=55.28% ads		
too thin=27	19.85%	10.96%
perfect body=59	43.38%	23.98%
maintain youth=4	2.94%	1.63%
physical appearance=39	28.68%	15.85%
sexual=20	14.71%	8.13%
Marie Claire		
May 2002		
250 pages		
133 ads=53.20% ads		
too thin=18	13.53%	7.20%
perfect body=50	37.59%	20.00%
maintain youth=3	2.26%	1.20%
physical appearance=47	35.34%	18.80%
sexual=24	18.05%	9.60%
Marie Claire		
July 2002		
182 pages		
100 ads=54.95% ads		
too thin=54	54.00%	29.67%
perfect body=14	14.00%	7.69%
maintain youth=1	1.00%	.55%
physical appearance=34	34.00%	18.68%
sexual=21	21.00%	11.54%
Marie Claire		
Aug 2002		
230 pages		
117 ads=50.87% ads		
too thin=22	18.80%	9.57%
perfect body=36	30.77%	15.65%
maintain youth=3	2.56%	1.30%
physical appearance=43	36.75%	18.70%
sexual=27	23.08%	11.74%

Table 2 Distribution and Frequencies of Themes In Men's Magazines

Men's Health	Ads	Pages
Jan/Feb 2002		
122 pages		
37ads=30.33% ads		
muscular/fit=11	29.73%	9.02%
money=7	18.92%	5.74%
sexual=4	10.81%	3.28%
cult of toughness=5	13.51%	4.10%
Men's Health		
March 2002		
202 pages		
81 ads=40.10% ads		
muscular/fit=47	58.02%	23.27%
money=45	55.56%	22.28%
sexual=14	17.28%	6.93%
cult of toughness=21	25.93%	10.40%
Men's Health		
April 2002		
54 ads=40.30% ads		
134 pages		
muscular/fit=18	33.33%	13.43%
money=10	18.52%	7.46%
sexual=6	11.11%	4.48%
cult of toughness=16	29.63%	11.94%
Men's Health		
May 2002		
68 ads=40% ads		
170 pages		
muscular/fit=32	47.06%	18.82%
money=20	29.41%	11.76%
sexual=10	14.71%	5.88%
cult of toughness=18	26.47%	10.59%

Maxim	Ads	Pages
June 2002		
214 pages		
98 ads=45.79% ads		
muscular/fit=31	31.63%	14.49%
money=20	20.41%	9.35%
sexual=23	23.47%	10.75%
cult of toughness=22	22.45%	10.28%
Maxim		
Aug 2002		
198 pages		
91 ads=45.96% ads		
muscular/fit=33	36.26%	16.67%
money=7	7.70%	3.54%
sexual=23	25.27%	11.62%
cult of toughness=14	15.38%	7.07%
Maxim		
Sept. 2002		
262 pages		
119 ads=45.42% ads		
muscular/fit=37	31.09%	14.12%
money=21	17.65%	8.02%
sexual=23	19.33%	8.78%
cult of toughness=33	27.73%	12.60%
Maxim		
Oct. 2002		
222 pages		
105 ads=47.30% ads		
muscular/fit=19	18.10%	8.56%
money=11	10.48%	4.95%
sexual=16	15.24%	7.21%
cult of toughness=12	11.43%	5.41%

GQ	Ads	Pages
April 2002		
216 pages		
81 ads=37.50% ads		
muscular/fit=15	18.52%	6.94%
money=22	27.16%	10.19%
sexual=8	9.88%	3.70%
cult of toughness=7	8.64%	3.24%
GQ		
May 2002		
246 pages		
91 ads=36.99% ads		
muscular/fit=29	31.87%	11.79%
money=26	28.57%	10.57%
sexual=16	17.58%	6.50%
cult of toughness=9	9.89%	3.66%
GQ		
June 2002		
282 pages		
104 ads=36.88% ads		
muscular/fit=33	31.73%	11.70%
money=24	23.08%	8.51%
sexual=33	31.73%	11.70%
cult of toughness=4	3.85%	1.42%
GQ		
Aug 2002		
184 pages		
59 ads=32.07% ads		
muscular/fit=25	42.37%	13.59%
money=29	49.15%	15.76%
sexual=5	8.47%	2.72%
cult of toughness=9	15.25%	4.89%

The results of Tables 3 and 4 have some interesting conclusions. It is interesting that Marie Claire has the highest average when dealing with females that are too thin. Due to the fact that this is the magazine geared toward fashion, I would expect these results. Fashion magazines put a strong on focus on the importance of thinness. Marie Claire also has the highest average of perfect bodies. Each magazine is fairly low when dealing with the focus of maintaining youth. As previously brought up, this could be due to the fact that these three magazines are geared to the 20 to 30 something age range. After looking through older women's magazines such as Redbook and More, there seems to be more of a focus on maintaining youth. All three magazines have a fairly high percentage when looking at physical appearance. Lastly, as to be expected, Cosmopolitan has the highest average for sexual ads.

Men's Health has the highest average when showing ads for muscular/fit men. This makes sense due to the fact that this magazine focuses on men's bodies. GQ has the highest average when dealing with the importance of money. This also would be expected due to the fashion emphasis one sees in GQ. The percentage of sexual ads is greatest in Maxim while Men's Health has the highest percentage of ads

dealing with the cult of toughness. That is an interesting finding, given that cult of toughness behavior often runs counter to good health.

Table 3. Averaged Results of Themes In Women's Magazines
Women

A=Too Thin
B=Perfect Body
C=Maintain Youth
D=Physical Appearance
E=Sexual

	A	B	C	D	E
Shape	13.93	19.21	3.69	33.57	13.62
Cosmopolitan	13.49	26.65	3.96	26.95	21.42
Marie Claire	26.54	31.44	2.92	33.69	19.21
Percent Average Over 4 issues	17.99	25.77	3.52	31.40	18.08

Table 4. Averaged Results of Themes In Men's Magazines
Men

A=Muscular/Fit
B=Money
C=Sexual
D=Cult of Toughness

	A	B	C	D
Men's Health	42.04	30.60	13.48	23.89
Maxim	29.27	14.06	20.83	19.25
GQ	31.12	31.99	16.92	9.41
Percent average Over 4 issues	34.14	25.55	17.08	17.52

CHAPTER #5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Advertisements often use men and women who are considered ideal in order to appeal to the customer. This sets a standard to look a certain way although the general public does not usually match these standards. By focusing on people's desire, the media are able to market products and ideas which set up people for failure and frustrated feelings. Many women of normal weight believe they are truly overweight due to the standards set by advertising. These ads consistently set unrealistic and unhealthy standards which Kilbourne focuses on in her book. The themes I focused on when analyzing the ads were all apparent for both men and women. There is a constant desire to have a thin, perfect body along with maintaining youth. All of these are associated with remaining sexy and dealing with one's physical appearance.

> How do these images affect us as women? The tyranny of the ideal image makes almost all of us feel inferior. An internal voice rages at us: You are fat. You are ugly. Your thighs are like jelly. You have cellulite. You have pimples. You have vaginal odor.

> You hair is drab. Your skin is dry. We are taught to hate our bodies, and thus learn to hate ourselves. This self-hatred takes an enormous toll. There is convincing evidence that negative body image leads to negative self-image, reflected by feelings of inferiority, anxiety, insecurity, and depression (Freedman 1986; Wolf 1991).

Men now also feel the pressure to have the perfect, muscular body. Ads focus on men's need for money to be considered successful, sexy, and tough.

Using content analysis to analyze these ads, was a very useful method. With content analysis, I was able to compare the content of the various magazines and analyze it with quantitative techniques.

The findings were consistent with the literature review along with Kilbourne's findings. They were also for the most part consistent with "current wisdom". This research study is consistent with and adds to the research base and will hopefully help both men and women to reject damaging stereotypes.

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