ABSTRACT

Individual Body Satisfaction and Perception: The Effect of the Media's Ideal Body Image
on Female College Students

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Throughout history societies have focused on beauty and body shape.
Researchers have studied the social and cultural factors that contribute to the formation of
an ideal body image. Many researchers agree that western society has created a thin ideal
body image. This image is communicated in the mass media. The thin ideal body image
is found in beauty and fashion magazines, television programming and on Internet sites.
This research sought to determine the correlation between media consumption and body
dissatisfaction, as well as the motivation to change one's body. A survey was conducted
on college age women to gather information. In general, this research found moderate
correlations between these factors.

Individual Body Satisfaction and Perception: The Effect of the Media's Ideal
Body Image on Female College Students

by

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Chloe Marshall is not the average beauty queen. She is 5 feet 10 inches tall, weighs 176 pounds and wears a size 16. However, she was one of contestants in the 2008 Miss England pageant. The media swooned around Marshall after her local win in her hometown area of Surrey. She was not only a spokesperson for plus-size figures in England; the media elevated her platform to a more global scale. ABC News featured Marshall's success with an interview on March 26, 2008. "I know I will stand out from [the thinner candidates] but in a good way. I want to bring plus-sizes back, and I want to show teenagers that you can be beautiful whatever size you are," Marshall said in the interview (Bambuck, 2008). Marshall's satisfaction with her figure and mission to help other girls experience the same contentment comes in response to the thin ideal body image that is stressed in many areas of the media.

Her success has not been without opposition. She has received negative barbs from other media venues arguing that she is not an appropriate role model. "What she's demonstrating isn't bravery but a shocking lack of self-control. Instead of flaunting her figure, Chloe ought to own up to the truth. She is fat and she got that way by over-eating," columnist and former Miss England judge Monica Grenfell said. Grenfell went on to say that Marshall's message is very dangerous to other young women, telling them it is acceptable to be fat. Grenfell's argument has received its own backlash in the media as well. ABC News reported that doctors at the Obesity Research Center at St. Luke's

Hospital in New York City agree with Marshall. She is normal with a body mass index of 26.03, where 30 indicates obesity (James, 2008).

Marshall is not the first young woman to bring the issue of body image into the spotlight. She is one of many in the fight against size discrimination, which has become a targeted problem in media effects research. In 2004, Dove began a campaign geared toward reshaping the standard of beauty in advertising. The Campaign for Real Beauty tackles advertising and ethics of images and photography techniques used in advertising. It attempts to establish a new standard of beauty that competes with the current one that promotes an unrealistic thin-ideal beauty image. The campaign itself contributes to the idea that advertising with one type of model is ethically flawed. In the past three decades, the advertising and fashion industry have celebrated a thin male and female body type. Dove has tackled this concept, as well as the moral and ethical issues of photo manipulation, eating disorders, dieting ads, and self-esteem. It uses women who vary in size, shape and height as models in its advertisements, promoting the idea that any woman can be beautiful. Its Web site devotes itself to media literacy for pre-teen, teenage and adult women. It provides information for individuals to hold "Real Beauty" workshops for girls. It has a section dedicated to girls and teens that includes body image quizzes, discussion boards and information about self-esteem. It explains how advertisers use digital manipulation with photos, and it provides resources for women to hold workshops on self-esteem for girls. Its mission is to further "the idea that real beauty comes in many shapes, sizes and ages." It is designed to create debate about the definition of beauty in society. (Lagnado, 2004) It has also produced commercials themed around the influence of a thin, flawless body ideal on today's women and

children. Dove's short video "Evolution," which looks at photography techniques and digital photo manipulation, won an award for advertising at the Cannes film festival in 2007 (Garfield, 2006) (Wentz, 2007).

Dove states on its Web site that its message takes the approach of using everyday women in advertising to a new level in an effort to turn "standard beauty-marketing practices on their head." Dove goes on to say that it does not have the authority to insist that other beauty companies change their approach, but hope that its campaign sets a precedent and will inspire others to think about the ethical implications surrounding the way women are represented in the media. (Lagnado, 2004)

Purpose and Scope of the Report

Dove's actions indicate an understanding of the ubiquitous presence of beauty messages in the media and the effects that they can have on a person's body image. It is difficult to turn on a television set or open a magazine and not be infiltrated with images of the ideal beauty type. Beauty is one of the most popular topics on television shows, in women's magazines and in advertising. Research in this field suggests that the number of advertisements seen per day varies from 400 to 600 to more than 3,000 per day. It is also suggested that at least 56 percent of commercials geared toward women speak about beauty. Major fashion and women's magazines provide readers with tips about how to look great by swimsuit season, how to get tighter thighs in one week, how to use makeup to camouflage wrinkles and how to look like a favorite star. In women's magazines, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the featured articles and advertisements (Lagnado, 2004). In today's ever-changing technological world, new forms of media

surface finding new ways to convey messages of the thin ideal body image. In the past 15 years, the Internet has become a strong media force. From personal Web sites to social networking groups to television network online communities, spreading a social message has become something that anyone can do. Companies now allocate a substantial part of their budgets on Internet advertising to promote products and ideas. These advertisements appear on all forms of Internet sites and are often blurred with forms of entertainment and news.

Research suggests a positive relationship between media consumption and the level of body image satisfaction. Researchers have studied the connections between magazine readership and television consumption with a cultural ideal body image. The media have been scrutinized as contributing factors in the cause of eating disorders in men and women, as well as in psychological disorders and emotional discontentment. They also have been linked to the origin of an established thin ideal body image in society. The Internet provides a new form of media that can have the ability to perpetuate this ideal, as well as influence actions and emotions dealing with body image, just as older forms of media have been shown to do. This study examines different forms of media consumption and their effect on body image and actions taken to alter one's body image. It will look at the differences of effect on body image satisfaction between television, magazine and Internet consumption. It will also evaluate levels of total media consumption and body image satisfaction and beliefs about the media with respect to a thin ideal body image.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

Beauty Advertising: An Overview

Media theorists argue over the effects media have on consumers. Some believe that the media have a strong persuasive tendency, while others believe that the media do not have power to influence one's actions and beliefs in a significant way. The full intention of advertising is to seek an effect. Forms of advertising have been around for centuries, however in the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries advertising has evolved into a ubiquitous industry. Women are the primary target of advertisers. In the past century, American culture has become more consumer-driven than ever before and with this trend, advertisers have worked to find more ways to sell products. They play on the ever-increasing peer-conscious society and used cultural beliefs of the times to encourage responses to their claims.

Twentieth and twenty-first century beauty industry advertising developed as a response to Victorian standards for women. Advertisers took advantage of the changing culture. Women were breaking free from the cultural expectations established by the Victorian idea about women being feeble and meek, as well as quiet and reserved socially outside of the home. (Wolf, 2002) In the 1860s and 1870s, women made moves in education. At the same time, the mass production of women's magazines occurred with the onset of *The Queen* and *Harper's Bazaar*. Beauty images in magazines aimed toward women commenced at this point. However, mass amounts of advertising aimed toward women did not surface until the turn of the century.

In the twentieth century, advertisers increased the usage of guilt as a tactic in order to persuade consumers. Advertising aimed toward teenage girls made use of this technique. Advertisements told girls they need to be the "popular girl" and the "athletic girl" in order to "get the boy." This type of mentality was seen as early as the 1920s in advertisements. A popular nutrition drink mix, Postum, advertised to teen girls in magazines by using a guilt mentality. Advertising account executives wrote a scenario involving a group of high schoolers questioning whether or not to invite a girl named Virginia to a party. The advertisement indicated that Virginia is not the type of "fun girl" that one would like to be with because she is not as athletic and active as the other girls. This is a complete opposite ideal than the preferred Victorian one of sedentary females. (Jacobson, 2004) Advertisements began to urge girls to scrutinize their appearance in order to become a vision of true femininity. In the 1920s, girls professed symptoms of depression when it came to the concern they had over their physical appearance. In her book *Raising Consumers,* Lisa Jacobson writes about a high school girl's diary entry. She writes, "the diaries of Yvonne Blue and Helen Laprovitz, both high school students in the 1920s, revealed an obsessive concern with physical appearance, peer approval, and the image they projected to the world." She argues that these girls experienced times of prolonged "self-scrutiny." She attributes this to the rise in movies, mass-market advertising and celebrity culture, all of which promote a beauty conscious society. (Jacobson, 2004)

During the first half of the twentieth century, advertising aimed at women attempted to persuade by virtuous appeal. The ads asked women to be socially aware, especially with the national demands of World War II. Advertisements called on women

to consume in ways that worked for the betterment of their country. The implication was it was their patriotic duty to buy the right kind of soap or the most ethical type of shoes. (Wolf, 2002) In the 1950s, advertising aimed at women shifted to perpetuate the concept of the ideal housewife. The shift occurred in response to the consumer-driven mentality in the United States post World War II. (Wolf, 2002)

In modern times, women's magazines have focused heavily on beauty rather than housework or moral virtues. Magazines stress that virtue and heroism for women is based on beauty and a woman's ability to keep up her looks.   The ideal beauty that is present in advertising today portrays a woman who is thin, young and without imperfection. Magazines promise women that they will tell them what men want and how to achieve it. Most articles agree that this involves a thin figure. Dieting advertisements and articles increased steadily in the latter part of the twentieth century. From 1968 to 1972, the number of diet articles and ads increased 70 percent. Because magazines promote themselves as invisible mentors to admire and from which to take advice, this volume of increase may have had an effect on the ever-increasing thin ideal body image. (Wolf, 2002)

As the number of women's magazines increased in the 1980s and 1990s competition began to drive the way advertisements influence the content. The ads in magazines began going to extremes for sales and used influential ways to drive the type of articles that accompany them. Naomi Wolf (2002), in *The Beauty Myth*, writes that when you read about skin care products and diet plans you are not reading free speech, but a blurred line between editorial freedom and the demand of a consumer-driven free market. In the same way, television and the Internet have the power to present the same

type of messages as seen in magazines. Advertisers use all forms together to reach the largest audience possible and, as a result, spread messages about ideal beauty.

Body Image

Body image is closely related to self-esteem, psychological health, eating habits and exercise habits. It is a common theme in print media, either depicted in photographs or as featured content in articles. The choice of photos and articles in magazines and newspapers pertaining to the body has been shown to affect the way a woman feels in relation to her body. The media is said to perpetuate one ideal body type in society by featuring thin models and celebrities in photos and writing about ways to obtain the perfect look.

A cultural ideal body image is an idea created in society through media, public figures and relationships. However, one's own body image is established internally. Body image is defined as positive or negative satisfaction with one's own body size (Eggermont, 2005). Body image also deals with the perception of one's body shape and perceived social value. Body image perceptions are developed by a combination of different external forces. Research studies have sought to determine an understanding of how body image is constructed. Several definitions have developed in studies concerning how a person appraises his or her body. Size and weight are important elements in determining the evaluation of body image. Other working research definitions present body image as an internal suffering resulting from dissatisfaction of one's body or internal approval resulting from satisfaction one's body (Tait, 2007). Body image is also measured by the way a person compares herself to others and by the steps taken to manipulate one's body to achieve a standard set forth by a force in society, such as eating

and exercise habits. This research will use a conceptual definition of body image as the satisfaction level one has with his or her own body. This level is developed through various external and internal comparisons.

Body image is also closely related to the constructs of self-esteem and emotional stability (Wykes & Gunter, 2005). Other relevant concepts include body dissatisfaction and body size. Levels of body dissatisfaction are measured in studies inquiring about the effect of the media on body image, while overestimation of body image is more closely related to studies primarily dealing with eating disorders (Holmstrom, 2004). The level of acceptance and satisfaction with one's body image is also a key factor in determining the likeliness of individuals to develop an eating disorder or emotional disorder (Jarry & Kossert, 2006). Studies use self-objectification as a way to determine the effects on body image. This term refers to the way that women view themselves as something to be valued by others. It also focuses on external appearance rather than internal qualities. (Monro & Huon, 2005)

In the United States, the ideal body image has changed in the past century, as seen in the differences between the size and shape of fashion models and Hollywood stars of the past and today. As body image changes over time, the population changes how it compares its own image to the evolving media portrayals of perfection. The media have changed their standards for what is allowed to be printed throughout the decades. Studies show that change has occurred over time due to trends in fashion and society. The changing standards of society have relaxed the content of media, allowing for more exposure to images that were not socially acceptable in earlier times or presently in other cultures. Also, there are now more articles focusing on diet and exercise than in previous

decades. Eggermont's (2005) article states that many girls, who could be considered anorexic by the Body Mass Index (BMI), are featured in these articles and advertisements exposing more skin than ever before. The content of articles and images today would promote shocking reactions to media consumers in past decades and centuries. Statistically women in America are growing heavier. However, models and beautiful women are portrayed in the media as thinner, promoting a thin body ideal. The ideal body image, or what is considered beautiful in today's society, is becoming slimmer. (Pipher, 1994)

Body Discrimination

It is argued that a cultural ideal body image is measured by a stereotypical image emphasized by the media and society. Just as racial and ethnic discrimination has historically defined social injustice in the United States, body type discrimination finds its place as another standard by which people classify and judge others. It is more ignored than the heavily researched and discussed racial, gender and sexual discriminations, but it is apparent that physical appearance plays a role in social relations and psychological functioning (Jackson, 1992). The way one is perceived or stereotyped in social, educational and work situations is said to have an impact in the type of relationships that are formed, including ones that foster social, work and relationship success. Research shows that people are judged or perceived in accordance with what is seen as the social ideal body image. People deemed as the attractive members of society may enjoy advantages in life. In contrast, those who do not meet society's standards may face obstacles based on stereotypical beliefs, such as the idea that overweight people are lazy and uneducated (Lavin & Cash, 2000). Many researchers agree that this standard is

established by the media and upheld by society in a variety of ways. It is suggested that the media help to convey messages that support reasoning and justification behind body discrimination. Body stereotyping is linked to media exposure of discriminatory messages in the news and entertainment media (Lavin & Cash, 2000). These same messages are also related to feelings of despair and social worthlessness in those who suffer from poor body image satisfaction and negative self-esteem (Lavin & Cash, 2000).

Body shapes are classified in a variety of ways. Some researchers use polygon terms to describe different body shapes, such as triangle, inverted triangle, and rectangle. Other research classifies body shape into three main types, ectomorphic (thin build), endomorphic (fat build) and mesomorphic (muscular build). Each body shape comes with preconceived stereotypes. According to research, mesomorphic people have been associated with qualities of strength, happiness and dominance. Endomorphic people have been associated with being lazy and unattractive, while the ectomorphic type is seen as being submissive and nervous (Sheldon & Stevens, 1942). In the past century, society's preference of body types in the media has shifted from being mainly mesomorphic to more ectomorphic (Spillman & Everington, 1989). The social expectations of a particular body type may encourage members of society to look at people with an endomorphic body under the associated qualities, furthering the ways people discriminate each other.

Media Theory

Media effects are widely explored and have been the topic of extensive research. When studying the effects of the media, it is important to understand how researchers classify the media. One technical definition states, "The media are defined as channels

for transmitting messages to a particular audience in a way to attract and condition their attention for repeat exposure (Potter & Riddle, 2007)." This research looks at three forms of media that transmit messages: television, magazines and the Internet. Researchers conclude that television and magazines present an ideal depiction of beauty and popularize ideas about body size and beauty. Through repeat exposures, the public internalizes these messages, and research shows that different effects surface due to a culturalized beauty ideal. The media work to maintain an audience by connecting to consumers and creating a need for products or information. Women's magazines usually include a health and beauty section, as well as food ideas and tips. These sections are sometimes disguised as providing helpful and problem-solving articles. However, the main message that is stressed is in line with the promotion of the thin ideal body image (Wykes & Gunter, 2005). With the advent of the Internet, magazine publishers and television networks have new opportunities to connect to consumers. They have multiple ways of contacting an audience and more ways to create a community to build relationships that generate a need for their product.

Researchers working with media effects and body image have based their work on the social comparison theory, along with the cultivation theory. The social comparison theory hypothesizes that individuals establish their identity, including body image, through making comparisons between themselves and others (Festinger, 1954). This theory gathers information about how a woman evaluates her status in relation to others "in terms of attributes, skills and social expectations" (Krayer, Ingledew & Iphofen, 2007). The social comparison theory posits that people use self-evaluating comparisons to gather information in order to rank themselves among others. It suggests that people

use these comparisons to develop ideas about self-improvement and self-enhancement (Krayer et al, 2007). Researchers using this theory attempt to build a link between media consumption and attitudes and behavior. This model indicates that exposure to a cultural ideal in the media causes a person to attempt to emulate it.

Another common theory used in media research regarding effects on body image is the cultivation theory. It is a framework that suggests the more media people consume, the more they will perceive media content to be an infallible representation of reality. If the thin ideal body image presented in the media appears to be the only accepted one positively portrayed, media consumers may internalize this idea and react accordingly. The cultivation theory suggests that the media repetitively support a stereotypical cultural ideal. Exposure to this message helps cultivate the idea that these stereotypical messages are truth and the norm in society (Wykes & Gunter, 2005). This indicates that the messages in the media that focus on a thin ideal body image are taken as the stereotypical ideal, and all images that fall outside of this ideal are abnormal.

There are other media theories that relate to the study of media effects and body image, such as the objectification theory and the social cognitive theory. Fredrickson and Roberts' (1997) objectification theory indicates that sexual objectification of the female body, or the promotion of an ideal body image, produces negative consequences for women. This theory is used as the basis behind the belief that self-objectifying people define themselves in terms of how others perceive them. This means that body image is established by social comparison and third-person perception. Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) posit that the media's constant emphasis on body image adds to an embedded sexualized state of mind, meaning the main focus is on body image and appearance. The

social cognitive theory used in media research states that people learn and model the behaviors of others, which suggests the idea that women will reproduce the behaviors of women in the media that focus on obtaining the thin-ideal body image. Researchers have taken these theories and more to evaluate the effects media have on consumers. Their results support these theories with findings that suggest a correlation between media messages regarding body image and physical and psychological change.

Media Research

Numerous studies have sought to understand the effect body image can have on the decision to opt for a cosmetic surgery procedure or to develop a pattern of eating that causes physical harm to one's health in order to reach an ideal body image. Researchers have found an increase in eating disorders over the past decades and seek to understand the relationship between an ideal body image, or the way a person views his or her own physical body (Holmstrom, 2004). These ideal images have been attributed to reoccurring images presented in society. Body image has been a constant focus in culture. From the beginning of recorded history, the ideals of the body have been displayed in art across cultures. Although the idea of having an ideal body image in a culture has been unvarying, the actual image has changed throughout time and across cultures. There are statistics that suggest that the increase of media exposure positively correlates to an increased belief of an ideal body image. In the past century, the average amount of media exposure in society has grown tremendously. The media continue to change in form and ability to contact higher numbers of consumers. The media also continue to alter the standards of their content. Researchers argue over whether the media change to reflect changes in society or if they are a factor in the change. The

average size of models from the 1950s to the 1980s is documented as having decreased in weight and measurement. This decreasingly thin ideal female stereotype in the media is noted as being unrealistic by many researchers in comparison to the average healthy person (Eggermont, 2005). This concept presents the argument that the ideal body image portrayed by the media needs to be addressed in order to understand the consequences it may have on self-image and self-manipulation.

Maggie Wyke and Barrie Gunter (2003) conducted a content analysis of six major women's and teen magazines. This research shows a breakdown of the advertisements, beauty and fashion sections, feature articles and photos to which readers are exposed in women's magazines. The pages of *Glamour*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Marie-Claire* all were overwhelming populated with advertisements. Out of *Glamour's* 290 pages, 31 pages contained feature stories, 50 focused on fashion and beauty, while 125 were advertisements. In *Marie-Claire's* 354 pages and *Cosmopolitan's* 334 pages, the statistical breakdown of the size of sections was the same. Each magazine featured thin female movie stars or models. Each had a beauty feature article that dealt with how to deal with "problem figures." Articles included *Glamour's* "De-jelly your belly" and *Marie-Claire's* "Real Lives", which gave ways to deal with "odd body shapes." *Cosmopolitan* had a similar article about dealing with "problem figures." (Wykes & Gunter, 2005) These articles insinuate the idea that other body shapes are a problem in need of fixing. They suggest that when women do not have the specific one portrayed by the featured models and actors, they are in a fashion and image predicament. This discounts the research conducted over years about different body shapes, which notes how physical differences in hip-to-weight ratios are genetically passed down and how

they are affected by fat distribution due to sex hormone levels (Singh, 2006). The majority of advertisements noted in the content analysis dealt with promoting beauty. The advertisements promoted products promising to make one "smell sexier," to deal with menstruation "discreetly," to shape and smooth out bodily imperfections with creams and cosmetic surgery and to reach a perfect hair color (Wykes & Gunter, 2005). Advertisements in magazines back up these standards by selecting only models with the ideal body size and shape to help market products and by implementing forms of photo manipulation to produce a perfected image for readers to yearn.

Research shows that body image is one of the main concerns of women, both young and old. A study conducted in 1989 found that more than three-quarters of girls between the ages of 13 and 18 wanted to lose weight and two-thirds had dieted in the past year. Eight percent of the females in the study admitted to having vomited in the last year in order to lose weight, 17 percent admitted to having used diet pills and 7.6 percent could be considered anorexic. (Wykes & Gunter, 2005) Another study on college-age females revealed that 20 percent of participants claimed to have self-starved in order to lose weight (Pyle *et al*, 1990). Other studies show that an overwhelmingly majority of women is dissatisfied with their weight and shape. More than 50 percent of women claim the desire to lose weight (Coughlin and Kalodner 2006). One study shows that 15 percent of women participants would sacrifice five years of their lives to be at their desired weight (Garner, 1997).

These statistics indicate that body dissatisfaction in women has become the norm in society, instead of the exception. This trend is also seen in an increased number of cited cases of eating disorders. Studies show that individuals with significant body

dissatisfaction are more at risk for developing eating and psychological disorders (Thompson, Heinber, Altabe & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999). Along with the descriptive studies about women and body perceptions, an alarming number of studies shows that exposure to thin media images contributes to negative body image and presence of eating disorders in women. In a study of college-age women, media exposure of thin models in magazines is positively related to disordered eating (Stice & Shaw, 1994). E. Stice, an expert researcher in the field of the media and body image, has linked exposure of thin models to a variety of negative physical and psychological reactions. Stice and Shaw (1994) provide two reasons to explain the idea that media contribute to the development of eating disorders. They theorize that thin ideal body images in the media may produce negative mood states in women, which can increase over time due to repeated exposure. Over time these negative moods develop into states of depression, anxiety, insecurity, negative self-appraisals and low self-esteem. All of these are factors found in researching the causality of disordered eating. (Stice, Shupak & Shaw, 2004)

Other research suggests that specific exposure to thin female main characters in television programs, as well as thin fashion models in women's magazines, relates to expressed symptoms of bulimia and anorexia (Hawkins et al, 2004). This research found that participants exposed to thin ideal body images are less satisfied with their bodies than those who were not exposed to these images. Along with body dissatisfaction and body size over-estimation, Irving (1990) found that research participants exposed to images of thin models experienced a decrease in self-esteem. This "thinness-depicting and promoting media" also is found to be a predictor for a personal drive for thinness and perceived ineffectiveness in women (Harrison & Cantor, 1997).

Diagnosed anorexic and bulimic women overestimated their actual body size by 25 percent after viewing images of thin women, according to a study reported by the American Psychiatric Association (Hamilton & Waller, 1993). This is in agreement with other research in this field. A qualitative study involving discussion sessions with women who have diagnosed eating disorders reported that some of the women admitted to having cut out photos of models from magazines and pinned them up to encourage them to stop eating. They also revealed that fashion and beauty magazines provided a source of role models. They believed that the models, thin women in successful positions, justified their desire to act in any manner to achieve the ideal body. (Wykes & Gunter, 2005)

Stice, Schupak-Neuberg, Shaw and Stein's (1994) research on ideal body stereotype internalization and body dissatisfaction found that magazine readership is indirectly related to eating disorder tendencies in female college undergraduates. Young girls are also affected. More than 6.5 million adolescent females read the top three teen magazines, *Seventeen*, *Teen* and *YM*, each month. Three-fourths of white females between the ages of 12 and 14 are reported to read at least one magazine regularly. These readers admit to finding some form of identity development and gender expectations through their readings. (Thomsen, Weber & Brown, 2002) These numbers indicate that magazine readership is something that needs attention. The messages sent out to minors are of concern to parents, as well as society as a whole.

The content of women's magazines has been under scrutiny for decades. The feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s exploited the gender stereotyping occurring in women's magazines in the past (Schlenker, Caron & Halteman, 1998). However,

researchers suggest that this stereotyping has evolved from that of a woman enslaved by her kitchen and cleaning to one held captive by society's expectations of her body image. Eileen Guillen and Susan Barr's (1994) study of magazine content showed an increase in the number of nutrition-related and fitness-related articles between the years 1970 and 1990. Their research found that the content of these articles focused on plans to lose weight and ways to become more attractive.

Another content analysis concerning body image and the media examined the content of *Seventeen Magazine* for the years 1961, 1972 and 1985. This study looked at the impact of the feminist movement on the content of magazines. The results showed slight changes in the messages portrayed in the magazines. At least 60 percent of the articles dealt with beauty, cooking, decorating and fashion, all topics considered to reinforce the stereotypical role of women who are concerned with appearance, household matters and attracting the opposite sex. (Peirce, 1990) Jennifer Schlenker, Sandra Caron and William Halteman (1998) further researched this topic and included the year 1995, along with other years in the same decades used by the first study. Results gave evidence for a connection between the content of *Seventeen* magazine and the feminist movement. The majority of articles remained focused on beauty and appearance. (Schlenker, Caron & Halterman, 1998) The content of teen magazines is critical due to how targeted the magazines are toward teenage girls (Peirce, 1990).

The trend in magazines that focuses on physical health and fitness attempts to take the primary spotlight away from appearance. However, the number of weight loss and dieting articles that dominate women's magazines blurs the line. The emphasis on body image in magazines aimed toward women is also seen in the number of articles

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published having to do with weight loss and dieting. The number of weight loss articles published in women's magazines is 13 times greater than those regarding body size in men's magazines. On average, there are six times as many beauty-focused articles in women's magazines as opposed to men's magazines. Women's magazines also featured 10 times as many dieting advertisements than did men's magazines. In addition to the number of advertisings, an analysis of *Teen* magazine found that 100 percent of pages in a random selection were found to depict the thin body ideal in images. (Wykes and Gunter, 2005) This indicates that women's magazines are focused on helping women improve their appearance or reach an ideal social standard, such as the thin ideal body image depicted in magazines images.

One study sought to examine the influence of the thin ideal body image for women in magazines by testing the relationship between the number of magazine articles read and actions taken for weight loss. Around 5,000 middle school and high school students were questioned about their magazine consumption. They were asked about how often they read articles where dieting and weight loss are discussed, as well as questions about participating in weight loss behaviors, such as taking diet pills and skipping meals. A large percentage of girls noted reading magazine articles pertaining to weight loss and dieting on a regular basis. Strong associations were found between the number of articles read and weight control behaviors. Factors such as depressive symptoms, low self-esteem and low body image satisfaction also correlated with weight loss behaviors. Frequency of reading dieting magazine articles related to unhealthy weight control actions, such as binging and purging and meal skipping. The most common cited influence on the desire to be thin was the influence of models and the

media. (Utter, Naumark-Sxtainer, Wall & Story, 2003) This research supports the idea that magazine article content attributes to negative body image and the desire to assimilate to the cultural thin body ideal.

Most of the articles in the study placed partial or full blame on the media's influence as a cause for disordered eating habits. Other cultural and social factors were sometimes overshadowed by the direct blame toward the media, specifically magazine articles and photos. This research suggests that articles about eating disorders in magazines do not capture the whole picture by framing the situation. They stereotype the condition. The researcher also credits the lack of articles about the issue to the idea that magazines would not want to "disrupt their diet-friendly editorial environment." With the advertisement-to-article ratio at ten-to-one, the majority of women's magazines are dependent on obtaining advertisements that are focused on the woman demographic, with one large advertising component of women's magazines being the dieting and weight loss industry. (Bishop, 2001)

Harrison and Cantor (2000) also studied the different messages perceived from fashion magazines and fitness magazines. They found significant relationships between reading fashion magazines and body dissatisfaction. Health and fitness magazine reading produced a drive for a desired thinness through dieting and exercise.

Research also suggests that the relationship between females and the media may contribute to the number of females who diet. As many as two-thirds of all high school females state they are either on a diet or are planning to diet. Research shows that what society considers as normal eating habits now actually resembles traditional views of disordered eating. It is generally believed that women's magazines' emphasis on the thin

body ideal encourages females to take measures in order to obtain this ideal. Research

concerning the use of pathogenic dieting methods indicates that the consumption of

women's magazines moderately correlates to the use of appetite suppressants, weight

control pills, as well as skipping meals and intentional vomiting after meals. (Thomsen,

Weber and Brown, 2002)

Ethical Analysis: Thin Ideal Body Image

Studies regarding media and body image are not geographically limited to one

area. Effects have been noted globally, as in the case of Fiji women studied in 1998. In

the three-year period after television was introduced in rural Fiji, 15 percent of teenage

girls developed bulimia. The study stresses the idea that society needs to be aware of

how vulnerable women are to images in the media in order to prevent eating disorders

and other dangers associated with body image (Becker, 2004). Another study conducted

in Singapore shows that research participants' perception of media effects on themselves

was positively associated with the intention to adopt weight loss behavior (Chia, 2007).

The international fashion industry has been attacked in response to the use of

ultra-thin models in fashion advertisements and on runways. Madrid banned overly thin

models from the catwalks at a high fashion show in 2006 in response to protests claiming

that girls and young women develop eating disorders while trying to copy the "rail-thin"

looks. Thirty percent of models were banned after not meeting the requirement of falling

into a healthy weight category according to the Body Mass Index. Milan officials placed

a similar ban on their high fashion shows. Advocates for the ban have attempted to

encourage American fashion shows to do the same. France, the capital of high fashion,

adopted a law banning the creation of Web sites and magazines that promote eating

disorders with "thinspiration" starvation tips after the 2006 death of Brazilian model Ana Carolina Reston was caused by anorexia. (Carvajal, 2008)

<p style="text-align:center;">*Ethics of Advertising*</p>

As research regarding body image and the media has increased, the size of models used in magazines and advertisements has decreased. A content analysis of women and teen magazines between 1970 and 1990 shows that the hip-to-waist ratio of models has decreased over time (Martin & Gentry, 1997). Research also shows the same results in an analysis conducted on the hip to waist ratio of *Playboy Playmates*. Results show women became more tubular as time progressed between the years 1979 and 1999. This study noted there was a significant increase in bust size, as hip size remained the same or decreased. (Sypeck et al, 2006) The thin ideal woman used in advertisements and fashion is typically 15 percent below the average weight of women and represents a narrow view of female body types. Experts agree the body type of this woman is biogenetically difficult to achieve for the majority of women. (Hawkins et al, 2004)

If research suggests that satisfaction or dissatisfaction with body image positively relates to exposure to media images, ethically speaking the media industry should attempt to foster healthy body images, as well as promote a variety of body shapes and sizes to which most women can identify. The shape and size of models used in advertisements is a highly discussed topic in media ethics. Researchers in the fashion industry identify five major body types of women similar to the ones used in body image research. These include the triangle (upper body smaller than lower body), inverted triangle (upper body larger than lower body), rectangle (equal body proportions), hourglass (equally broad on bust and hips, with smaller waist), and oval (top and bottom are narrow, chest and

<p style="text-align:center;">23</p>

stomach are largest) (Simmons, Istook & Devarajan, 2004). The fact that five specific

body types are defined by those who study the female body emphasizes the idea that

more variety in advertising would better represent the truth.

The extreme conformity to a single body type in the media brings into question

the actions of advertising agencies, magazine editors and fashion designers. Is the

fashion industry promoting a product or a social standard of beauty and body image?

According to the ethical standards associated with marketing and advertising, methods of

product promotion should ethically follow certain standards. The TARES test, a popular

advertising test created by Baker and Martinson, asks five ethical questions pertaining to

the intent and content of ads. The first question asks if the advertisement is truthful in all

aspects. The second questions the authentic nature of the advertisement, asking if there is

a sincere need for the product in question. The third questions whether or not the

advertisement treats the receiver with respect. The fourth asks about the equity between

the sender and receiver of the message and considers the possibility that the

advertisement may downplay a group's intelligence or speaks to an audience on an

inappropriate level. The last question asks if the advertisement is socially responsible.

There are many advertisements present in the media that viewers may deem as

questionable, in regards to this last question (Patterson & Wilkins, 2008). The test

suggests that advertisers should consider the effects that their messages and content can

have on viewers. These questions are formulated under the belief that advertising can

have significant effects on its recipients. Advertising agencies, as well as magazine

editors and television producers, are responsible these ethical questions. However,

arguments are constantly made about the content in advertisements, regarding health concerns, sexuality and body image.

According to the recent bans on unhealthy models on the runways and in advertisements in Europe, society should hold these institutions accountable for their actions. Most of the research that has been conducted on the effects of thin body image media messages also perpetuates this thought. Statistics imply that consumers internalize the messages that the media promote about the ideal body image. These internatlized messages discriminate on a large percentage of the female population. Researchers suggest that media producers should feel obligated to monitor the content with the physical and emotional state of consumers in consideration. Another complaint about advertisements dealing with women is with the emphasis on the body. Advertising researchers conclude that the preoccupation with the body in the media makes society more susceptible to persuasion. One researcher quotes Plato, "The body intrudes . . . into our investigations, interrupting, disturbing, distracting, and preventing us from getting a glimpse of the truth" (Cohan, 2001). For centuries, the body has been an influential image in society. It is only made more publicly visible in the modern media.

The intent of advertising is to persuade an audience by conveying repetitive messages. This in turn can reinforce preconceived beliefs and develop new ones. Most advertisements are professionally developed to encourage reaction. With women being 80 percent responsible for consumer spending, advertisers concentrate highly on producing ads that get a strong message across focusing on feminine concerns (Cohan, 2001). They do this by creating a need and a solution. The thin ideal body image produces the need for products and services used to reach and maintain the ideal beauty

image. To maintain the need, the media appear to maintain an unobtainable ideal by the use of uniformly thin models. If society held the media responsible for the messages they are promoting regarding body image, women could be offered "a more human, approachable, intimate interpretation of beauty – more to do with inner beauty than an idealize, unattainable standard" (Cohan, 2001).

Photo Digital Manipulation

Technology continues to transform the way the media communicate. Not only have researchers concluded that the media use a thin ideal body image, they also perfect this image even more with the use of digital manipulation. Photographers and printers have used forms of photo-color correcting in the past, but with the popularity of photo manipulation programs such as Adobe Photoshop, they are now able to do much more. Digital manipulation of photos has become a commonplace practice, evoking questions about the legality and ethics of its use.

The National Press Professional Photographers established a digital manipulation code of ethics that lays out guidelines for media use of photo altering techniques. It states,

> As journalists we believe the guiding principle of our profession is accuracy; therefore, we believe it is wrong to alter the content of a photograph in any way that deceives the public. As photojournalists, we have the responsibility to document society and to preserve its images as a matter of historical record. It is clear that the emerging electronic technologies provide new challenges to the integrity of photographic images. In this light, we the National Press Photographers Association reaffirm the basis of our ethics: Accurate representation is the benchmark of our profession. We believe photojournalistic guidelines for fair and accurate reporting should be the criteria for judging what may be done electronically to a photograph. Altering the editorial content is a breach of the ethical standards recognized by the NPPA. (NPPA, 1991)

This standard is applicable to any form of media. Images presented to the public are trusted to be fair and accurate reports of reality. However, this has not been the case in the magazine industry, specifically regarding body image. Magazine editors have been more tolerant of digital manipulation than newspaper editors. There are differences to consider when examining the use of photo manipulation. Magazines appeal to specialized audiences. Women and men-targeted magazines are the focus of ethical discussion pertaining to digital manipulation of images to promote the thin ideal body image. Magazines face rigid competition in sales, and their research shows that front cover beauty sells their products. They also rely on photographs to attract readers. (Reaves, 1991) To maintain the thin ideal body image, magazines have routinely used digital manipulation to reshape a model or celebrity in a photograph. Even though the individuals in the photos, as well as the general society, have called on magazines publicly to stop the practice, the trend continues. The act of sliming down physically attractive fit people in photos illustrates the perceived need to continue the trend of the thin ideal body image regardless of the effects shown in research. Some magazines claim that they have artistic freedom. However, research shows that photo manipulation is a practice that has psychological and health consequences for its audience.

Even with the research conducted in the academic and health world, magazine and advertising editors claim that psychological damage due to media exposure is hard to detect (Cooper, 1998). Editors and advertisers dismiss the negative claims and profess the idea that slimming down legs and tightening a stomach are trivial and harmless acts (Reaves, Hitchon, Park &Yun, 2004). Advertising continues to promote the "natural look" with models when they actually result to the use of airbrushing and digital

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enhancement. When confronted with allegations of misleading their audiences,

publishers argue their art is exempt from rules and regulations. "This world is not reality.

It's just paper," digital retoucher Pascal Dangin said. Even though these artists claim

their product is above what is real, humans tend to believe what they see and feel

betrayed when they find out they have been deceived (Reaves et al, 2004). Research

supports this idea. Participants in a study were made aware of digital manipulation of

particular photos in magazines and admitted to feeling manipulated and misled. They

believed the digital manipulation to be unethical and dishonest, as well as unfair to both

female and male media consumers (Reaves et al, 2004). The overall consensus of the use

of digital manipulation on body size in magazines and advertisements is negative.

Reactions to the revelations of photo manipulations have drawn press coverage

and are a popular topic of discussion in the media. Celebrities like Kate Winslet have

complained after altered photos of them appeared in a magazine. *GQ Magazine* admits to

having slimmed Winslet down (Wykes & Gunter, 2005). CBS felt it necessary to slim

down Katie Couric in a photo promoting her as the first female news anchor on a major

network channel. The network bought into the thin ideal body image mentality during a

break through event for women. Martha Stewart protested a photo used by *Newsweek*

that used her head on a model's body. The magazine focused on Stewart's release from

prison, noting her as "thinner and wealthier." *Redbook* reduced the size of Faith Hill's

arms and waist in a cover photo. America Ferrera, famous for her curvy body shape and

size was pictured on the cover of *Glamour* looking sizes smaller than reality. Emma

Watson, a long-standing character in the *Harry Potter* series, was featured in a poster

promoting *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. The designers of the poster

enlarged Watson's chest size to enhance her sexuality. At the time Watson was only 17

years old. These and other examples illustrate the emphasis advertisements and

magazines place on representing the thin ideal body image and perfected beauty. All

imply that even celebrities are not beautiful enough for publication. When photos are

manipulated, they send the message that all models and celebrities are able to reach and

maintain the ideal image.

New Media: The Internet and Advertising

The effectiveness of magazine and television advertising techniques has been

studied in the past. Internet advertising effectiveness is a newer field of research and one

that is broader in definition and complex in its capabilities. Research shows that the

female body exhibited online complies with the thin ideal body image found in other

forms of media. Magazine content online follows the same format as print, but most are

free. However, these online magazines are said to be little more than advertisements for

the print edition. (Wykes & Gunter, 2005) This research includes a look at how Internet

advertising is used on social networking Web sites, such as Facebook and MySpace,

magazine Web sites and television network Web sites. Advertisers in the beauty and

fashion industry devote large sections of their budgets on new forms of spreading

awareness of their product, and they are able to reach a wider audience with the

advantages of using multiple forms of media. Because the Internet serves as a new form

of advertising, it also provides another way for the ideal body image to spread.

By 2002 more than 606 million people had Internet access worldwide (Cho,

2003). In 2008, a Pew Research Center poll found that 92 percent of those with

computers in their home have Internet access in their homes. Seventy-seven percent of

the population reported having a home computer. In 2001 companies devoted a total of $7.7 billion to Internet advertising. By 2005 the projected number of dollars spent was $23.5 billion (Cho, 2003). At this rate of increase, it is clear that advertising online is seen as an influential, important way to communicate with consumers. Weight loss companies, such as Jenny Craig and Weight Watchers, are turning to the World Wide Web to create communities in order to promote their products and services. These companies use blogging, a form of online personal diary entries, online commercials and downloadable tools, like recipes and calorie counters, for subscribers' convenience. (Lemonnier, 2008) The popularity of online dieting Web sites creates more options for consumers to come into contact with media promoting an ideal body image.

The Internet is increasingly used as a source of health information. One survey found that "diet, vitamin and nutritional supplements" were the third-most-searched topic on search engines. Many people view the Internet and the companies who advertise on it as trustworthy sources of healthcare advice. In 2005 a survey reported that more than two-thirds of participants searched for information about health and the ideal weight. Forty percent searched for information about fad diets such as the Atkins diet and the South Beach diet. (MedicineNet, 2006) A more recent survey found that more than 60 percent of Americans using the Internet search for information about weight loss and diets. In this survey three-quarters said that the information they found had a great impact on their decisions concerning weight loss. (ComScore Networks, 2006) These numbers reflect the idea that people access health information on the Internet due to its easy accessibility.

Search engines do not only bring up dieting Web sites when searchers use words specifically targeted for dieting. A search for the words "body image" on Yahoo.com resulted in a sponsored diet ads at the top of the page for WeightWatchers.com. Companies pay search engines for key words that trigger their sites to be featured in the results. With the media coverage about celebrities and weight, advertisers have also paid search engines for the ability to connect their products to searches for favorite Hollywood stars. A search for popular actress Jennifer Aniston brought up several diets featuring her body that claimed to be the diet that keeps her in shape. (Wykes & Gunter, 2005)

The problem with people seeking health and diet information on the Internet more and more is that there is lack of quality control of the material posted. There is little regulation for companies' advertisements on the Internet. However, Great Britain has established the British Code of Advertising (BCA), and the United States' Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has published several ways to spot false claims in weight loss advertisements. Great Britain's code contains regulations regarding the way a product or treatment be presented. "Slimming products" advertisements should reference clinical trials and should be advertised with the suggestion of medical supervision. They should not be aimed at people less than 18 years of age. The code regulates that the amount of weight loss per week should be advertised at no more than two to three pounds and should not claim that products can cause weight loss to certain parts of the body. (The Advertising Standards Authority, 1996) The U.S. FTC suggests the same type of information. It also adds that consumers should be aware of advertising that stresses the ability to cause substantial weight loss "no matter what or how much the consumer eats." The FTC also targets products that suggest substantial weight loss by "rubbing [a

product] into the skin." (The Federal Trade Commission, 2006) The U.K. controls the regulations while the U.S. puts out the guidelines for consumer use.

A 2000 survey found that out of 50 surveyed Web sites containing dietary advice, all but a few contained misleading information (Miles, Petrie, & Steel, 2000). In another survey, the British Advertising Standards Authority found that 40 percent of the dieting advertisements surveyed broke the codes established by the BCA. They also found that 80 percent of the advertisements claimed other problematic messages (The Advertising Standards Authority, 2006).

While some of these companies stress a healthy approach to weight loss, the ubiquitous presence of these advertisements on television, in magazines and on the Internet has the potential to add to the large presence of media that promote an ideal body image. Weight loss companies play on consumers' insecurities and use visual and written persuasive techniques to convince women they are in need of their product. For instance, Jenny Craig, a popular weight-loss company, placed advertisements on Women.com. A banner across the top of the Web page asked "[a]re you overweight? [c]lick here to find out." The photo associated with the advertisements showed a scale set at 130 pounds, which is not considered overweight for most American women (Carmichael, 1999).

There are several different tactics companies use when advertising on the Internet. One popular method is to create a Web page that promotes a service or product. These sites are the basis for online advertising. They also provide ways to make purchases and to create relationships between customers with the use of blogs and message boards. The company's main objective is to attract Internet users to its site. They do this by using a variety of techniques. Banners, sidebar advertisements and pop-up advertisements are

the most common ways companies advertise on other Web sites; however, new forms continually develop. Pop-up advertisements are considered by some to be invasive unethical forms of advertising online. Researchers have found that consumers catagorize them as Internet spam, telemarketing and junk mail. One commentator referred to pop-ups as "the single biggest annoyance on the Internet." Still, in 2004 they were noted as the fastest growing form of online advertising. (Oser, 2004) The problem with pop-up advertisements is not only with Web site consumers but also with other marketers. Pop-up ads can appear on sites without the Web site owner's permission. For instance, a person can visit an L.L. Bean Web site but receive a pop-up advertisement for a competitor's product. This type of action has brought lawsuits against the companies who use this technique. (Oser, 2004) Many advertising agencies warn against the use of pop-ups citing consumers negative perception of them. Pete Blackshaw (2003) says that pop-up ads run the risk of losing the respect of the consumer. He believes they are rude, aloof and indifferent to the impact of their actions. He notes that companies now sell pop-up blockers to help consumers filter the number of the ads that appear. In one week in 2003, 300,000 Internet users downloaded pop-up filters. Despite the negative attention and obstacles presented, companies continue to find pop-up advertising to be an effective way to attract the attention of consumers (Oser, 2004).

Another form of advertisement found on the Internet is the banner ad. These have become the most prevalent form of advertising on the Internet. Researchers have studied the effectiveness of banner advertisements by studying the "click-through" rates, which is sometimes the basis for the pricing of the ads. Chang-Hoan Cho (2003) found that the level of effectiveness of the banner ad is related to the product involvement level of the

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consumer. Those with a low-involvement level are less likely to click on the advertisement, opposed to those with a high-product involvement, or product knowledge. Cho also found that the size of the banner was a factor in effectiveness.

A newer form of online advertisement is in-text advertising. Advertisers pay for keywords in news stories to be linked to their Web page. For example, a Fox News Web site featured an Associated Press article with the headline "Home Depot to Label Green Products." This story contained three words that linked to advertising for light bulbs, Hoover vacuum cleaners and American Express cards. In this case readers choosing to read a journalistic article are subjected to advertisements for related and even non-related products. This type of advertisement blurs the line between journalism and advertising and brings up ethical questions about journalistic publications that use it. (Craig, 2007)

Researchers suggest that online advertisements may not be as effective as advertisers hope. It is said that consumers are less likely to pay attention to Web ads and purposefully avoid looking at them during online activities. However, other researchers suggest that advertisements' presence still have an effect due to implicit and explicit memory. (Yoo, 2007)

Beginning in 2005, television networks added Internet accessibility for their consumers' convenience. Disney ABC Television Group began offering television episodes for sale online through Apple's iTunes store. The shows ran without advertisements, but this changed in 2006 when Disney ABC began offering free episodes on the ABC Web site. It opened the episodes up as a place for advertisements to cover the costs. By 2007 all of ABC's primetime shows were available at no charge. ABC planned limited commercial breaks in each show for a single marketer to advertise.

These advertisements are multi-layered. Not only do the advertisements run like a

television commercial, they also have clickable links to their companies' Web sites.

Researchers have found that the effectiveness of these ads is high. An experiment found

that nine out of ten viewers rated their viewing experience positively. Eight-three percent

of participants were able to recall the brands that were advertised during the episode, and

24 percent reported they interacted with at least one advertisement during the show.

(Loughney, Eichholz & Hagger, 2008) Television network Web sites continue to grow in

popularity as consumers take advantage of their convenience. Not only are they using

advertisements in their online broadcasts, but they are also allowing companies to place

banner and sidebar advertisements. Many companies target audiences for their products

depending on the content and audience appeal of the shows on the network. If a show is

geared toward women, most of the time advertisements for beauty and weight loss

products appear frequently on the Web site.

      Television network Web pages are not the only places target marketing is used on

the Internet. Social networks and search engines are becoming popular places for

advertisers to gather information about potential consumers and advertisement

specifically to their target demographics. In December 2007 the FTC issued proposed

guidelines for online advertising to address the privacy issues brought about by target

marketing. Three of their guidelines are as follows:

> Every Web site where data is collected for behavioral advertising should provide
> a clear, consumer-friendly, and prominent statement that data is being collected to
> provide ads targeted to the consumer and give consumers the ability to choose
> whether or not to have their information collected for such purpose.
>
> Any company that collects or stores consumer data for behavioral advertising
> should provide reasonable security for that data and should retain data only as
> long as is necessary to fulfill a legitimate business or law enforcement need.

Companies should only collect sensitive data for behavioral advertising if they obtain affirmative express consent from the consumer to receive such advertising. (The Federal Trade Commission, 2007)

These guidelines have been the topic of discussion for social networking groups like Facebook, but these groups have worked to regulate their privacy policies to meet the guidelines. Facebook provides profitable demographics for many marketers. With more than 175 million registered users worldwide, Facebook is a medium where advertisers have a wide range of possible consumers (Facebook, 2009). Facebook's Web site claims that it collects the personal information listed by users including likes and interests, as well as the sites a person visits beyond Facebook by using cookies. These are pieces of data stored on a computer that are tied to information about the user's browser history. This information is shared with third-party advertisers. (Jones & Soltren, 2005) Some Web sites will allow consumers to opt out of "cookie collection," the marketers gather information about a person's online browsing experience. The problems with cookies do not come from major brands, but from "edgier" brands in areas such as nonprescription medicine, credit cards and weight loss. Sometimes they push too far against the privacy guidelines. But advertisers agree that target marking is a fixture on Web sites because consumers are not willing to pay for the content or service. Web sites need revenue; therefore, they turn to companies that chose to advertise to specific audiences. (Sherman, 2008)

Many marketers do not use social media to advertise; however, research found that 78 percent of marketers believe that social media provide a way to gain a competitive edge. Of those already using social networking sites to advertise, 88 percent planned on spending more of their budget on the venue in 2008 (Bulik, 2008). Target ads cost

significantly more than untargeted ads. For a behaviorally targeted ad a marketer may

pay $120 per thousand, but only $10 per thousand for a non-targeted one (Sherman,

2008). Nevertheless, marketers justify cost because this the way of advertising allows

them to seek out consumers who are more likely to purchase their specific product.

Statement of Hypotheses and Research Questions

Six research questions were developed from the survey questions. Each question

looks at contributing factors the media bring in the establishment of the ideal body image.

> RQ1: Do participants believe that the media should be held responsible for the
> messages they send out pertaining to body image?

> RQ2: Have participants noticed a change in the media's portrayal of the ideal
> body image since the onset of the 2004 Dove Campaign for Real Beauty?

Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty calls on the advertising world to be responsible

for the messages it sends out about an ideal body image. It works to create a healthy

variety of body types and sizes in its advertisements and campaign material. Research

question one is designed to gather information on the general public's response to the

reasons behind Dove's campaign. Research question two evaluates participants'

observation of the media's portrayal of the ideal body image. Dove calls on other beauty

and advertising companies to change tactics of promoting one ideal body image. This

question was designed to determine if participants have noticed a decrease in the number

of advertisements using a thin ideal body image since the beginning of Dove's Campaign

for Real Beauty.

> RQ3: What body image type do participants choose for the media's ideal body
> image?

> RQ4: What body image type do participants choose for their own ideal body?

Research shows that the ideal body image promoted by the media has decreased in size over the past five to six decades. The fashion industry has been criticized for about its use of underweight, unhealthy models to model clothing. Douty's (1968) body scale has five body sizes ranging from very underweight to very overweight. Participants in the survey were asked to choose the ideal body image promoted by the media from the scale. This question seeks to identify the body type most often used and noticed in the media. Research question four looks to compare the ideal body image in the media with how participants feel about their own bodies.

RQ5: What factors contribute to participants' body image satisfaction?

Although research seeks to find whether media exposure has the capability to influence one's body satisfaction, there are many other possibilities of influence. Research question five looks at the top five influences participants noted as influential in their body satisfaction. The other contributing factors from which participants chose are family, friends, faith, clubs, oneself and significant other.

RQ6: How often are participants exposed to thin ideal body image advertising on social networking sites?

As research shows, new media is another force in the propagation of a thin ideal body image. Magazines and television networks have online components that stress the same messages as their print and broadcast counterparts. Advertisers use these Web sites as platforms to attract customers just as with traditional forms of media. Social networking sites like Facebook are used by the majority of high school and college students and are becoming more popular with older populations. This new form of communication emphasizes the blurred line between mass communication and interpersonal communication that in the past was more defined. This question looks at

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the types of online media participants consume, as well as the presence of the thin ideal body image in advertising on social networking sites. These answers will provide a understanding of the impact new forms of media have on promoting the same stereotypes of body image that traditional forms have been proven to uphold.

Four hypotheses were developed for this study to understand the connection between media consumption and body satisfaction.

H1: There will be a negative correlation between media use and body satisfaction.

H2: There will be a negative correlation between Web site use and body satisfaction.

Research provides reasons to believe that media use and body satisfaction are negatively correlated. Body image is said to be one of the primary concerns of women, and research suggests that exposure to thin figures in the media has the power to influence satisfaction levels with a person's body. Research also shows the percentage of images in the media that depict a thin ideal body image is high; therefore, the amount of media a person consumes suggests that a correlation with body satisfaction will exist. Hypothesis one and two look at the combined scores that make up the body satisfaction level of the participants. These scores are compared to the amount of combined media participants intake to deduce a relationship between media exposure and satisfaction with one's body. Hypothesis two looks specifically at the use of Web sites and body satisfaction. There has been little research on Web site consumption and body satisfaction; however, the similarity between content on Web sites and traditional forms of media suggest similar results will occur.

H3: Those who consume a high level of media report more motivation to change their body than those with a low level of consumption.

Hypothesis 3 suggests that the level of media consumption relates to the motivation to change one's body. If media consumption relates to a body satisfaction level, this suggests that it can also have the ability to affect the desire to change one's body to meet a social standard. Research has shown relationships between exposure to thin body images and the desire to change eating and exercise habits; therefore, a relationship between the amount of media one consumes and the desire to alter one's body is possible.

> H4: Magazine and television consumption have more effect on motivation to change one's body than Web site use.

The amount of money and interest companies put into online advertising suggests that the power of advertising on the Internet is strong. The research conducted on the effectiveness of Web site advertising reveals varying results. It is unclear how effective its use is. Some researchers suggest that online advertising does not have the same effect as print and television advertising. This hypothesis suggests that online advertising is not as powerful as traditional forms due to the suggestion that people intentionally avoid Internet advertising during Web site browsing.

CHAPTER THREE

Method and Research Design

This study examined the effects of media on body image of women. For this

study, a survey was conducted. A questionnaire was given to 200 volunteer subjects at

Baylor University in various academic classes and at one Alpha Chi Omega sorority

meeting. The survey was designed to question beliefs about the media with respect to a

cultural ideal body image and personal body image satisfaction. The method of study

was selected to gather information about how different forms of media affect one's body

image. It also measured levels of media consumption in order to determine if the amount

of media consumed related to a body satisfaction level. The survey tested four

hypotheses dealing with media consumption levels and body image satisfaction and ideal

body image identification. It also answered five research questions pertaining to beliefs

about the media's relationship to a cultural ideal body image, as well as levels of

exposure to an ideal body image in new forms of media, such as the Internet.

Survey Design, Coding Categories and Procedures

The survey contained four sections of questions that were intermixed throughout,

leading to a total of 35 Likert Scale and multiple-choice questions and three free-response

questions. The Likert Scale answers ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Each section of the survey targeted a different component of the study. The first section

was a series of questions that asked about the media's portrayal of a thin ideal body

image. These questions asked for opinions about the media's depiction of women. For

example, one question asked women if they believe the media represent a realistic ideal body image for women. Another question asked about their familiarity with the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty, while another question asked about whether the media should have regulations regarding the weight and size of models used in advertisements and on fashion show runways.

The second section of the survey gathered information about the participants' own body image satisfaction. Questions in this section were borrowed from Garner's (1983) Body Dissatisfaction Scale and Douty's (1968) Body Size Scale. Garner's (1983) scale has been used in multiple body satisfaction studies, but was first used in Garner, Olmstead and Polivy's research concerning the development and validation of eating disorders in women. The scale was used to determine if body satisfaction was a contributing factor in the development of eating disorders. Douty's (1968) Body Size Scale was created to distinguish between body images in health related research. It was developed using silhouettes of women of various sizes in photos. It has also been used in assessing female body shapes in clothing and textile research (Connell, Ulrich, Brannon, Alexander and Presley, 2006). In these questions participants were asked about their satisfaction with specific areas of their body and about their body size and shape as a whole. They were also asked how they believed others view their body size. Another question asked participants to identify their ideal body image on the Body Size Scale.

The third part of the survey measured levels of media consumption. The survey focused on three different types of media: television, magazines and Internet. Participants were asked about how many hours of television they watch each week, along with the type of television shows they chose to watch. The survey asked the number of

magazines each participant read each month, as well as how often they visit magazine Web sites. Other questions in this section asked participants about their Internet use, specifically concerning social networking sites and television network Web sites.

The fourth section of the survey asked about actions taken to improve one's body image after media consumption. Participants were asked to note if they ever considered or purchased a product to help improve body image after viewing the ideal body image in an advertisement on television, in a magazine or on the Internet. They were also asked if they ever changed eating habits due to exposure to the thin ideal body image in the media.

The study looked at the differences of effects on body image satisfaction between the three different types of media, as well as an over-all media consumption and body satisfaction score. It also questioned beliefs about the media's role in creating an ideal body image and about the ethical responsibility the media have in promoting an ideal body image. The survey was designed to specifically examine new media and their role in the portrayal of a thin ideal body image.

For the results and analysis, statistical tests were run for each hypothesis and research question. Pearson correlation tests were used to test each hypothesis by comparing each factor against the other. For each research question, frequency tests were used to determine the mean of the population for each. These percentages give an account of the results of each survey question. The statistical program SPSS was used to measure the results of the findings.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

The survey instrument has the advantage of being designed with scales used in previous studies. The use of predetermined scales used in previous research concerning body image reduces the chance of error in determining a body satisfaction level of participants and the size of the media's ideal body image.

This study has several limitations. There was no major difficulty in administering the survey. However, the sample size was only 218 college-age females. A larger sample size of more than 300 would reduce the range of error in the results. The participants in the study came from Baylor University classes. The demographics of the sample were limited to the ages, ethnicities and educational levels of those on this particular college campus. The ability to compare a wider range of demographics would help bring depth to the study in order to evaluate if the correlation between media consumption and body satisfaction differ among various age, ethnic and educational categories.

When working with human participants there is always a possibility of error due to misreading or misinterpretation of the questions in a survey. Because of this participants' answers could not reflect true results.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results and Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

In total, 218 female students from Baylor University participated in the study. Baylor University is a large private Baptist university with more than 14,500 students where 58 percent of the student population is female and most are in the 18-to-23 age range (US News and World Report, 2008). The media consumption level of these participants is one of the main focuses of this study. Of the 218 survey participants, 99 percent are members of online social networking groups like Facebook or MySpace. Of those who are members, 27 percent said they check their online social networking group daily, while 63 percent check it several times a day.

Other forms of media consumption that were measured included hours and content of television watched per week and number of magazines read per month. Sixty-seven percent of participants said they watch zero to five hours of television each week. Twenty-two percent of the survey participants say they watch six to ten hours of television per week, five percent say they watch 11 to 15 hours, and four percent say they watch 16 to 20 hours of television each week. When asked if they watched reality television shows that deal with body image, beauty or weight loss 74 percent say they do. Out of this 74 percent, 18 percent said they watch these shows often. Thirty-five percent of participants note that they visit television network or show Web sites sometimes. When asked about magazine consumption 73 percent of participants say they read zero to two beauty or fashion magazines each month. Twenty-one percent said they read three to

five magazines a month, while 36 percent say they visit online components of beauty and fashion magazines.

These frequencies were compared to body satisfaction scores and the motivation to change one's body. Out of the 218 participants, 24 percent are satisfied with their body. Only one percent claimed to be very satisfied. Thirty-six percent are slightly dissatisfied, 34 percent are dissatisfied and five percent are very dissatisfied. When asked about reaction to seeing the thin ideal body image on the Internet, 44 percent of the participants said they experienced motivation to change eating habits and exercise habits in order to change their body. Forty-eight percent said they feel motivation to change their body after seeing the thin ideal body image on television and 50 percent say they are motivated to change after reading beauty or fashion magazines.

Survey participants were asked a variety of questions about the ideal body image in the media, as well as about responsibilities of the media. Respondents of the survey were critical of the body image promoted by the media with 84 percent disagreeing with the statement claiming that the "media represent a realistic body image" for women. Ninety-two percent agreed that the average model is thinner than the average woman. When asked if they believed the majority of advertisements in the media portray a thin ideal body image 90 percent agreed. Eighty percent believe the media have the power to change a person's body image.

Evaluation of Research Questions

To determine the answers for each research question, frequency tests were run to calculate the mean of each category.

RQ1: Do participants believe that the media should be held responsible for the messages they send out pertaining to body image?

Participants were mixed on the idea of media responsibility, with 50 percent of the survey population saying they believe that there should be regulations for the media regarding the promotion of a thin ideal body image. Twenty-five percent disagree that there should be any form of regulations in the media regarding body image, while 25 percent remain neutral on the issue.

RQ2: Have participants noticed a change in the media's portrayal of the ideal body image since the onset of the 2004 Dove Campaign for Real Beauty?

Out of the 218 participants, 83 percent said they were familiar with Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty. When asked if they believe there has been a change in the media since the beginning of Dove's campaign, 24 percent claim to have noticed a decrease in the number of advertisements promoting a thin ideal body image.

RQ3: What body image type do participants choose for the media's ideal body image?

RQ4: What body image type do participants choose for their own ideal body?

Participants were given Douty's (1968) body size scale from which to chose the ideal body image portrayed in the media. The body sizes ranged from very underweight to very overweight. Sixty percent chose the very underweight figure as the media's representation of the ideal body image. Thirty-three percent selected the underweight image and 5 percent chose the average size figure. When asked about their own ideal body, 8 percent chose the very underweight figure, 45 percent chose the underweight figure, 41 percent chose the average figure and 6 percent chose the overweight figure.

RQ5: What factors contribute to participants' body image satisfaction?

The top contributors aside from media influences listed by participants were friends, family, significant other and one's self. Seventy-three percent indicated that friends are significant factors in their body satisfaction. Fifty-three percent listed family, 30 percent listed significant other and 61 percent listed themselves as an important factor in determining their body image satisfaction. Other answers listed included clubs and organizations, faith and religious beliefs.

RQ6: How often are participants exposed to thin ideal body image on social networking sites?

While using the online social network group 46 percent said they noticed advertisements dealing with weight loss or beauty products very frequently. Twenty-five percent say they notice these advertisements often, while 20 percent said they sometimes notice weight loss and beauty ads.

Testing of Hypotheses

All four hypotheses were supported. A Pearson's correlation test was used to test each null hypothesis.

Pearson's correlation tests were used to measure the relationship between the two variables of each hypothesis. A critical value of $p < 0.05$ was used to determine significance.

H1: There will be a negative correlation between media use and body satisfaction.

For this hypothesis, three types of media use were combined to create a media consumption score. This included exposure to television, magazines and Web sites. For participants, there was a moderate negative correlation between media use and body satisfaction. As Table 1 indicates, Pearson's correlation test found a value of -.276 with a

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p-value of 0.01 indicating statistical significance. This means that the level of media

consumption is an indicator for body satisfaction scores, meaning that the more media a

person consumes the less satisfied she is with her body.

Table 1
Media Use and Body Satisfaction

	Media Use
Total Body Satisfaction	-.276

P< -.05

H2: There will be a negative correlation between Web site use and body
satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2 examined the relationship between Web site use and body

satisfaction. Previous research concerning media use and body image had focused

primarily on television and magazine consumption. This research sought to detect the

relationship between Web site consumption and body satisfaction. As Table 2 indicates,

there was a weak, negative correlation, -.164 (p < 0.05), indicating statistical significance.

This suggests a weak negative correlation between Web site use and body satisfaction.

Table 2 presents a summary of these findings. This indicates that there is a relationship

between Web pages visited and a body satisfaction score.

Table 2
Web site Use and Body Satisfaction

	Web Site Use
Total Body Satisfaction	-.164

P< -.05

H3: Those who consume a high level of media report more motivation to change their body than those with a low level of consumption.

Hypothesis 3 looked at the relationship between media consumption and the motivation to change one's body to meet an ideal body image. As in Hypothesis 1, television, magazine and Web site use were combined to create a total media use score. This score was compared to a variable calculated from answers to survey questions regarding the motivation to change one's body. A Pearson's correlation test found a value of .413 ($p < 0.01$). This suggests a moderate positive correlation between media consumption and the desire to change one's body in order to conform to the media's ideal body image. A summary of these analyses is presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Media Use and Motivation to Change One's Body

	Media Use
Total Motivation to Change	.413
P< -.05	

H4: Magazine and television consumption have more effect on motivation to change one's body than Website use.

Hypothesis 4 compares the individual effects of different forms of media on the motivation to change one's body. A Pearson's correlation test was used to calculate a variable for the use of media. Table 4 summarizes these results. A Pearson correlation of .333 ($p < 0.01$) suggested a moderate, positive correlation between television consumption and the motivation to change one's body. This suggests that the amount of television use is positively related to the desire to change.

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A Pearson's correlation test revealed a moderate, positive correlation between magazine consumption and the motivation to change one's body with a score of .373 (p < 0.01). The test also revealed a moderate positive correlation with Web site use with a score of .307 (p < 0.01). All three scores support Hypothesis 3. The difference in the Pearson correlations between the three forms of media indicates that there is a difference between the way each affect motivation. The scores for television and magazine consumption show a higher correlation to the desire to change one's body than Internet. However, the significance is not great between Web site use and television and magazine use. Table 4 illustrates the difference between the different variables.

Table 4
Difference in Media Use and Motivation to Change One's Body

	Motivation to Change
Total Television Use	.333
Total Magazine Use	.307
Total Web Site Use	.373

P< -.05

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

Summary of the Study

Wykes and Gunter (2005) conclude their book, *The Media and Body Image,* with a quote. "Each one of us has a complex lifelong relationship – with our body. We exult in it, feel betrayed by it and, given the chance, would change some aspect of it" (Adams, 2005). This summarizes the reason researchers place emphasis on studying the body, issues related to it and what affects it. The focus on women's bodies, rather than on inner attributes, appears to be how society deems the worthiness of women. "The female body is spectacle, both something to be looked at, whether real or mediated . . ." (Wykes & Gunter, 2005). It is clear that the media celebrate the female body by its prevalence in magazines, on television, on the Internet, and in all forms of advertising. It is important for society to consider how media representation of the female body can affect not only young girls, but also women of all ages. Women have come a long way in society in order to reach levels of equality experienced in government, education and the work place. These advantages do not mean that fairness in society has been achieved. Success for women is becoming more and more attributed to "having it all." This includes the perfect job, the best education, the ideal family and a flawless appearance.

This study was built upon prior research that connects media exposure to body satisfaction and the motivation to change one's body through dieting or exercise. It is based on studies that gathered information on the images in magazines and on television revealing a high level of thin ideal body images. Some media theorists believe the

messages the media present to society have the potential to create expectations and standards for people. In the case of the female ideal body image, this research suggests there is a correlation between the amount of media a woman consumes and the way she views her body. This study looked at the opinions of survey participants regarding the ideal body image present in the media. This research found that women believe the ideal body image in the media is not a realistic model for the average woman, but still feel motivated to alter their bodies to meet it. Most said they believe companies should employ more models and actors that vary in age, weight, size and ethnicity, as in the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty, in order to encourage a broader definition of what is an ideal healthy body.

There are concerns with the results of surveys pertaining to the trustworthiness of the participants. The credibility of participants' answers must be considered. Most of the results of the survey are logical by most standards; however, there are factors that may affect the answers given by the participants that inhibit collecting the full truth. One issue that may contribute to skewed answers is the social desirability bias. This suggests that respondents may answer questions in terms of what they believe to be more socially desirable. This may have contributed to the low levels of television consumption reported. Most participants reported watching zero to five hours of television each week, which by most standards is relatively low, especially for college students. These levels may also be attributed to the changing way television programs are viewed. The Internet, along with digital recording devices like TiVo, allows more flexibility in television viewing. They may not be regarded the same way as traditional television viewing.

It is also important to consider the Hawthorne effect when conducting research with human subjects. This effect is usually associated with participants in experiments, but should not be ignored in the case of surveys. This study involved a survey that asked questions similar to those in an interview. Although anonymity was maintained, individuals' responses may have been affected by the fact participants are aware they are being studied. The Hawthorne effect suggests that participants in research may alter their answers to either reflect a preconceived social standard or be biased to what they believe the research desires to find. Nevertheless, precautions were taken to minimize risks of these circumstances.

The first research question was based on a survey question that asked participants if they believed the media should be held responsible or should be given guidelines pertaining to the promotion of a thin ideal body image. Research found that 50 percent of the participants believe that there should be regulations. Twenty-five percent believed that no regulations should be made, while the remaining percentage remained neutral on the issue. There are several factors that may have contributed to these mixed results. For one, many of the participants were enrolled in classes in the journalism department at Baylor University. These classes teach students about First Amendment rights. Although something may seem ethically wrong for publication, it is acceptable if it falls under the right to freedom of speech and expression. Participants may believe that publishers and producers have the right to depict the female body as they choose. These participants may have answered according to the legality of the issue. However, other participants may have answered based on their own moral and ethical beliefs. Overall the study revealed weak-to-moderate correlations between the media and body satisfaction and the

motivation or desire to change one's body. Eighty-four percent of the surveyed

population reported that they believe the media represent an unrealistic image for women,

and 80 percent agreed that the media have the power to change a person's body

satisfaction. These results indicate that women view the media's example of the ideal as

unattainable for all women; they also see the media as a threat with the power to shape

and influence the way society perceives women and the way a woman views herself.

A growing body of research has examined the relationship between the media and

their effect on body satisfaction. Some research has linked exposure to thin images in the

media to disordered eating. This information is not only available in academic research

circles; it is reported in the news media as well. Some participants may believe that the

media should be held responsible for the images they produce mainly because the

possible effects may influence the health and well being of susceptible minds. In the free

response section of the survey participants were asked if they believed the media should

be held responsible for the way they portray the ideal body. One participant wrote, "I

don't know exactly how [the media] should be held responsible, but sometimes I feel

they are responsible for the deaths of female teenagers who died trying to match the ideal

body image seen in the media." One participant wrote about how the media has affected

her seven-year-old twin sisters. She wrote, "[they] think they are fat because of the

images they see in the media." Some participants suggested possible regulations of the

content in the media regarding body image of women. One participant wrote that she

believed decision-makers in the media should be made to take seminars about the

development of eating disorders, hear testimonies of women who were negatively

affected by the media and be given information from doctors and psychologists. She

believes this will encourage marketers to change their tactics. These seminars are not far from what employers enforce regarding matters of sexual harassment. Other participants reasoned that all models and actors should be held accountable to the BMI scale, as in European fashion runways. In general, most responses reflected the desire for representing a greater variety of body types in the media in order to promote healthy women of all shapes and sizes. This is the same message that Dove conveys in its Campaign for Real Beauty.

Research question 2 asked specifically about Dove's campaign. Since the beginning of Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty, other companies have adopted similar mission statements. The survey asked participants if they have noticed any change in the way women are portrayed in the media in the past five years. Twenty-four percent reported noticing a change in media content regarding body image. This possible change in media could be related to the way some marketers are specifically addressing the issue. In 2001, before Dove launched its campaign, Lancôme, a popular beauty line, publicly announced it was changing its approach to beauty. It began a $35 million ad campaign promising to feature models who were not heavily retouched, allowing freckles and natural imperfections to be visible. The company said they wanted to offer a more humanistic and approachable interpretation of beauty. In 2001, John Cohan, a commentator on media ethics, suggested that Lancôme's approach may be a paradigm shift in beauty advertising that encourages women to find their "own beauty" rather than strive for unattainable perfection. (Cohan, 2001) This concept of finding one's "own beauty" was seen in Jenny Craig's new approach to dieting in 2007 when it chose plus-size celebrity Queen Latifah to be its new spokesperson. Jenny Craig's marketers said

that this campaign is more focused on attaining a healthy lifestyle rather than fitting into a specific size of clothing. (Adato and Nudd, 2007)

Survey participants attributed the change in the media to companies like Dove. One participant wrote, "I appreciate the few 'real beauty' campaigns a lot more than the mainly 'ideal' beauty advertisements out there." Another wrote, "It is difficult to see so many people as role models for young women who are so skinny and unrealistic. Ads like the Dove Real Women ads or the news about the European models who were too skinny to participate in [runway] shows gives me hope." These results show that, although few in numbers, 'real beauty' campaigns are being noticed by some and may have the potential to counter-affect any negative work associated with ads that promote an unrealistic thin ideal body image.

Women today are more aware of tactics used by the media to bring models and actors to perfection. Media literacy is a possible key factor in the desire for change in beauty advertising and in the representation of a thin ideal body image in the media. Because of this, advertisers may gain more respect from women if they turned toward the use of more variety of images. "Consumer revolt is an American tradition, fueled by our vibrant First Amendment right," Cohan (2001) said. As more women become aware of the practice of digital manipulation and become tired of the way the media stress one ideal body image, it is possible they will revolt against products and companies that continue in these ways. "Consumers can become more vigilant in recognizing the subtle message presented in advertising and teach [their] children to understand that advertising in not reality," Cohan continues.

One goal of this research was to gain information about how women perceive the ideal body image in the media. Research questions 3 and 4 used the Douty (1968) body scale, featured in Appendix A. This scale presented participants with five body shapes. They were asked to choose which shape best reflects the image stressed as the ideal body in the media. They were also asked to choose which figure represents their personal ideal body. When asked to choose the media's ideal body image, 60 percent chose the thinnest figure, which Douty suggests to be very underweight. Thirty-three percent chose the underweight model and 5 percent chose the average one. These results are supported by previous research that acknowledges a decrease in size of models and actors over the past three decades. In the free response section of the survey participants used terms such as "pencil-thin" and "stick-thin" to describe the size of the models and actors celebrated in the media. The fact that 93 percent chose an underweight figure as the media's ideal body image not only defines how participants perceive women in media, it also proposes the cultural standard to which women are held in society.

In contrast, only 8 percent chose the very underweight model, while 45 percent chose the underweight model for their own ideal body. Forty-one percent chose the average model and 6 percent chose the slightly overweight model. These results show that although the media stress an underweight figure, many women would be content with an average size figure, and it also alludes to the idea that media literacy about the thin ideal body image in the media may contribute to women not developing the desire to resemble the extreme thinness depicted in the media.

Research question 5 looked at the other contributing factors that affect body image satisfaction among the participants. Survey results show that participants establish

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their body satisfaction by many factors. The top influences selected were friends, followed by family, significant others and one's self. These all describe the closest interpersonal relationships in society. In the study of media effects, the limited-effects model suggests that the media have weak influences over people due to other contributing factors such as these interpersonal relationships. Survey participants noted they believe these contributors have more influence on their body satisfaction than the media do. Although other factors contribute heavily to the development of a person's body perception, it is possible that the media still indirectly contribute. It is not clear where friends, family and significant others develop their perception about appropriate body images. More research needs to be conducted to narrow down the effect of other influences on body satisfaction.

The final research question looked for information about the number of thin ideal body images to which participants are exposed on the Internet. Although this research cannot conclude a strong relationship between the Internet and body satisfaction and the motivation to change one's body, these findings provide evidence that the Internet is another medium where the thin ideal body image is stressed. The most common form of Internet use reported was participation in social networking sites like Facebook. Ninety-nine percent reported to belonging to one, while 90 percent of those who have memberships reported visiting these groups often. Ninety-one percent of the participants said they noticed advertisements dealing with diet, weight loss and exercise on social network sites. In the free response section of the survey, participants were asked to describe the way a thin ideal body image is promoted on the Internet. Nearly all participants wrote that they see advertisements on social networking sites for weight loss

programs and supplements. Some participants went into detail describing the ads. One person wrote about the photos that are used in the advertisements. "There are advertisements and pop-ups all over the place. They are usually of girls in bikinis with ridiculously flat stomachs."   Several participants wrote about a particular advertisement on Facebook that targets women's ages. One participant wrote, "I saw one that showed an extremely thin person and said '20 and overweight?' I am 20, and it was targeted specifically to me." Another answered, "I saw one with a moving photo of a dancing fat tummy saying 'are you like this?'" Participants also noted that it is important to present an attractive photo of one's self as the image associated with one's social networking page. This is the photo that people see when they visit a personal page. When asked how the Internet stressed the thin ideal body image, one participant wrote that Facebook makes it necessary to have an appealing image to display. It can be assumed that this participant associated appealing image with being thin. This answer reveals that this participant feels obligated to conform to the thin ideal and experiences a sense of necessity to present herself in an appealing way.

Advertisements on social networking sites were not the only way listed for the Internet to stress the thin body ideal. Some participants said they watched reality television shows online, like MTV's *The Hills*. One wrote, "I watch [The Hills] on the Internet and can't help but notice how fit and thin they are." Other answers reflected on the number of articles about celebrity weight loss or weight gain. One participant noted that celebrities are "constantly criticized for weight gain." If women are exposed to the criticism celebrities accrue, there is the possibility that they may associate their own weight gain with the harsh criticism given by the media.

All hypotheses tested found correlations between media use and body satisfaction and motivation to change one's body. These results are consistent with Stice and Shaw's (1994) research, Irving's (1990) research and others where participants reported less body satisfaction after media exposure. Hypothesis 1 compared the amount of media consumed with body satisfaction scores. Hypothesis 2 looked specifically at the effect Internet use has on body satisfaction. There was a negative correlation suggesting that the amount of media containing the thin ideal body image a person consumes relates to the level of body satisfaction. These results are supported by the cultivation theory, which argues that the media represent forms of social reality. These forms tend to be stereotyped, and if repeat exposure to these messages occur the audience may internalize the messages as characteristics of the norm. This may result in a mainstream formation of an ideal body image. The results are in line with the social comparison theory. Social comparison is a belief about how a person establishes his or her personal identity. This theory would suggest that women who view a large amount of media would make comparisons between themselves and the women in the media and develop beliefs about their bodies accordingly. Women may look at the abundance of thin women in the media, conceive thin as the norm and compare their own bodies. Women exhibit high levels of comparing their bodies to others. Those who demonstrate higher levels of comparison also tend to show greater discontentment with their bodies. The results also comply with the self-ideal discrepancy model, which assumes that people make comparisons between their body shape and other sources. If women compare themselves with an idealized figure, they risk the chance of dissatisfaction with their own body if

they do not match the standard they have established for themselves. (Wykes & Gunter, 2005)

Hypothesis 2 proposes the idea that the Internet has the potential to affect one's body satisfaction due to the mediated thin ideal body images found on Web pages and social networking sites. A relationship was found between low body satisfaction and high Internet use. The same theories used to explain connections in traditional forms of media can be used to explain these same findings.

No conclusions can be made regarding a direct relationship between total media consumption and body satisfaction scores due to other possible contributors to body satisfaction, as seen in research question 5. The study does provide some evidence that the content in media may have the potential to affect a person's body satisfaction. Research suggests that the thin ideal body image is ever-present in multiple forms of media. It is probable that the more media to which one is exposed, the more likely she is to believe in the importance of attractiveness and the more likely she is to value thinness. In the free response questions, many participants expressed concern about overall media and their effect on personal body satisfaction. One participant wrote, "The frequency of advertisements for weight loss products or workout equipment makes me feel that body image should consume my mind. I exercise frequently, play a collegiate sport and eat healthily. Even though I am healthy, I still feel that sometimes I should be even more concerned with how I look than how I feel." Other participants wrote about how the media make them feel. They expressed feelings of depression and anxiety, while others wrote they are uncomfortable with themselves, have low self-esteem and have a "skewed sense of beauty."

There are a few reasons why there was a weak correlation rather than one that is stronger. It is commonly expected that women should feel bad about their bodies after viewing images of thin models (Holmstrom, 2004). However, some evidence suggests that women may not compare themselves to these images because they are so prevalent in the media they no longer invoke a response. Women may become desensitized to overly thin models and internalize the idea that these bodies are not realistic and obtainable.   If a woman was to compare herself to every thin figure in the media she sees, she could spend a lifetime involved in social comparison (Holmstrom, 2004).   It is also possible that women reject cultural attitudes about a thin ideal body image but still are affected emotionally by the social pressure to assimilate to the perceived norm.

Results from prior research indicate that the longer people are exposed to the thin ideal body image, the less satisfied they are with their own bodies. When people experience body dissatisfaction, they are likely to be motivated to change their appearance to reach the standards in the media. (Utter, Neumark-Sxtainer, Wall, & Story, 2003) The results of this study are in agreement with these proposed ideas. Hypothesis 3 posits that the amount of total media consumed correlates with the desire to change one's body to fit the thin ideal body image emphasized in the media. Results of the survey suggest that there are moderate correlations between these two factors.

Media images work as role models for many women looking for a standard to emulate. Research has found an overwhelming presence of thin figures in the media. This study found that most participants associate the media's ideal body image with the underweight figure in Douty's (1968) scale, which is supported by analyses of media content in prior studies. The average woman today weighs 140 pounds and is 5 feet 4

inches tall in contrast to the average model who weighs 117 pounds and is 5 feet 11 inches tall. This size of woman represents 2 percent of the population. (National Eating Disorders Association, 2009) The other 98 percent of the population, although the majority, may appear as the minority in society due to the media's concentration and celebration of one ideal figure. If media consumers view this abundance of thin images and internalize them as the norm, it is likely that they act in ways to adjust themselves to meet the standards set by the media. This concept reflects the proposed ideas in the cultivation theory. This theory suggests that if the media depict a thin figure as attractive, people may accept this body image as the ideal for which all women should achieve. If a thin image is praised and celebrated in the media, the achievement of this figure for women may be associated with these same positive reactions. Therefore, the more a person is exposed to the approval of the thin ideal in the media, the more she may feel the need to resemble this figure in order to receive the same social rewards. This may lead to the desire or the motivation to change one's eating or exercise habits.

These findings are also in agreement with the social comparison theory and social cognitive theory. The social comparison theory hypothesizes that people establish personal identity by comparing themselves with others. These comparisons can be acted upon if a person associates certain behaviors with the identities. Regarding media and body image, the social cognitive theory would suggest that media consumers acquire knowledge about behaviors through media coverage. Through repeat responses consumers would base their own actions on what they depict in the media. If media coverage focuses on eating and exercise habits that contribute to weight loss, repeat consumers may internalize these messages and act accordingly. (Baran & Davis, 2006)

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Many people argue that the main problem regarding weight in American society is not the threat of being overly thin, but in fact the opposite. Obesity plagues a large percent of the American population. This percent is steadily growing. However, this fact does not discount the important evidence suggesting that mediated thin body images affect motivation or the desire to change one's body. Some may see the thin models in a positive light. The exposure to thin images in the media may encourage people who are considered overweight or obese to lose weight. However, the media go beyond presenting healthy examples of female figures to celebrating excessive thinness. This basically goes from one extreme to another.

The Uses and Gratifications theory implies that social situations can weaken real-life opportunities to satisfy certain needs, and the media can serve as substitutes. Women may consume more media featuring a thin ideal body image in place of actually acting in ways to conform to the image. They make seek out media that educates about dieting, weight loss and exercise instead of physically participating in these actions. It also states that the values obtained by social situations can be confirmed and reinforced by the use of media. If women receive messages about body image from friends and family, they may look to the media to reinforce these beliefs. The variety of media available allows women to be intentionally selective about the type of magazines, television shows and Web sites they consume. This can mean women have the ability to purposefully consume or not consume media containing the thin ideal body image. (Baran & Davis, 2006)

Research claims that the effectiveness of Internet advertising waivers on the trustability of the form of advertisements companies use. Hypothesis 4 proposes that

Internet use does not have the same effect on the desire to change one's body to meet the thin ideal body image as television use and magazine readership. This idea is based on the research surrounding the effectiveness of Internet advertising. There are ambiguous results about the efficiency of advertising on the Internet. The researchers who believe people intentionally avoid interacting with Internet advertisements might agree with the idea that people are less affected by the weight loss and beauty advertisements online, opposed to those in magazines or on television; however, others may disagree. Although people attempt to avoid the ads, they still risk the chance of internalizing the messages merely due to their presence. They do not need to interact with them to experience some effect.

The results of the survey indicate that there is a slight difference in the way magazine and television consumption affects the motivation to change one's body in comparison to Internet consumption. The near equal results of this calculation indicate that all media are internalized equally. If the same messages are stressed in all forms of media, the medium in which is it presented does not have an effect on the outcome of its message. Survey participants wrote about how the media affect their motivation to change their bodies. One wrote, "[the media] influence me strongly to work out and diet. Media portray a very thin image for women. Size four is no longer pretty; one must be a two or a zero." Another commented, "I used to have an eating disorder. So seeing thin people on television made me feel ugly, fat and not worthy of affection. I thought that if I could lose weight I could be admired." Participants attributed the media's standard of beauty for their desires to be thin. The desire for thinness is also apparent in other comments. "I continue to find ways to lose weight even though my doctor has told me I

am below average for my age and height, but I still want to be smaller," one woman wrote. Another stated, "I am pretty thin, in fact I've been told I look underweight, but I still feel uncomfortable about my softness on my stomach and thighs. [The media] make me feel like I should be dieting." Overall the comments expressed similar beliefs regarding the media about the desire to be thin, even underweight, and being motivated to lose weight or, as one participant stated, "never eat again."

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Recommendations for Future Research

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In order to gain more knowledge about the effect of media exposure on body image, future research should be conducted on the content of Internet sites regarding the thin ideal body image. Content analyses have been carried out with beauty and fashion magazines and with television programs. However, little research has looked at the number of advertisements that appear on social networking sites, magazine sites and television network sites. Also, further research is needed to evaluate the ways the Internet features the ideal body image.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty is attempting to bring attention to issues concerning the media and body image. A handful of other companies are joining in on the crusade, including Lancôme, Jenny Craig and Hanes, by using average and plus-size models and celebrities in their advertisements. The question is whether these companies will continue to sell "real beauty," as opposed to the media-constructed thin ideal. These companies are trying to change the mentality of how women are treated in media. One photographer explains the situation beautifully. "Don't try to change the world to what you think it should be. Take it or leave it. If you've got a problem with the world and you think you've got to clean it up, you're in the wrong business," said *National Geographic's* Dave Griffen (Reaves, 1991). If advertisers, fashion editors and producers believe that a variety of body shapes and sizes is a problem, they are looking at the diversity of humanity in the wrong way. It is little different from the type of selectiveness seen in attempts to purify the world's races.

What responsibilities do the media have to the public? If research suggests a correlation between the thin ideal body image and physical and psychological damage in women, the media need to be aware and responsible for the messages that they are presenting to the public. Peirce (1990) explained, "Teen magazines have a unique opportunity to shape the world of a teenage girl."   Messages like Chloe Marshall's, the Miss England contestant, are a way to keep the media accountable for their actions. Dove understands the power of advertising and hopes that its message of "real beauty"

helps redefine the way women are portrayed in the media. The media need to continue to bring attention to issues related to the thin ideal body image. An ideal beauty image may always be a part of society. However, awareness about the way these messages may affect body image may prove to counteract any negative consequences.

APPENDIX

Survey Instrument

Please circle your answer to the following questions.
There are no right or wrong answers.
Please do not put your name anywhere on the survey.

SD – Strongly Disagree	
D - Disagree	
N - Neutral	
A - Agree	
SA – Strongly Agree	

1. The media represent a realistic ideal body image for women.   SD   D   N   A   SA

2. The average female actor or model is thinner than the average women.   SD   D   N   A   SA

3. The majority of advertisements on television, in magazines, and on the Internet portray a thin ideal body image.   SD   D   N   A   SA

4. The number of advertisements on television, in magazines, and on the Internet portraying a thin ideal body image have decreased in the past five years.   SD   D   N   A   SA

5. I think my stomach is too big.   SD   D   N   A   SA

6. I think that my thighs are too large.   SD   D   N   A   SA

7. I like the shape of my buttocks.   SD   D   N   A   SA

8. I am motivated to change my eating habits after seeing thin models or actors on Internet sites.   SD   D   N   A   SA

9. I think that my hips are just the right size.   SD   D   N   A   SA

10. There should be regulations regarding the weight and size of models used in advertisements and on fashion show runways.   SD   D   N   A   SA

11. Critics are too hard on the media's role in creating a thin ideal body image in society.   SD   D   N   A   SA

12. I feel satisfied with the shape of my body.   SD   D   N   A   SA

13. I think my hips are too big.   SD   D   N   A   SA

14. I am motivated to change my eating habits after seeing thin models or actors on television.   SD   D   N   A   SA

15. I am motivated to change my eating habits after seeing thin models or actors in magazines.   SD   D   N   A   SA

16. I think that my thighs are just the right size.   SD   D   N   A   SA

17. I think that my buttocks are too large.   SD   D   N   A   SA

18. I think that my stomach is just the right size.   SD   D   N   A   SA

19. The media have the power to influence other people's desire to change eating habits and exercise habits.   SD   D   N   A   SA

20. I am familiar with the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty.   SD   D   N   A   SA

21. Beauty companies, like Dove, should use models and actors that vary in age, weight, size, and ethnicity more.

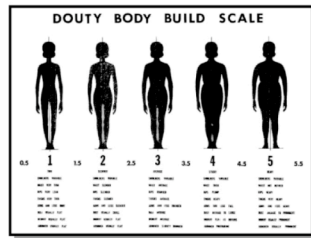SD   D   N   A   SA

22. Which image below best illustrates the ideal body image portrayed in the media?

1   2   3   4   5

23. Which image below best illustrates your ideal body image?

1   2   3   4   5

Figure 1

Douty scale of body build types. (Douty, 1968a, p. 28).

24. How do you believe others judge your body?
(a) very underweight (b) underweight (c) average
(d) overweight (e) very overweight

A   B   C   D   E

25. How many hours of television do you watch per week?
(a) 0-5   (b) 6-10   (c) 11-15   (d) 16-20   (e) 21- up

A   B   C   D   E

26. Are you a member of a social networking Web site (i.e. Facebook, MySpace)? (a) yes (b) no (c) uncertain

A   B   C   X   X

○ **Use answer choices for the following questions:**
(a) never/N/A (b) sometimes (c) often (d) very frequently (e) I don't know

27. Do you watch reality TV shows dealing with body image (such as Biggest Loser, America's Next Top Model, True Beauty, etc)?

A   B   C   D   E

28. Do you visit Web sites of TV shows dealing with body image?

A   B   C   D   E

29. How often do you visit on-line versions of beauty magazines?

A   B   C   D   E

30. How often do you check your social networking Web site?

A   B   C   D   E

31. How often do you notice advertisements dealing with diet, weight-loss, and exercise on your social networking Web site?

A   B   C   D   E

32. I consider or purchase products to help with weight-loss, dieting, or exercise after viewing an advertisement on the Internet.

A   B   C   D   E

33. I consider or purchase products to help with weight-loss, dieting, or exercise after viewing an advertisement on television and/or in a magazine.

A   B   C   D   E

34. How many magazines featuring content dealing with beauty, fitness, weight-loss, and body image (Cosmopolitan, Glamour, Elle, Shape, People, etc) do you read a month?
(a) 0-2   (b) 3-5   (c) 6-8   (d) 9-11   (e) 12- up

A   B   C   D   E

35. Rank in order the top five influences that contribute to your own body satisfaction. (1 being the most influential)
(a) friends (b) family (c) television (d) magazines (e) Internet
(f) significant other (g) clubs/organization (h) faith/religious beliefs (i) none
(j) myself

1__ 2__ 3__ 4__ 5__

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