

ADVERTISING IN WOMEN'S FASHION MAGAZINES:  
SEXUAL STEREOTYPES AND THEIR INFLUENCE

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# Advertising in Women's Fashion Magazines: Sexual Stereotypes and Their Influence

A Thesis

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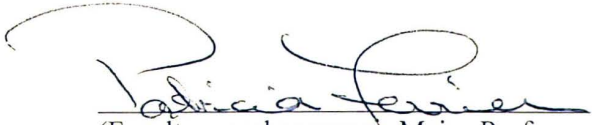
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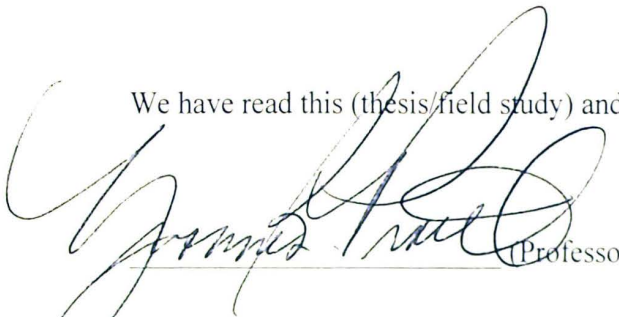
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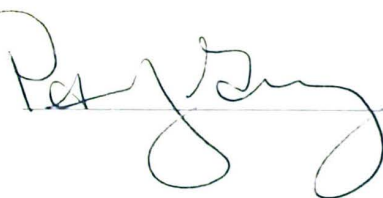
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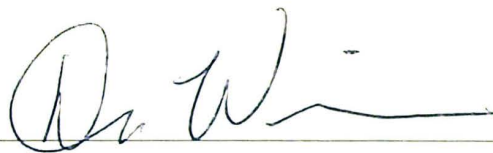
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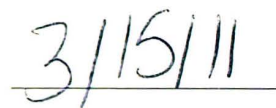
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## ABSTRACT

DRU WINN. Advertising in Women's Fashion Magazines: Sexual Stereotypes and Their Influence (under the direction of DR. PATRICIA FERRIER).

This study was designed to examine the portrayal of women in advertising in popular women's fashion magazines (i.e. *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *Glamour*, *Marie Claire*, and *Vogue*). This content analysis aimed to find and assess the sexual roles women play in fashion magazine advertisements today as well as discover which magazines represent which stereotypes. Research has shown sexuality in advertising has become more overt over time. It is important to follow young women's magazines and their advertising approaches because millions of women rely on fashion magazines for information and advice. The technique in which male and female models are presented in magazine advertising will continue to shape what it means to be a male or female in today's society.

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# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

Approximately 40 million women read women's magazines (Mastin, Coe, Hamilton, & Tarr, 2004), and about 60% of college women read at least one magazine per month. Subscription rates for women's magazines are in the millions (Kim & Ward, 2004). According to *Cosmopolitan's* Media Kit (2009), *Cosmopolitan* had a circulation of 2,907,000 as of June 2009. Women's magazines are different from other types of media because they are often passed to others or kept for future reference (Mastin et al., 2004). In addition, women's magazines are unique because they are written specifically for women, can be viewed privately, are available for multiple readings, and are often sexually explicit (Kim & Ward, 2004).

Sexual appeal is a major part of advertising, especially in women's fashion magazines. Sexual advertising can be defined as messages including sexual information or behavior with the intent to sell a product or brand (Reichert & Carpenter, 2004). Previous research regarding magazine advertising has shown that sex appeals are common, widespread, and increasing (Reichert, Lambaise, Morgan, Carstarphen, & Zavoina, 1999). Reichert et al. (1999) said sex is a staple in America's advertising campaigns. Advertising in general is a huge part of our society. In 2002, more than \$237 billion was invested in American advertising campaigns (Reichert & Lambaise, 2003). It is estimated that a person sees approximately 3,000 ads per day and spends about three years of his or her life viewing advertisements (Mastin et al., 2004). In other words, advertising is everywhere. Stankiewicz and Rosselli (2008) said advertising has found a way into our relationships, homes, and minds because it is so prevalent and powerful.

Analyzing print advertising is necessary in order to understand the way women are portrayed in the media (Lindner, 2004). In addition, Baker (2005) indicated sexuality in the media is important to study because it has been suggested that it is the root of gender inequality. Through advertising, the media, and magazines, women are educated about the female image (Mastin et al., 2004). Advertisements illustrate what is considered appropriate and normal for men and women (Klassen, Jasper, & Schwartz, 1993). Women's magazines have been said to shape a woman's image of herself (Sengupta, 2006). In 1963, Betty Friedan, founder of the National Organization for Women, said women in America were so insecure and unsure of who they are and who they should be that they had to look to a public image to decide it for them (Venkatesan & Losco, 1975).

While sex in advertising has become increasingly popular, it is not a new principle nor is the debate that surrounds it (Kurzbard & Soley, 1986). Sexual advertising has been traced back to the 1850s as tobacco advertisers used images of nude women to differentiate tobacco brands (Reichert & Lambaise, 2003). Since the 1960s, advertising researchers have tried to understand sexual images (Reichert & Lambaise, 2003), mostly due to the fact the sexual revolution occurred in the 1960s (Kurzbard & Soley, 1986). In addition, some of the earliest studies regarding sexual advertising were inspired by the Women's Movement in the 1970s (Lindner, 2004).

Early research found advertisements were more likely to be remembered when sex was a dominant factor (Kurzbard & Soley, 1986). During the women's liberation movement, however, women started to demand more respect in advertisements (Lyonski, 2005). Women protested these sexual images mostly because they could be harmful, unfair, demeaning, and derogatory (Lyonski, 2005). The protests worked in some cases.



Magazine advertisers between 1967 and 1984 were concerned with how they depicted social issues, including equality for women (Klassen et al., 1993). In spite of the progress that was made, women were still often being depicted in the media as dependent on men and as sex objects (Sengupta, 2006), and sometimes they still are today. Women's fashion magazines continue to perpetuate stereotypical gender and sexual roles, unhealthy weights, and unrealistic standards of beauty (Sengupta, 2006). The study examines the sexual advertising published in one year in major women's fashion magazines.

## CHAPTER II

### Literature Review

Mass media research shows advertisements have the power to influence our attitudes, beliefs, behaviors (Lindner, 2004), opinions, and life expectations (Mastin et al., 2004). Klassen et al. (1993) said advertising campaigns try to sell more than just a service or a product and strive to sell a means of understanding society. Indeed, advertising can gauge what is desirable and normal because it appears to define reality (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008). Advertisements are a pervasive form of media, which suggests they have a large impact on people (Baker, 2005). Because advertising is such an invasive medium, people often do not pay conscious attention to advertising messages (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008). As a result, sexuality in ads is likely to be unquestioned and is thought to be public consensus (Sengupta, 2006).

#### *Type of Medium*

The extent to which sexual appeal occurs in advertising varies with the type of medium (Reichert et al., 2004). Research has shown certain magazines show more sexual advertisements than television, but this depends on which magazine or television network is being discussed (Reichert et al., 2004). For example, news magazines are less likely to have sexual advertisements than women's fashion magazines (Reichert et al., 2004). According to Stankiewicz and Rosselli (2008), men's and women's fashion magazines were more likely to portray women as sex objects than any other type of magazine.

Women are three times more likely than men to be portrayed explicitly in fashion magazines (Reichert et al., 1999). In fact, 30% of ads in three popular women's fashion magazines featured nude or partially nude models in 2006 (Stankiewicz & Rosselli,

2008). Stankiewicz and Rosselli (2008) said the number of images of highly sexualized women maintains men's dominance by designating women's bodies as property to be evaluated and touched whenever a man desires. Although women actually preferred to see a man suggestively dressed instead of other women, Kurzbard & Soley (1986) found female consumers were more likely to see partially clad or nude females in women's magazines. Lindner (2004) said, although magazines like *Vogue* are for a female audience, their ads portrayed women more stereotypically than any other kind of magazine. In addition, in 2000, 54% of ads in *Cosmopolitan* were based on a female model's appearance (Thomas & Treiber, 2000). A recent study by Stankiewicz and Rosselli (2008) found 63.39% of ads in fashion magazines showed women as sex objects.

### *The Purpose of Sexual Appeal*

Advertisers choose to use sexual appeal in their campaigns for many reasons. Reichert et al. (2004) said advertisers push sexual boundaries because they want to outdo the competition. In 2000, more conservative magazines added sex in their editorial and advertising content in an attempt to increase their sales (Kuczynski, 2000). For example, *Ladies' Home Journal* created its first sex column in its 117 years of publication (Kuczynski, 2000). *Redbook* and *Ladies' Home Journal* were thought of in the past as "women's service" magazines (Kuczynski, 2000). According to former *Redbook* editor in chief Lesley Jane Seymour, *Redbook* is trying to pull away from magazines it was once compared to, such as *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Good Housekeeping*, and is now trying to be compared to the likes of *Elle* and *Jane* (Kuczynski, 2000). Editors at *Redbook* and *Ladies' Home Journal* hope sexual content can help attract new readers (Kuczynski, 2000).



Sexual appeals in advertising are often used to get people's attention and can serve as a means to convince people to buy a certain brand or product (Reichert & Lambaise, 2003). All men and women possess a need for intimacy, and advertisers take advantage of this and attempt to convince the audience their products and services will help with sexual fulfillment (Reichert & Lambaise, 2003). Couples shown in sexual appeals might be seen as proof that using certain products make people more sexually attractive (Reichert & Lambaise, 2003). Sexual appeals are often used when the product aims for associations with sexiness and temptation (Baker, 2005) such as beauty products and fragrances (Kilbourne, 1990). Sexual women are often shown in advertisements to imply the product will increase a woman's appeal to men (Baker, 2005).

Women's fashion magazines are practically expected to include sex in advertising (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008). A large portion of editorial content is related to fashion, beauty and sexual skills, so they are likely to have a higher number of ads depicting women as sexual objects (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008). Ads with at least one female were likely to include sexuality in their advertisements (Koernig & Granitz, 2006). In addition, ads aimed towards women are thought to be more effective in fashion magazines if women are portrayed as youthful, fashionable, and sexual, rather than business or technology savvy (Thomas & Treiber, 2000).

While overt sexuality can seem unnecessary in advertising, Reichert and Lambaise (2003) said it serves a purpose. Advertisements are designed to introduce products, position products ahead of the competition, remind consumers about products, and tell consumers why they should buy a certain product (Reichert & Lambaise, 2003). To be successful, advertisements must be attention-getting and motivating (Reichert &

Lambaise, 2003). Advertisers believe images in advertising will have some sort of persuasive effect on those who view it (Thomas & Treiber, 2000). In addition, the advertisement's message must be clearly defined (Cohen, Shumate, & Gold, 2007). If the audience does not understand the ad, it will not have any incentive to purchase the product or keep it in mind for the future (Scuilli & Bebkko, 2005). Also, if consumers are highly involved with the idea or product being advertised, they will be more motivated to keep the advertisement in mind (Lee & Thorson, 2008). Mastin et al. (2004) indicated advertisers use stereotypical images to establish shared experiences among consumers to influence purchase decision.

Researchers said sexual stereotypes have always occurred in advertising but the types of stereotypes are transforming over time. Lindner (2004) et al. explained:

A shift has occurred from portraying women as socially inferior and subordinate to men in very blunt and obviously stereotypical ways (e.g. by showing them in domestic settings) to images of women that contain rather subtle messages about gender roles and about women's place in the social power hierarchy. (p. 412)

### *Sexual Images Through Time*

In the late 1950s and 1960s, women were consistently portrayed in ads as overachieving housewives, dependent on men, and as pleasure-seeking and self-indulgent individuals (Venkatesan & Losco, 1975). Belkaoui and Belkaoui (1976) studied women's magazines in the 1950s and found women were often shown engaging in intense household duties. If women were shown outside the home at all in this time period, they were usually depicted as unable to cope with the pressures of a secretarial job (Belkaoui

& Belkaoui (1976). Women were shown as purely decorative objects in 74.5% of ads in 1958, 70% in 1970, and 94% in 1972 (Belkaoui & Belkaoui, 1976). Women in advertising also appeared to have limited purchasing power and were usually shown buying inexpensive items such as beverages, clothing, beauty aids, healthcare goods, cleaning products, and household items (Belkaoui & Belkaoui, 1976). Belkaoui and Belkaoui (1976) said advertisers did not keep up with the times, as they did not portray women in the wide variety of roles they actually maintained. When women were shown purchasing large items like cars or insurance or participating in transactions with banks, Belkaoui and Belkaoui (1976) found the media seemed to be telling women they needed a man to help them. Recent employment, marriage, and divorce statistics, however, illustrate women are currently responsible for making a wide range of purchasing decisions (Mastin et al., 2004). Mastin et al. (2004) explained advertisements in women's magazines that provide awareness for financial services and technology have the potential to enhance the quality of life for women while also enhancing the companies providing the product.

Although advertising is showing women as working professionals more often than before, there is an increase of overtly sexualized images of women (Lindner, 2004). Overtly sexual images of women indicate women's bodies are constantly on display to be judged (Lindner, 2004). In these ads, women are shown in highly sexualized ways, such as adopting a posture that suggests the need for protection and control (Lindner, 2004). Research has shown women are often depicted in advertisements as decorative objects (Reichert & Lambaise, 2003). "Decorative" can be defined as having no apparent link or



connection between the model and the product or service being advertised (Thomas & Treiber, 2000).

In the 1980s, magazines portrayed women as more independent than in earlier years, but such images were counteracted by an increase in the portrayal of women as sex objects (Lindner, 2004). Recently, there has been a significant increase of images that present women as less sexually powerful than men in spite of showing images of women in powerful professional settings (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008). Lindner (2004) found women to be objectified in 59.2% of the advertisements in *Vogue*. *Vogue* reinforced an inferior and weak stereotype of women by showing them tracing an outline of an object or caressing its surface instead of holding the object (Lindner, 2004). Also, women were shown in subordinate positions, such as lying on the ground, 33.3% of the time (Lindner, 2004). Lindner (2004) found the results of the study to be disturbing and described this as a backlash in response to women gaining power and more influential positions in the workplace and society, which can be perceived as a threat to the male dominant society. These sexualized, degrading, submissive, and objectifying images are used to reestablish the power imbalance between men and women (Lindner, 2004).

Women in advertisements are sometimes depicted differently when they are pictured with men than when pictured individually. Kurzbard and Soley (1986) studied the physical relationship between models if there was more than one model shown in an ad. Ads containing both male and female models were analyzed for their suggestion or depiction of intercourse, which was thought of as embracing while partially dressed or nude. Kurzbard and Soley (1986) found female models more likely to be sexually clad, meaning wearing super-low cut tops or tight clothing, partially clad, or nude. While the

percentage of sexual material stayed relatively the same throughout the years, Kurzbard and Soley (1986) found the type of sexual content changed. About 69.9% of sexual ads in 1964 contained visible sexual content, but the number jumped to 79.1% in 1984 (Kurzbard & Soley, 1986). The amount of physical contact between models in 1984 was significantly greater than in 1964 (Kurzbard & Soley, 1986). In addition, Reichert et al. (2004) found female dress grew more sexually explicit over time in women's fashion magazines.

### *Emotional Reactions*

Sexual appeals can evoke many different reactions from an audience. There are factors that can determine these reactions. Kim and Ward (2004) assessed women's sexual experience, personal background, and religious upbringing because individual characteristics are likely to affect the reader. Kim and Ward (2004) said a woman's motivation for reading magazines influences her opinions about sexual advertising. For example, if women are reading a magazine to obtain information about sex, they are more likely to approve of sexual images in advertising (Kim & Ward, 2004). Levels of magazine exposure can also determine women's sexual attitudes (Kim & Ward, 2004). According to the cultivation theory, repeated exposure to certain media messages can dictate attitudes and beliefs (Kim & Ward, 2004). Kim and Ward (2004) found the frequency by which women read magazines significantly correlated with their sexual attitudes, and readers of sexually liberated magazines like *Cosmopolitan* were more likely to support sex in advertising.

The location of the ad can also influence the reaction of the public. Advertisers need to be aware of the placement of ads and the feelings the audience might already

have in order to achieve a positive reaction from the audience (Potter, Braun-LaTour, & Reichert, 2006). Kurzbard and Soley (1986) found sexuality was more common and more accepted in international advertising than in American advertising. Lyonski (2005) said reactions are often due to generational, cultural, and gender differences. Koernig and Granitz (2006) noted advertisements are a representation of the thoughts and behaviors of the culture. Some researchers argued women's self-perception has evolved from the way women are featured in advertisements (Lyonski, 2005).

Whipple and Courtney (1985) said the type of advertising used should depend on the product being advertised, because some types of advertising might be completely inappropriate to a particular product category or brand. Unilever, the company responsible for Axe and Dove products, explained each brand tailors its advertisements to reflect the interests and needs of its target audience (Neff, 2007). An article in *USA Today* reported an ad for Carl's Jr. restaurant featured Paris Hilton in a swimsuit (Girl, 2005). The CEO of CKE Restaurants, which owns Carl's Jr., said it was merely an effort to sell hamburgers (Girl, 2005). A columnist at *USA Today* was not convinced sex was a good tactic and said sex was not necessary to sell something as basic as a hamburger (Girl, 2005).

Sexual appeals directed toward men and women are different. According to Reichert and Lambaise (2003), sex appeals in women's magazines focused on attractiveness, behavior, and sexual esteem, whereas appeals toward men emphasized better sex, more sex, and attracting beautiful women. Messner and Montez de Oca (2005) said women were often shown as highly sexualized fantasies. Physical and personal attractiveness are important aspects of advertising campaigns for both men's and



women's magazines (Amos, Holmes, & Strutton, 2008). Amos et al. (2008) claimed attractive people are viewed in a more positive light. According to Lee and Thorson (2008), attitudes and purchase intention were found to change in direct correlation with the physical and personal attractiveness of a model featured in an advertisement. Marketers expect people to have a positive reaction to a model and hope that positive feeling will transfer over to the company or brand (Cialdini, 1984).

### *Effects on Women*

In spite of its popularity, sexual appeals in advertising can have a negative effect on women (Koernig & Granitz, 2006). Sexism, which is an attitude or social practice that promotes gender roles, has the potential to harm women (Lyonski, 2005). Women have been shown in women's magazines as passive, helpless, and powerless (Koernig & Granitz, 2006). Such stereotypes combined with overtly sexual images and content can affect people's psychological well-being (Lindner, 2004). Exposure to such advertisements can cause concern with body weight and body image (Linder), and constantly viewing sexualized images is associated with eating disorders, low self-esteem, depression, and negative feelings regarding one's sexuality (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008). Researchers found that women frequently exposed to fashion magazine images exhibited depression and body dissatisfaction (Wilson & Blackhurst, 1999). About eight million women have an eating disorder, and as many as one in five college women suffer from bulimia (Wilson & Blackhurst, 1999). Body dissatisfaction among women is now the norm (Engeln-Maddox, 2005). The phrase "normative discontent" was created "to refer to troubling findings of widespread body dissatisfaction among girls and women in Western cultures" (Engeln-Maddox, 2005, p. 1114).

Because so few women meet the ideal standards of beauty and sexuality created by the media, dissatisfaction with one's appearance is a likely outcome of the social comparison process (Engeln-Maddox, 2005). The social comparison process proposes comparison with others is often used to fulfill the basic human drive for self-evaluation (Engeln-Maddox, 2005). The social comparison theory suggests people desire to compare themselves to others to gain information about the self (Bassenoff & Del Priore, 2007). People are most likely to compare themselves to people similar to themselves, but recent research has shown images of women in the media are increasingly becoming targets for comparison (Engeln-Maddox, 2005). Frisby (2004) said it is reasonable to assume when people are exposed to images in the media, they will automatically and unknowingly engage in social comparison.

When a woman feels that the models on the pages of fashion magazines are better than she is, also known as upward social comparison, she may start to compare herself to the models (Bassenoff & Del Priore, 2007). For a woman to experience upward social comparison, she must see similarities, such as age and features, between herself and the models (Bassenoff & Del Priore, 2007). Women who see differences between themselves and media images are less likely to feel unsatisfied with their bodies, sexuality, and weight (Bassenoff & Del Priore, 2007). Although social comparison can be damaging, it doesn't always have to be (Engeln-Maddox, 2005). Some women can actually be inspired by such comparisons and could even evaluate themselves more favorably than the models (Engeln-Maddox, 2005). When a woman approaches the images with a self-evaluative motive, she is more likely to compare herself to the models in a negative manner, but if a woman approaches the images with a self-improvement or self-enhancement attitude, she

is more likely to compare herself favorably (Engeln-Maddox, 2005).

The social comparison theory can be an effective marketing tool for women's fashion magazines (Wilson & Blackhurst, 1999). Women are expected to be able to relate to the models in advertisements, and many advertisers use this to their advantage (Wilson & Blackhurst, 1999). The advertisers create this ideal to suggest women will be sexier or lose weight if they buy the right product (Wilson & Blackhurst, 1999). Some researchers have said social comparison is necessary for women's magazines to survive (Wilson & Blackhurst, 1999). Lindner (2004) explained *Vogue* is primarily a means for advertising products that are thought to be a cure for feelings of inferiority. Advertisers create an illusion that products will make the reader feel sexy and beautiful and, in turn, make them happy (Lindner, 2004). Feminist theory indicates women's fashion magazines are able to maintain a constant market by promoting unrealistic and mostly unattainable beauty ideals that are dependent upon personal dissatisfaction (Sengupta, 2006).

### *Violence Against Women*

Kilbourne (1990) found people, after viewing sexually explicit advertisements, demonstrated an increased acceptance of rape, violence, and sexual aggression against women. Some advertisers and publications actually show women as sexual victims (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008). According to Kilbourne (1990), sexual victimization used to be only for pornography but has now found itself in mainstream advertising through body positioning, facial expressions, and sexual relationships. Since the 1970s, beauty and fashion images have increasingly incorporated violence against women as explicit examples of subordination (Lyonski, 2005). Research has shown rape and sexual intimidation are widespread problems (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008). In a study of



fashion magazines such as *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *Glamour*, *InStyle*, *Marie Claire*, *Redbook*, and *Vogue*, Stankiewicz and Rosselli (2008) attempted to determine the extent to which women were presented as sex objects, victims, or potential victims. Kilbourne (1990) indicated sexual victimization in advertising is illustrated as glamorous and exciting. Previous research showed the presentation of women concurrently as sex objects and victims increased the overall acceptance of violence against women (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008). Stankiewicz and Rosselli (2008) found women were presented as victims in about 16.57% of advertisements in women's fashion magazines.

Some researchers found magazines feed off young men's and women's insecurities and give them "convenient scapegoats on which to project anger at their victim status" (Messner & Montez de Oca, 2005, p. 1906). Messner and Montez de Oca (2005) found "revenge-against-women themes" in recent ads, which appeared to encourage men to express anger or even partake in violence against women (p. 1906). Such imagery in advertising establishes an environment in which women are insignificant objects (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008). In addition, such images imply real men are sexually aggressive, violence is sexy, and women who are victims of sexual assault wanted it (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008).

#### *Other Negative Effects*

Sexual advertising can also have a negative effect on the brand being advertised. Reichert et al. (1999) explained evidence shows sexuality in advertising might reduce the probability the audience will remember information. Overly sexual information and images can distract viewers to the point where there is little to no corresponding gain in message processing or memory of a brand name (Reichert & Lambaise, 2003). Few

brands were correctly recalled when sex was dominant in the advertisement (Kurzbard & Soley, 1986). Also, sexual advertising can be offensive to even progressive target audiences (Whipple & Courtney, 1985). The success of sexual advertising depends on the audience, context, and intensity (Whipple & Courtney (1985). While overt sexuality could hurt sales, advertisers are willing to use sexual advertising to break through the clutter and gain brand awareness (Lyonski, 2005).

Although sexual advertising can have a negative effect on the brand, some marketers enjoy the commotion (Bullock, 2008). Marketers at Calvin Klein call this “the halo effect” of controversy, which they said began back in the 1990s with scandalous commercials and continued with Obsession fragrance ads (Bullock, 2008, p. 456). In 1995, the public and authorities were so bothered by a Calvin Klein ad that creative director Fabien Baron was investigated by the FBI for possible child pornography (Bullock, 2008). The ad featured scantily clad teens and even younger children striking poses in a basement while a man behind the camera coached them (Bullock, 2008). The FBI eventually decided no criminal acts were committed, but the brand pulled ads anyway (Bullock, 2008). Although Baron said he wondered if the brand had pushed the envelope too far, he admitted he liked the spectacle, and the sales of the jeans skyrocketed afterward (Bullock, 2008). Sexual appeals have the potential to bring negative publicity to a campaign and attract advocacy groups that can produce a large amount of negative publicity (Koernig & Granitz, 2006). Venkatesan and Losco (1975) explained the public is a powerful force, and if people believe that advertisements are too sexual, the backlash can be harmful.

## CHAPTER IV

### Method

Given that past research has consistently shown women are objectified in advertising, this study was designed to test five hypotheses:

H1: Women will be objectified in the majority of the advertisements.

H2: *Cosmopolitan* will have the highest amount of sex and nudity among the five fashion magazines.

H3: Summer magazines will include more nude and partially dressed models than the other seasons because of the seasonal clothing differences.

H4: In ads with both men and women, women will be shown more often as subordinate and less powerful than men.

H5: The magazine advertisements will show female models more often as victims rather than aggressors.

### *Materials*

The study included a year's worth of advertisements from five popular women's fashion magazines: *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *Glamour*, *Marie Claire*, and *Vogue*. These publications were chosen because of the similarity in editorial and advertising content and because they each have circulations ranging from approximately one million to nearly three million (*Cosmopolitan*). In terms of circulation, these magazines are five of the most popular women's fashion magazines on the market. One issue from each of the four seasons of each magazine was chosen because women in most locations dress differently according to the season. To choose, the magazines were separated into the four seasons, and a magazine was picked from each season at random. Only full-page or



half-page advertisements featuring at least one female model were used in this study. A total of 1,556 advertisements were examined in this study.

### *Categories and Coding*

A large amount of studies involving fashion magazine advertising used content analysis and used similar evaluation techniques when assessing ads. The coding system for this study was based on several coding systems from previous studies. Goffman's and Kang's (1979) coding system was used as a guideline, and Stankiewicz and Rosselli's (2008) coding system was used as a guideline for the victim and aggressor portion of this study. Advertisements were coded only if at least one woman was present in the image.

To find what types of ads were most commonly used in women's fashion magazines, the ads were put into 23 different product categories. While other researchers have used similar categories, several categories were added in order to obtain a more comprehensive view of the type of ads in fashion magazines. For example, cigarettes and education did not have their own individual category in previous studies. The categories for this study were: accessories, banking, beauty, cigarettes, education, fashion, food/drink, fragrance, gum/mints, health, home design, household goods, hygiene, insurance, liquor, movies, music, sex, technology, travel, TV, underwear, and Web site. These categories seemed to cover every type of ad found in the study's sample. In past studies by researchers such as Venkatesan and Losco (1975) and Belkaoui and Belkaoui (1976), women were considered to make only small-purchase decisions, and these categories were used to see if that still held true today in the popular women's fashion magazines. The types of advertisements found in the women's magazines provided insight into which sales tactics advertisers believed would be most effective in that type

of media. Advertising content is not chosen by the editors, and magazines have to make money, so an ad appearing in a publication does not mean the magazines represent or believe in the advertisements. This study is simply a way to find which kind of advertising material is found most often in women's magazines.

Some of the categories Goffman studied in general interest magazines in 1979 were used in this coding process. Many of the coding systems used in the studies about women's fashion magazine advertisements were based on sociologist Erving Goffman's coding system from the 1970s (Lindner, 2004). Goffman concentrated mostly on hands, knees, facial expressions, head postures, relative sizes, poses, positioning and placing, eye contact with the audience, finger biting and sucking in order to determine how men and women are depicted in ads (Klassen et al., 1993). Goffman found gender and sexual stereotyping in ads occurred in ways that can be found by analyzing the following categories: relative size, function ranking, feminine touch, ritualization of subordination, and licensed withdrawal (Klassen et al., 1993). Relative size referred to when men are often taller and take up more space than women, suggesting superiority over women (Klassen et al., 1993). With function ranking, women were shown in less prestigious occupations or as controlled by a man (Klassen et al., 1993). Feminine touch referred to women touching themselves in unnatural ways or caressing and cradling objects (Klassen et al., 1993). For example, sometimes women are shown gently touching or holding a perfume bottle whereas a man will be shown shaking a cologne bottle or holding it with more force (Klassen et al., 1993). Women are also often shown touching themselves softly with the back of their hand or sitting in an uncomfortable pose (Klassen et al., 1993). Ritualization of subordination was demonstrated when a woman was positioned to

indicate submission or control by others. For example, a woman may lower herself physically, lie down at inappropriate times, or be embraced by a man (Lindner, 2004). The model will be positioned in a way that someone else could have control over her (Lindner, 2004). Licensed withdrawal referred to women being depicted as removing themselves mentally from a situation (Lindner, 2004). In this case, the model's attention drifts and she will look away from the reader or appear disoriented (Lindner, 2004).

In 1997, Kang conducted a study that used Goffman's categories but added body display to the coding. Body display referred to the degree of nudity and the type of clothing worn by the model (Kang). Body display of the model or models in the ads was coded in this study. The four categories of body display were nude, partially dressed, normal dress, and the face-only shot, which meant only the face could be seen in the advertisement, so it was unclear what the model is wearing. According to Thomas and Treiber (2000), the face-only model is most often used to sell cosmetic products. Normal dress was everyday dress, such as jeans and a shirt or a suit. In normal dress, the model could be anyone because the focus was on the clothing more so than her looks or body. Partially dressed models included those wearing short shorts, revealing clothing, underwear, bathing suits, and unbuttoned blouses (Reichert et al., 2004). To be coded as nude, the model had to be completely nude, covering strategic body parts or giving the illusion of being nude. Suggestions of nudity were present when models were holding a towel or if the photo was composed so genitals were concealed (Reichert et al., 2004).

Lindner (2004) used Goffman's and Kang's classifications for a study of magazine ads in *Vogue* and *Time* from 1955 to 2002 but also added location and objectification classifications to the study. Location in Lindner's (2004) study was



defined as a “domestic versus public settings” (p. 412). Location demonstrated where the images in advertisements are supposed to take place. The location can tell a lot about the ad and what messages marketers are trying to send. Home, bed, and office were coded in this study in order to find which of these three locations was most popular in women’s fashion magazines.

Objectification was another category in this coding process. Objectification can be defined in many ways, but this study defined objectification as whether a woman is used in an advertisement only to be looked at. A female model who was being objectified was used primarily for decoration.

The categories of victim and aggressor were also coded. This has not been commonly examined in studies, but it is important to find whether models in today’s most popular fashion magazines are depicted as victims or aggressors of sexual or physical crimes or are portrayed as drug addicts because advertisements continue to shape what it means to be a female in society. If women are constantly viewing advertisements in which females are victimized, women might start to believe that type of behavior is acceptable, and if men start to see the same advertisements, they might start to believe it is customary to treat women that way. The guidelines from Stankiewicz and Rosselli (2008) were used to determine if a model was acting as a victim or aggressor. There were several ways women were classified as victims by Stankiewicz and Rosselli (2008). For example, a woman could be considered a victim if a person in the ad was involved in an act of violence against the woman, such as yelling, hitting, or shooting a gun (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008). Also, a female model could be a victim if a man was dominant or overpowering in a sexual act or was watching a woman in a sexualized

manner (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008). The female model could be a victim if she appeared lifeless or unconscious, is being lied to, or watched without her awareness. If the model was wearing makeup that made her appear sick or injured, she could have been a victim. In addition, the model could have been a victim if she was visibly afraid, angry, depressed, or vulnerable (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008). An aggressor was defined as a female committing an act of violence or being dominant in a sexually aggressive manner (Stankiewicz and Rosselli, 2008).

Many studies, such as the study by Kurzbard and Soley (1986), also reviewed ads in which men and women were shown together. When there were two or more people in an advertisement, the contact between the models was coded. This study coded whether there was a man and woman or two women, as sometimes multiple women are shown in the media as engaging in sexualized activities as well. The four categories of contact were no contact, simple contact, intimate contact, and very intimate contact. Very intimate contact was defined as depicting sexual intercourse or sexual behavior. Intimate contact was defined as embracing or kissing. Simple contact was defined as holding hands or having an arm around the other person in the ad. Models not touching at all were coded as having no contact. The sex of the model or models was also coded in the ads as well if there was more than one female model in the advertisement.

This coding system included the sexual advertising that appeared in the ad's text as well, a category that many previous studies neglected to consider. Sex in advertising can appear in the text instead of in an image as a subtler means of a sexual appeal. Along with the overt sexuality in an image, the subtle sexual messages in the images were coded. Reichert and Lambaise (2003) explained some sexual content is overlooked if just

the images are studied. Therefore, it was important to study text. Subtle sexual messages and images in advertising can be equally as damaging. Although the underlying messages in advertising have remained mostly unchanged, there has been an increase in the more subtle means of stereotyping (Lindner, 2004). Sexual appeals are often presented visually but sometimes are presented in subtle textual references (Kurzbard & Soley, 1986).

Kurzbard and Soley (1986) studied headlines and text in advertisements as well as visual content and found text for some advertisements mentioned nudity, sex, breasts, contraception, and sexual phrases. Subtle sexual content in advertisements can contain innuendos, suggestive meanings, and double entendres (Reichert & Lambaise, 2003). Klassen et al. (1993) said advertisers should be aware of the subtle stereotypes they put in advertising campaigns. If they are unaware of the subtle clues, marketers might support stereotypes without even realizing it (Klassen et al., 1993).

In this study, the ads were placed into all of the categories, and the totals and percentages were found and analyzed. The percentages are based on the four issues from each magazine title in order to get a comprehensive view of each magazine's advertisements. The magazine issues were considered individually as well in order to find which issues had the highest percentages for which category, and the percentages for each season were also calculated for the entire year for each magazine. The fall magazine issues included October 2008 *Cosmopolitan*, October 2008 *Elle*, October 2008 *Glamour*, October 2008 *Marie Claire*, and September 2008 *Vogue*. The winter magazines examined were December 2008 *Cosmopolitan*, February 2009 *Elle*, January 2009 *Glamour*, January 2009 *Marie Claire*, and December 2008 *Vogue*. The spring magazines were April 2009 *Cosmopolitan*, April 2009 *Elle*, April 2009 *Glamour*, April 2009 *Marie Claire*, and May



2009 *Vogue*. The summer issues examined were July 2009 *Cosmopolitan*, July 2009 *Elle*, July 2009 *Glamour*, July 2009 *Marie Claire*, and July 2009 *Vogue*. It was important to find which seasons had higher numbers in certain categories as well as which titles had higher numbers in the categories. The overall totals and percentages for fashion magazines as a whole were also a major part of this study.

## CHAPTER V

### Results

The first hypothesis indicates women will be objectified in the majority of the total advertisements. This was not supported in the findings. In the total magazine advertisements, women were objectified 36.63% ( $n = 570$ ) of the time and were not objectified 63.37% ( $n = 986$ ) of the time.

In the second hypothesis, it was predicted that *Cosmopolitan* would contain more sex and nudity than the other magazines. This was supported in some ways but not supported in other ways. *Cosmopolitan* and *Glamour* each contained five couples engaged in sex, but because of the total number of ads, 8.47% of *Cosmopolitan*'s total ads included sex compared with 9.43% of *Glamour*'s total ads. In terms of nudity, *Cosmopolitan* contained 29 ads featuring nude models, but *Vogue* contained 53. The numbers suggest *Vogue* contains more nudity, but because of the total number of ads, *Cosmopolitan* has a higher percentage of nudity. *Vogue* contains 526 ads throughout the four issues used in this study, but *Cosmopolitan* contains only 252 ads. In this regard, the hypothesis is supported because 11.51% of *Cosmopolitan*'s total ads contain nudity compared with 10.08% of *Vogue*'s total ads.

The third hypothesis predicts the summer issues will include a higher amount of nude and partially dressed models because in the summer people wear less clothing. The hypothesis was supported in percentages but not in the actual number of ads. In the total amount of summer ads, 14.29% of models were nude, which is a higher percentage than any other season, but because of the total number of ads in each season, it does not contain the highest number of nude models because it has the lowest number of total ads.

In other words, it had the lowest number of nude models but it had the highest percentage of nude models. However, the summer contained the least amount of partially dressed models with 26.37%. The spring actually contained the highest percentage of partially dressed models with 41.83%, but fall contained the highest number of partially dressed models with 30.35% ( $n = 227$ ) because the fall has the highest number of ads. Therefore, the hypothesis was not supported in terms of partially dressed models.

In the fourth hypothesis, it is predicted women will be shown to be less powerful and subordinate to men when male and female models are photographed together. This hypothesis is not supported by the results of the study. Only 26.22% of the total number of ads in the fashion magazines showed women as subordinate to men, but 73.14% of the total ads showed women just as powerful or more powerful than men.

In the fifth hypothesis, it is predicted the magazine ads will show female models more often as victims rather than aggressors. The results of this study support this hypothesis. Females are shown as victims in 5.53% ( $n = 86$ ) of the total ads in the five fashion magazine titles, but females are shown as aggressors in only 0.96% ( $n = 15$ ) of the total ads.

*Vogue* had the largest amount of total ads coded with 526. *Elle* had 334 total ads coded, *Glamour* had 259, *Cosmopolitan* had 252, and *Marie Claire* had 185 (see Table A1). *Vogue* had the highest number of ads featuring both male and female models with 68 ads. *Cosmopolitan* and *Elle* each had 38 ads featuring male and female models. *Glamour* included 35 ads with both male and female models, and *Marie Claire* included 19 (see Table A2). In terms of seasons and total advertisements, the fall issues contained the highest number of ads with 748, followed by spring with 361. Winter magazines



contained 265 total ads, and summer issues had the lowest amount of total ads with 182 ads (see Table A3). The summer issues also had the least amount of total pages, and fall issues had the highest number of total pages.

All ads were categorized, and results showed the five magazines, taken together, published more fashion-related ads than any other category. The fashion category had 38.95% ( $n = 606$ ) of the total ads, followed by beauty with 30.98% ( $n = 482$ ) of the total ads. The category with the third highest number of ads overall was fragrance with 9.58% ( $n = 149$ ) of the total ads. As for the individual publications and categories, *Vogue* included the highest number of accessory ads with 12.17% ( $n = 64$ ), followed by *Elle* with 7.78% ( $n = 26$ ).

The “big-ticket” advertising categories included banking, education, insurance, and technology. *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, and *Vogue* each contained one banking ad, and *Glamour* and *Marie Claire* did not feature any banking ads at all. The winter season contained the highest number of banking ads with just 0.75% ( $n = 2$ ). No banking ads were shown in spring or summer seasons. The only magazine to feature college education ads was *Cosmopolitan* with 1.19% ( $n = 3$ ). Education ads were not shown in the summer, but the winter had the highest amount of education ads with only 0.38% ( $n = 1$ ). *Marie Claire* featured the highest number of insurance ads with 1.08% ( $n = 2$ ). *Elle* did not feature any insurance ads in any of the issues examined. Winter magazines did not feature any insurance ads, but the summer issues contained the most insurance ads with only 0.55% ( $n = 1$ ). Overall, the magazines featured 0.77% ( $n = 12$ ) technology ads with women included in the images. *Cosmopolitan* featured the largest amount of technology ads with 1.98% ( $n = 5$ ). *Marie Claire* had 1.62% ( $n = 3$ ) technology ads, *Elle* had 0.60%

( $n = 2$ ), and *Glamour* had 0.39% ( $n = 1$ ), and *Vogue* had 0.19% ( $n = 1$ ) out of the total number of advertisements in each magazine. The winter season featured the highest amount of technology ads with 1.89% ( $n = 5$ ). The spring season contained the least amount of technology ads with 0.28% ( $n = 1$ ).

As for smaller purchases like cigarettes and alcohol, *Vogue* was the only magazine to feature any cigarette ads, which equaled 0.38% ( $n = 2$ ) of its total ads for all of the *Vogue* ads included in the study. Both of *Vogue*'s cigarette ads appeared in the summer. The magazines did not feature a large amount of alcohol ads either. *Glamour* did not include any, and *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *Marie Claire*, and *Vogue* each featured one. Fall and winter magazines did not contain any alcohol ads, but the summer issues contained the highest amount of alcohol ads with 1.10% ( $n = 3$ ). The spring issues contained only 0.28% ( $n = 1$ ).

*Vogue* featured the highest number of fashion advertisements with 61.79% ( $n = 325$ ) in the issues examined. *Elle* featured 49.1% ( $n = 164$ ) fashion ads, and *Glamour* featured 53 (20.46%). *Cosmopolitan* contained 12.70% ( $n = 32$ ) fashion ads and *Marie Claire* contained 17.30% ( $n = 32$ ) fashion ads. Not surprisingly, the fall fashion issues displayed the highest amount of fashion ads with 50.67% ( $n = 379$ ). Winter and spring issues were nearly tied with about 34%. The five total winter publications contained 89 fashion ads, and the spring publications contained 126 fashion ads. Summer had the least amount of fashion ads with 12.

*Glamour* featured the highest number of food drink ads with a total of 2.32% ( $n = 6$ ).

As for fragrances, *Cosmopolitan* featured the highest number of fragrance advertisements in the total throughout the year with 17.86% ( $n = 45$ ). *Glamour* contained the second highest amount of fragrance ads with 11.58% ( $n = 30$ ). Winter magazines produced the highest amount of fragrance ads with 23.40% ( $n = 62$ ). Summer contained the lowest number of fragrance ads with only 0.55% ( $n = 1$ ). Fall magazines had 8.16% ( $n = 61$ ) fragrance ads and spring magazines had 6.93% ( $n = 25$ ).

The magazine that placed the highest amount of health ads was *Cosmopolitan* with 8.73% ( $n = 22$ ), followed by *Glamour* with 7.72% ( $n = 20$ ). *Cosmopolitan* also featured the highest amount of hygiene ads with 5.16% ( $n = 13$ ), followed by *Marie Claire* with 3.78% ( $n = 7$ ). The summer issues contained the highest number of health ads with 6.59% ( $n = 12$ ) and the highest amount of hygiene ads with 7.69% ( $n = 14$ ). Sex product ads were only shown in *Cosmopolitan* and *Marie Claire*. Only 0.79% ( $n = 2$ ) were shown in *Cosmopolitan*, and only 0.54% ( $n = 1$ ) were shown in *Marie Claire*. The winter and summer magazines did not include any sex ads, but fall contained 0.27% ( $n = 2$ ) sex ads, and spring magazines contained 0.28% ( $n = 1$ ).

*Elle* included the highest number of underwear ads with 3.29% ( $n = 11$ ), followed by *Marie Claire* with 1.08% ( $n = 2$ ). Summer magazines contained the largest amount of underwear ads with 2.20% ( $n = 4$ ). Winter magazines contained the least amount of underwear ads with 0.38 ( $n = 1$ ; see Tables A4 and A5).

To be coded for relative size, the ad must have had at least one man and woman featured. When a female model was featured with a male model, 32.83% of the total amount of ads demonstrated relative size. *Vogue* featured the highest number of couples in ads illustrating relative size with 36.76% ( $n = 25$ ). The lowest amount of relative size



was displayed in *Marie Claire* with only 21.05% ( $n = 4$ ) of ads. The season with the highest amount of couples depicting relative size was spring with 43.18% ( $n = 19$ ), and the season with the lowest amount was summer with 27.78% ( $n = 5$ ).

To be coded for function ranking, at least one male model and female model were featured in the advertisement. Overall, 46.46% of total ads displayed function ranking. As far as individual magazines, *Elle* had the highest amount of function ranking with 55.26% ( $n = 210$ ). The lowest number of function ranking occurred in *Cosmopolitan* with 42.11% ( $n = 16$ ). The spring season contained the highest amount of function ranking with 45.45% ( $n = 20$ ). The season with the lowest amount of function ranking was summer with 33.33% ( $n = 6$ ).

In addition, 54% of the total ads from all of the magazines displayed feminine touch. In terms of individual magazine titles, *Vogue* displayed the highest number of ads showing feminine touch with 58.17% ( $n = 306$ ), followed by *Elle* with 55.39% ( $n = 185$ ). The lowest amount of feminine touch was found in *Marie Claire* with 47.57% ( $n = 88$ ). The season that displayed the largest amount of feminine touch was winter with 60.75% ( $n = 161$ ). The season that showed the lowest amount of feminine touch was summer with 48.35% ( $n = 88$ ).

In all of the fashion magazines, 26.22% of the total number of ads examined showed women as subordinate. *Vogue* displayed the highest amount of subordination in all of the issues examined with ads 31.56% ( $n = 166$ ). The magazine that displayed the lowest amount of subordination was *Marie Claire* with 17.30% ( $n = 32$ ) of ads. Winter magazines contained the highest amount of subordination with 30.94% ( $n = 82$ ), and summer magazines contained the least amount of subordination with 13.74% ( $n = 25$ ).

In terms of licensed withdrawal, 26.86% of the total amount of fashion magazine ads showed the models displaying licensed withdrawal. In all of the issues examined, *Elle* showed the largest number of models in ads with licensed withdrawal with 35.92% ( $n = 120$ ). *Cosmopolitan* displayed the lowest number of models displaying licensed withdrawal with 20.23% ( $n = 51$ ; see Table A6). Fall and summer magazines both contained approximately 30% of total ads depicting models displaying licensed withdrawal. Fall contained 228 ads displaying licensed withdrawal, and summer contained 55 ads displaying licensed withdrawal. Winter magazines contained the least amount of models displaying licensed withdrawal with 16.60% ( $n = 44$ ; see Table A7).

Overall, the largest number of models in the magazines wore normal, everyday dress, but 9.7% of the models in the total amount of ads in the magazines were actually nude. *Glamour*, *Marie Claire*, and *Vogue* each presented about 10% of the models as nude in the total number of advertisements in each publication (see Table A8). Not surprisingly, the summer magazines contained the largest percentages of nude models in the total amount of ads with 14.29%. The lowest percentage of nudity was displayed in the fall with 7.49% of the total number of ads. The winter season displayed 12.83% ( $n = 34$ ) nude female models, and 9.7% ( $n = 35$ ) of the models were nude in the spring. Surprisingly, the summer season actually had the least amount of partially dressed models with 26.37% ( $n = 48$ ). Spring displayed the highest percentages of partially dressed models with 41.83%, followed by the winter season with 38.49% of the total quantity of ads. In the fall, 30.35% ( $n = 227$ ) of ads showed models as partially dressed. Summer actually had the highest amount of normal, everyday dress models with 56.04% ( $n = 102$ ; see Table A9).

With the location coding in all of the magazines examined, 3.6% of the total number of models were shown in bed, but only 0.84% were shown in an office setting. *Cosmopolitan* showed 7.14% ( $n = 18$ ) of female models in bed. For example, fragrance ads generally showed female models in bed wearing lingerie if anything at all, and a razor and shave gel ad showed a male and female model naked in bed. On the other hand, *Cosmopolitan* showed only 0.79% ( $n = 2$ ) models in an office or workplace setting in all of the issues examined. *Elle* showed the lowest number of models in bed with 1.80% ( $n = 6$ ), and *Glamour* showed the largest amount of women in an office setting with a total of 1.54% ( $n = 4$ ; see Table A10). The summer season showed the largest amount of models in bed with 4.40% ( $n = 8$ ). The summer also depicted the largest number of models in an office setting with 1.65% ( $n = 3$ ). Winter magazines, however, contained the least amount of women in an office setting with 0.38% ( $n = 1$ ; see Table A11).

In all of the magazines issues examined, 36.63% of the models in the advertisements were depicted as objects. The issues of *Cosmopolitan* depicted the highest percentage of models as sex objects with 50.79%. *Vogue*, on the other hand, depicted 25.48% of models as sex objects (see Table A12). The four seasons were fairly even in terms of objectification and percentages. The fall season contained 37.97% ( $n = 284$ ) of ads that depicted models as objects, winter featured 35.09% ( $n = 93$ ), spring had 37.12% ( $n = 134$ ), and summer had 32.42% ( $n = 59$ ).

In terms of victim and aggressor coding, 5.53% ( $n = 86$ ) of female models were depicted as victims in all of the magazines, and only 0.96% ( $n = 15$ ) of female models were shown as aggressors. The magazine that included the highest number of victims in advertising was *Vogue* with 9.13% ( $n = 48$ ). *Marie Claire* depicted the lowest number of



models as victims with 1.08% ( $n = 2$ ). *Marie Claire* did not show any models as aggressors, but *Vogue* also depicted the highest number of models as aggressors with 1.52% ( $n = 8$ ); see Table 13). The spring season contained the largest percentage of models depicted as victims with 6.09%. The summer contained the least with 3.30%. Fall depicted 5.88% ( $n = 44$ ) of models as victims, and winter included 14 5.28% ( $n = 14$ ). The summer magazines did not contain any images of women depicted as aggressors. The fall contained the highest number of models as aggressors with 1.13% ( $n = 10$ ), followed by the spring season at 0.83% ( $n = 3$ ), and the winter season with 0.75% ( $n = 2$ ).

Most of the models in all of the magazines were shown having no physical contact with each other, but 4.75% were shown involved in very intimate contact. In addition, 14.84% of the models in all of the ads examined were involved in intimate contact. As for individual titles, *Glamour* contained the highest number of people engaged in very intimate contact with 9.43% ( $n = 5$ ) of couples. *Marie Claire* showed 21.21% ( $n = 7$ ) of couples engaged in intimate contact. *Elle* depicted the largest amount of models not engaged in any contact at all with 57.75% ( $n = 41$ ) of ads. The lowest amount of very intimate contact was also portrayed in *Elle* with only ad 1.41% ( $n = 1$ ), and *Elle* also had the lowest amount of intimate contact with only 5.63% ( $n = 4$ ). *Cosmopolitan* had the lowest number of models, 28.81% ( $n = 17$ ; see Table A14), showing no contact at all. The fall magazines showed the highest number of couples engaged in very intimate contact with 5.52% ( $n = 10$ ), followed by spring magazines with 5.26% ( $n = 4$ ). The winter season showed the lowest amount of models engaged in very intimate contact with one couple 2.33% ( $n = 1$ ). The summer showed the highest number

models engaged in intimate contact with 24.32% ( $n = 9$ ), and the spring season had the least amount of couples engaged in intimate contact with 10.53% ( $n = 8$ ; see Table A15).

Surprisingly, only 7.65% of the total ads had sexual reference within the text overall. The magazine that had the most ads with sexual text was *Cosmopolitan* with 13.10% ( $n = 33$ ). For example, an ad for Venus razors in the April 2009 issue includes the text, “The goddess of check please,” implying if a woman uses this razor, she and her man will go home and go to bed without finishing dinner. *Vogue* contained the lowest amount of ads with sexual text with 3.61% ( $n = 19$ ), but *Vogue* and *Elle* featured the highest number of ads that did not include any text at all (see Table A16). The summer magazines had the highest amount of sexual reference in text with 18.68% ( $n = 34$ ). The season with the second highest amount of sexual reference in text was the winter season with 7.17% ( $n = 19$ ). Spring contained 6.09% ( $n = 22$ ) of ads with sexual reference in text, and the fall season contained the least amount of sexual reference in text with 5.88% ( $n = 44$ ).

Male models were wearing more clothing than the female models in 56.06% of all of the fashion magazine advertisements. The magazine with the largest amount of females wearing less clothing than male models in ads was *Cosmopolitan* with 65.79% ( $n = 25$ ). The magazine with the lowest amount of female models wearing less clothing than male models was *Marie Claire* with eight 42.11% ( $n = 8$ ; see Table A17). In the summer, 94.44% ( $n = 17$ ) of ads in *Marie Claire* illustrated female models wearing less than male models. The spring season showed 65.91% ( $n = 29$ ) of female models wearing less than males, and 54.84% ( $n = 17$ ) female models in the winter wore less than male models.

## CHAPTER VI

### Discussion

It was predicted that women would be portrayed as sexualized beings in the majority of the advertisements in the fashion magazines. Although this hypothesis was not supported in the findings, 36.63% of women were objectified in the total number of ads, meaning 570 ads showed women being objectified. While this is not the majority, it is still a large number of female models, averaging about one in three female models. It is nice that the majority of the women were found not shown dehumanized in this study, but it could still be harmful for women to view fashion magazines and see one in three females in advertisements being objectified. Results such as these could cause damage to the female psyche. It seems females place emphasis on sexuality when determining their level physical attractiveness, but other factors, such as weight, also seem to play a large role in determining the level of physical attractiveness. It appears sexuality in ads may not always make sense to the reader, but it most likely at least got their attention and got that person thinking about the brand. If sexuality in an ad does not have an obvious purpose, it risks driving away future consumers. The magazines actually are not the problem when it comes to overt sexuality in advertisements because they do not choose or discriminate between ads. The responsibility should lie with the company or brand because each company approves its ads before they go to print. Therefore, maybe more research needs to be done on which brands promote the most sexuality in their advertising campaigns.

In *Cosmopolitan*, women were actually portrayed as objects more often than they were not. Therefore, *Cosmopolitan* was the only publication that did support the first



hypothesis. Women in 128 of *Cosmopolitan's* total number of advertisements were depicted as sexual individuals, and women in 124 ads were not. This is probably because *Cosmopolitan* has a reputation for being more sexualized than the other publications examined. While women in *Cosmopolitan* are often shown as sexually powerful, this study shows women in *Cosmopolitan* are also presented as objects more often than not, which can be potentially harmful for subscribers who read the publication each month.

In this study, it was somewhat supported *Cosmopolitan* contained more sex and nudity than the other magazines. Because of the total number of ads, *Glamour* and *Vogue* also displayed equal or larger amounts of sex and nudity. As stated previously, *Cosmopolitan's* advertising is more sexualized than other fashion magazines, so it is to be expected that it will show more sex or nudity as a whole. *Glamour* shows a large amount of sex in its advertisements but seems to show large amounts of positive sexuality, meaning women are enjoying themselves and not being forced into any activities. According to the results, 10.08% ( $n = 53$ ) of women were nude in *Vogue's* total number of advertisements examined. However, 9.13% ( $n = 48$ ) women in *Vogue's* ads were also shown as sexual victims, demonstrating that *Vogue* did not show women as sexually powerful, and in some cases were shown as the opposite. Victimization of women in *Vogue* occurs so often that its younger readers might start to think that kind of behavior is normal and acceptable. As mentioned earlier, magazine editors do not choose the advertising content. Magazines have to make money and will generally use most ads in order to generate revenue. Advertisers, however, focus on target audiences and will only advertise in publications that target their specific audience. It would be a waste of time

and money for advertisers to advertise in a magazine not targeting the audience they want to reach.

It was hypothesized women would be wearing less clothing and be shown as nude more often in the summer issues of the fashion magazines. This was not supported in numbers because the summer magazines had the lowest number of total ads, but it was supported in percentages for the same reason. In other words, the percentage of nude models is high because the number of total ads is low. The spring magazines displayed the largest percentage of partially dressed models, most likely because designers debut their summer collections in the spring. People who work at magazines must think several months in advance because they go to press and are published a couple of months early. For example, editors will work on the July issue in the spring. Therefore, summer clothing ads are actually displayed in the spring issues of fashion magazines. The fall season contained the highest number of partially dressed models because the fall issues contain the highest number of total ads. Fall fashion magazines generally use September as their fall fashion issue, and magazines such as *Vogue* and *Elle* often have upwards of 500 pages in this issue alone.

The fourth hypothesis predicted women would be shown as less powerful and subordinate to men when male and female models are shown in the same image. While this is technically not supported, 26.22% of the total women in all of the fashion magazine titles were shown as subordinate and less powerful than men. That averages to about one in four women in all of the fashion magazine ads examined. Although the majority of women were shown as equal to men, one in four women is still a significant number. In fact, in terms of actual numbers, 408 women in the magazines were shown as

subordinate. This kind of average can still be potentially damaging to young women who consistently view magazines because they might start to believe they should be subordinate to men. *Cosmopolitan* actually shows the least amount of women in ads as subordinate, which makes sense because the majority of their articles are about taking charge in the bedroom, in the office, and in life in general.

The fifth hypothesis predicted magazines would show female models as victims more often than aggressors. This is supported in the findings. Although the other hypotheses were not all fully supported in the findings, they go hand in hand with this hypothesis. One in four women in the fashion magazines was shown as subordinate and less powerful than men, and one in three women in the fashion magazines was objectified. It is only natural that women would not be shown as aggressors because aggressors would be committing acts that make them obviously more powerful than the man or other women shown in the ad. Females are most likely shown as victims in 5.53% of the total number of ads because, as Kilbourne (1990) said, sexual victimization in fashion advertising is depicted as glamorous and exciting.

Through this coding process, ads from each category proved to be overtly sexual. Accessories ads were often highly sexualized. For example, an accessories ad in the spring issue of *Marie Claire* featured a woman in a red dress. The woman was almost touching herself between the legs, displaying a huge diamond ring. The text read, "It's not such a dirty little secret." In a Hearts on Fire accessories ad for the September issue of *Vogue*, a man was lying on top of a woman who was wearing only diamond earrings. The text read, "Love intensely." Several of the magazines throughout the year included an



Ebel accessories ad showing supermodel Gisele Bündchen completely nude in bed, wearing only a watch.

Many fashion ads were also overtly sexual. In a sexualized ad for Bebe in the September *Vogue*, models were partially dressed in black bras and tight black clothing (see Figure 1). One of the models in another one of the Bebe ads was even holding a pair of handcuffs. On the next page, another ad for Bebe showed models wearing equally revealing clothing but holding whips. A Marciano ad demonstrated how women are perceived as overtly sexual beings in fashion magazine advertisements (see Figure 2). In a particularly sexual Ed Hardy fashion ad for the September *Vogue*, a female model was straddling a male model. The male model was not wearing a shirt, and the female looks like she's not wearing pants (see Figure 3). Cesare Paciotti fashion ads were also exceedingly sexualized. In one of the Cesare Paciotti ads for September *Vogue*, the female model was bent over, wearing no top, arm in front of breasts, wearing just leather pants and stilettos. In another, the same model was lying down with only suspenders covering her breasts (see Figure 4). In a shocking ad from Armani Exchange for the April 2009 issue of *Cosmopolitan*, the models actually looked to be partaking in a giant orgy. A woman was mounting a man just a few feet away from another woman who was pulling down a different man's pants. A few feet behind them, there was a man with his pants pulled down, butt in full view, as he appeared to be holding his crotch. Guess? ads almost always appeared to be overtly sexual. In a Guess? ad in the February 2009 issue of *Elle*, a woman in skin-tight jeans was grinding on top of a man while he groped her. Although sexual ads are expected in fashion magazines, some ads like the Armani Exchange ad were simply shocking. Turning a page from the masthead to an advertisement of that sort

is enough to catch someone off guard. Ads such as that will catch people's attention, but possibly for all the wrong reasons.

Several ads for clothing actually featured nude models. A Versace ad in the September 2008 issue of *Vogue* featured a nude model sitting on the couch. You could not see anything completely inappropriate, but the only articles of clothing advertised in this ad are a bag and shoes (see Figure 5). In a Valextra ad also in the September 2008 *Vogue*, a nude model was positioned with a photo of a bag next to her but not actually with the bag. The model did not make any connection to the brand, and the brand did not even attempt to establish a connection between the two. On the next page, a male model was actually objectified as well. This Valextra ad placed a nude male model with a briefcase near him. This made a bit more of a connection because it's actually a brief case rather than a photo of a briefcase, but he is still nude for an ad for a clothing and accessory brand. In fashion ads, it is expected that the models will be wearing the clothes being advertised. When they are not and placed with only a photo of the item, it might make the reader wonder why the model does not have on the clothing. Nude models in fashion advertisements will attract people's attention, but advertisers should be careful they do not get carried away, as nudity can be offensive and unnecessary.

Although not common, a handful of food/drink ads were overtly sexual. In an ad for Glaceau Smartwater in the July *Cosmopolitan*, actress Jennifer Anniston was pictured nude, caressing and kissing a bottle of Smartwater. The text read, "Pure infatuation." In the July issue of *Glamour*, a different Smartwater ad was featured. Anniston was nude again, caressing the water bottle. In the July issue of *Vogue*, another image of a nude Anniston for Smartwater appeared with text that read, "Pure temptation. You know you

want it.” For a brand of water, this type of advertising seemed to be over the top. The ads were done tastefully, and Anniston looked beautiful, but the nudity and text seemed out of place for an advertisement for water. In this case, however, at least the brand made a connection between the nudity and the product. By being nude and make-up free, Anniston was displaying beauty and purity, and the water is supposed to be in its pure and most delicious form.

Fragrance ads, most likely due to the sensuality associated with perfume, almost always were sexualized. In a popular fragrance ad for Givenchy, the text read “simply irresistible” while actress Liv Tyler sat in a sheer dress on a bed. One of the most overtly sexual fragrance ads was an ad for Calvin Klein’s fragrance Secret Obsession. Actress Eva Mendes was nude, in bed and obviously in a state of pleasure (see Figure 6). The Calvin Klein Secret Obsession print ads were also part of a television campaign, but the television ad was deemed so sexual that it actually had to be cut down considerably to be at all appropriate (Bullock, 2008). Mendes argued the commercial was not inappropriate at all but admitted it featured intimate qualities that make people uncomfortable. *Elle* described this as the standard for Calvin Klein (Bullock, 2008). Calvin Klein always pushes the envelope with its advertisements. They are attention-getting and memorable, which is something advertisers strive for. However, the ads often create such a backlash that the brand must pull the ads. Having to pull ads from the media has worked in Calvin Klein’s favor because it has boosted their sales, but it doesn’t always work that way, and sometimes such backlash can hurt a brand. Advertisers should be careful not to offend consumers or potential consumers.



A campaign for Intimately Beckham, David and Victoria Beckham's fragrances, featured the line, "Seductive fragrances for him and her." One of the Intimately Beckham ads showed them nude and embracing, staring intensely at the camera. In another fragrance ad for Walgreens, a model appeared nude while the text beside her reads "a fragrance about passion" and "unmistakably intoxicating." Several fragrance ads showed completely nude models or models that gave the illusion of nudity (see Figure 7). Other fragrance ads showed models ready for the bedroom. Estee Lauder's Sensuous fragrance ad presented several famous models and popular actresses such as Gwyneth Paltrow in men's white button-up shirts and underwear. The white shirts were unbuttoned and open, strategically covering their breasts (see Figure 8). The women were sitting on beds, and the styling of the ad made it look like each of the women had just had sex or soon would be having sex.

Ads that sell sex products like KY obviously will more often than not show people in intimate settings like a bedroom, and these ads were no different. Most of these ads showed a male and female nude in bed. Underwear ads were quite tame in most cases, but some Victoria's Secret ads were highly sexualized. This was not a surprise due to the company's sexualized television commercials, runway shows, and store windows, but the ads still displayed overt sexuality. In a Victoria's Secret ad in the October *Elle*, only one lingerie-clad female model was shown lying down seductively on a bed (see Figure 9). The camera was positioned right above her head. The reader couldn't see her face but had a clear view of her breasts, stomach, and underwear. By not giving the woman a face, it implies that only her body is important. Objectifying women in such

ways can be harmful to young women especially because this kind of ad implies women aren't important unless they are beautiful and able to please a man.

Ads like the Victoria's Secret ad are obviously going to be more sexualized than other ads because of the brand and type of dress. Some ads in which models appear nude were actually less sexualized than ads in which models were wearing underwear or full dress. In an ad in the October 2008 issue of *Elle* for the retail company Bluefly.com, a naked woman stood in an airport waiting to go through security while the text explained she had nothing to wear to Paris (see Figure 10). This ad was not necessarily presented in an overtly sexualized manner, but nonetheless the audience can plainly see her butt and side of her breasts. Additionally, a few ads contained nude models but were not trying to exude sex at all. A popular ad for Breast Cancer Awareness was featured in several of the issues of the magazines. The model was nude but in no way was presented as sexual (see Figure 11). When the advertisers make an obvious connection to the message of the image, readers will be more likely to accept the advertisement rather than reject it because of the sexuality. A reader is probably much more likely to understand why sex is used to sell bras rather than why sex is used to sell a hamburger.

Some of the ads that portrayed females as victims were quite disturbing. Ads for Nina Ricci often depicted the models as victims. One of the models appeared to be falling to the ground outside in the snow as the other weak-looking model touches her head (see Figure 12). In a clothing ad for Gucci in the October 2008 *Elle*, the models looked drugged (see Figure 13). In a Prada ad in the October 2008 *Elle*, a woman looked scared while a shadow looms over her. An ad for Giorgio Armani in the September 2008 *Vogue* featured two models. One appeared to be crying and the other appeared lifeless. A Jimmy

Choo ad in September 2008 *Vogue* shows a model lying in a bathtub. The reader can see only from her thighs down. She's pale and visibly wearing only a pair of stilettos. Her feet were propped up on the side of the tub, and it resembled some sort of crime scene. The September 2008 *Vogue* depicted models in 9.91% ( $n = 32$ ) of ads as victims. In fact, of the first 16 ads featuring at least one woman in the September 2008 issue of *Vogue*, five ads victimized the models. In the April 2009 *Marie Claire*, a Juicy Couture fragrance ad depicted models as broken dolls. The models looked lifeless and helpless, and they were actually much smaller than the perfume bottle. With the development of recent books and films such as *Twilight* and television shows like *True Blood*, vampires are currently being depicted in the media as sexy and exciting. In a *True Blood* ad in the July 2009 issue of *Glamour*, the male vampire was on top of a female human and had just bitten her. The text says, "It hurts so good." Other models are presented as completely lifeless. In an Yves Saint Laurent ad in the October 2008 issue of *Elle*, the model is presented to look like a mannequin rather than a human. This data seems to mean that people, to some degree, find it acceptable to degrade women because it is used in advertising, which is used to sell a product. Clearly some companies and advertisers think that victims will appeal to the public.

Calvin Klein has been known to push the sexual envelope with advertising. Two ads in the April 2009 *Glamour* were no different. In the first Calvin Klein advertising spread, two male models and one female model were shown. All three models were topless and caressing each other. The woman, however, was practically pinned down by the men. On the next two pages, the same models were featured. The female was topless and lying across both men while the men completely ignored her as she stared into space.



In the February 2009 *Elle*, Calvin Klein's CK One cologne ad continued to victimize, although the brand has been criticized for CK One ads in the past (Bullock, 2008). The partially dressed models in this ad looked sick or drugged as they walked along the beach.

Ads that victimized the female models were simply disturbing. This kind of advertising technique has to be one of the most harmful because advertisers are basically showing women that it is glamorous and exciting to be a victim of sexual crimes. These types of attitudes about such victimization can make people think it is acceptable to commit crimes against women. When women are shown on drugs in fashion advertisements, it enforces the idea that it is acceptable in society to use drugs. Models being too thin in fashion magazine advertisements used to be the only concern, but now, being featured as a victim should also be a concern. If women start to see these images more and more often, the potential damage it can cause will increase as well.

In an example of a female as an aggressor, a Fendi ad in the April 2009 *Elle* showed a male model lying on the floor while the female model stood over him. An ad for Dsquared in the May 2009 *Vogue* portrayed two women in a physical fight. In addition, a few ads depicted women as completely out of control. In an ad for Trident Splash gum, a woman was pictured in an office getting ready to throw a chair while another woman and man observed in confusion. In an ad for Treximet medicine, a woman literally removed her head and held it in her hands. In the September 2008 *Vogue*, a Juicy Couture ad showed a model cradling a bottle of perfume. The model actually was drinking from the bottle with a straw. Several ads directed toward women were actually quite mean, which feeds into the idea women need fashion magazines and the products

they advertise to help them overcome flaws. An ad for Benefit cosmetics in the October *Cosmopolitan* featured a man, a woman, and a salesman. The man, presumably the woman's husband, said, "'You're tellin' me this little bad boy will diffuse her dark circles & fine lines...SOLD!'"

Sexual reference in advertising text wasn't as common as expected. An example of sexual references in text was found in a popular Revlon mascara ad. The text read, "Lashes you lust after" (see Figure 14). An ad for Chanel mascara that appeared in the October 2008 issue of *Glamour* included text that reads, "Audacious curves. The ultimate seduction." In another mascara ad for Estee Lauder in the October issue of *Marie Claire*, the text read, "daringly full, sensuously curved, all-out seductive lashes." The text also referred to the mascara as "flirtatious." A Donna Karan fragrance ad read, "A fragrance to seduce the senses." In an October 2008 *Marie Claire* Vassarette underwear ad that didn't actually show the underwear, a woman was facing the camera, but her face was cut off. The reader only could see her from waist to neck. A few buttons were undone on her blouse to slightly expose her breasts. The text read, "Why do they put the top two buttons on blouses anyway?" In a CoverGirl ad, the text read, "There's no such thing as too close." Even Reebok used sexual reference in text. In an ad in the April 2009 issue of *Glamour*, the text explained their shoes would be perfect for "the walk of shame."

Male models were sometimes objectified in the women's fashion magazines as well, although not nearly as often as female models. An ad for Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams home design in the October *Elle* featured a male model being objectified. A man with no shirt and unbuttoned pants was sitting on new furniture. The text said, "Our 'business model' is designed to expose you to a more comfortable shopping experience"

(see Figure 15). Although the fashion magazines evaluated were specifically for women, women are objectified more often than men because the clothes advertised in such magazines are designed for women. Women reading the women's magazines will most likely be looking for clothing and product ideas for themselves, not for the men in their lives, and advertisers know this. Advertisers in fashion magazines do extensive studies before actually designing the advertisements, even if some ads do not appear that way.

Some ads seemed to convey the message that the female model was less important than the product. In an ad for a Chanel fragrance, a partially dressed female model was actually the size of the perfume bottle. In addition, some of the sexualized ads were confusing. In a few of the ads, it is not even clear what the model is selling. In an ad for Sally Beauty Supply, a partially dressed Paris Hilton faced the camera. It was unclear what she was selling or representing because there was no other text that gives even the slightest hint. It could possibly have been just for makeup or hair products since it is for a beauty supply store, but it was very unclear without any sort of direction given. In some ads, the product that was being advertised wasn't even shown on the model. In a Movado ad in the October 2008 *Elle*, the model was not wearing the watch. Instead, the watch was shown larger than the model (see Figure 16). In a similar Seiko accessories ad in the October 2008 *Glamour*, the watch advertised was not on the model. Also, in a Skechers shoe ad for the April 2009 *Cosmopolitan*, the model wasn't wearing shoes. This kind of advertising can reinforce the idea that women are only as valuable as their beauty or body. It could be a damaging thought if women take such advertisements too seriously.

Although *Cosmopolitan* included the highest amount of sexuality in their advertising and is generally known as being a sexually liberal publication, *Cosmopolitan*



featured the highest number of larger, important items in their advertising. By including images of women making educational, technology, and insurance decisions in advertising campaigns, *Cosmopolitan* showed the most progress in at least making an attempt to show women are equal to men and are often the head of their households. *Cosmopolitan* is directed more toward the single woman than the other publications, however, which could be the reason for this, as the editors would be most likely to recognize women will probably have to make these big purchases by themselves now or later on in life.

*Cosmopolitan*, out of all the fashion magazines evaluated, most successfully balanced sexuality and important items and life choices. Whether *Cosmopolitan* advertising representatives contacted colleges like The Art Institute to advertise in the publication or if the college's advertising representatives contacted the magazine is unclear. It would be interesting to find out because having the likes of colleges and insurance companies advertise is a step in the right direction. Women have so many other concerns in life, and many might not consider looking sexy high on their list of things to do. Choosing a college or buying a car might be more important or just as important as attracting men.

### *Limitations*

As with most other studies on this topic, this study codes only advertisements that were at least a half-page in size. This eliminates all of the overtly sexual ads in the last few pages of magazines like *Cosmopolitan*. That last section includes smaller classified ads for phone sex and sex toys, to name a few. Many of those ads include nude or scantily clad models in overtly sexual poses as well as with accompanying blatantly sexual text. Since these ads are only in the last few pages and are significantly smaller than the other ads, they were not counted in this study. If they had been, *Cosmopolitan's*

numbers and percentages would have changed considerably. The other women's magazines I examined do not include classified ads, so it would not be fair to include them in this study. Also, a female model had to be present in an ad for the ad to be coded in this study. There are certainly ads that do not contain a female or even a male model that could have sexual references, but these were not included in the study because this study was focused primarily on the examination of women in advertising. The study of ads with men or without people could be investigated in the future.

Another limitation of this study is not every issue of the entire year was coded. A randomly selected issue of each magazine from each season was coded in an attempt to compensate for seasonal changes. Because of previous research and this research, there is no reason to believe that will hurt this study in any way. Magazine issues within seasons have similar advertising content. For example, the summer issues of *Vogue* have similar advertising content because most fashion designers change their advertising campaigns only to display the season's new clothing. In magazines, advertisements are consistent for a few months and then the designer or company will begin to advertise a new item. The advertising content of the entire year would most likely stay constant with the results of my study. It is key to show readers a product a few times so that it stays in their heads. Although the different issues of magazines will not negatively affect the research, this concern could be eliminated in the future by using the same issues from each season of each magazine. Also, using a larger sample of magazines could eliminate this concern. While it is unlikely that these results would be different from other magazines with similar content, a larger sample could be helpful for future researchers. Magazines such

as *Allure*, *Nylon*, *InStyle*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *W* could be analyzed for the same topic as well.

Reichert and Lambaise (2003) indicated this type of research could be difficult to code. Lyonski (2005) said it might be complicated to evaluate sexual advertising because some people might think an ad is sexist where others might think it is sexy. To avoid this, the guidelines presented by previous researchers were followed, and the coding process is described as clearly as possible. Also, a variety of coding categories were utilized to try to eliminate this concern.



## CHAPTER VII

### Conclusion

This study shows that *Vogue*, which has always been considered the most fashionable of the fashionable magazines, is also the magazine with the most advertising that shows women as victims. *Marie Claire*, however, had the lowest numbers for nearly all of the categories involving objectification and sex. *Marie Claire* seemed to stick closely to its editorial purpose, "More than just a pretty face," because they were least likely to present women as sex objects. *Cosmopolitan* showed the most progress for single women as the magazine included the largest number of advertisements for "big-ticket" items like insurance and education. Insurance and education advertisers rarely bought advertising space in the other magazines I examined, which shows such advertisers must believe *Cosmopolitan* readers are in their target audience. Colleges such as The Art Institute would not spend money for the ad space if they did not believe it would be effective.

Although several of the hypotheses were not supported, it was still apparent women are objectified and depicted as subordinate and less powerful quite often. Some of the findings are disturbing, and it is no surprise women are affected by the type of negative images of women in advertising campaigns in fashion magazines.

There are several ways to improve this area of study. One way would be to analyze the ways in which men have changed over time in the media. Men also need to be studied in fashion magazine advertising. As Lindner (2004) suggested, men are shown in advertising in unrealistic ways such as being overly muscular and athletic. Andersen and DiDomenico (1990) explain it is possible advertising and content are major sources

for influencing women to be concerned with weight and for men to be focused on shape. Male body image and the concept of the ideal male is a topic that could later be examined to improve this research (Lindner, 2004). It would also be a good idea for more studies to be done on how women are portrayed in men's magazines and how men are portrayed in women's magazines. Also, more research should be done on how men and women are depicted in ads for particular products.

Another topic of future study could be the depiction of other racial groups in women's fashion publications. Stereotypical locations and the subtle stereotypical messages about gender roles should be studied more in depth. It also might be helpful to see if an editor's gender affects the advertising content in a publication. For example, do male or female editors tend to put more sexually explicit ads in publications? In 1986, Kurzbard and Soley (1986) found male advertisers were significantly more likely to use sex appeals in advertising. It would be interesting to find if this still holds true. Also, another area of future research could be based on people's responses to sexual appeals in advertisements compared to advertisements without sexual appeals.

Future research could also focus on the differences between healthy and unhealthy images of sexuality in women's magazines. As far as women being portrayed as victims, research should examine the social effects of these potentially damaging images. Also, more research should be done to examine the consequences of exposure to models because models in magazines are an unattainable ideal for most people. Another future area of research could include the influence of editorial content in young women's magazines and how editorial content has changed throughout the years. It would be interesting to find how some young women's magazines have had to change their

advertising as well as editorial content in order to keep up with younger, sexier magazines.

People might ignore the fact that sex in advertising has always occurred because now it is so much more obvious (Kurzbard & Soley, 1986). Over time, the percentage of ads with sexual content has remained somewhat steady, but the number of actual advertisements in magazines has increased over time, which could explain why people assume there is a larger amount of sexual advertisements in the media (Kurzbard & Soley, 1986). Indeed, this means people are seeing more sex in advertising simply because advertising is more common in terms of numbers now than it used to be.

It is important to follow women's fashion magazines and their advertising approaches because millions of women rely on such magazines for information and advice. The way male and female models are presented in magazine advertising will continue to shape societal values (Klassen et al., 1993). It is not surprising that sexual appeal in advertising occurs so frequently in women's fashion magazines because it seems the two go hand in hand. Women's fashion magazines seem to rely on sex and female insecurity to sell products, and items advertised most often in women's magazines are those easily associated with sex: fashion, beauty, and fragrance.

The extent to which sexism occurs in female fashion magazines is disturbing, such as portraying women as weak, dependent on men, or as victims and aggressors of sexual violence in order to sell a product or idea. In addition, the degree to which women are affected negatively by the female ideal presented in women's fashion magazines is also disturbing, as it raises concern for body image issues, rape myth acceptance, and inequality between the sexes. Positive sexual messages and images are also displayed in



women's fashion magazines, but the negative messages and images are overpowering them.

As the times change, advertising and modern women's magazines change as well. It is important to research young women's magazines often because they provide insight to how women think and to what kind of information they are seeing on at least a monthly basis. There are millions of women who subscribe to or pick up copies of fashion magazines at the newsstand, and because these magazines are such a personal medium, there can't be enough research done on the effect they can have on women and their wellbeing.

## CHAPTER VIII

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## CHAPTER IX

## Appendix A

Table A1

Total number of ads in women's fashion magazines

<b>Magazine</b>	<b>Number of ads</b>
<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	252
<i>Elle</i>	334
<i>Glamour</i>	259
<i>Marie Claire</i>	185
<i>Vogue</i>	526
Total ads	1556

Table A2

Total number of ads with at least one female and one male

<b>Magazine</b>	<b>Ads with males and females</b>
<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	38
<i>Elle</i>	38
<i>Glamour</i>	35
<i>Marie Claire</i>	19
<i>Vogue</i>	68
Total	198



Table A3

Total number of ads from women's fashion magazines in each of the seasons

Season	Number of ads
Fall	748
Winter	265
Spring	361
Summer	182
Total	1556

Table A4

Percentages of advertising categories in women's fashion magazines

	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	<i>Elle</i>	<i>Glamour</i>	<i>Marie Claire</i>	<i>Vogue</i>
Types of Ads					
Accessories	0.79% (2)	7.78% (26)	5.79% (15)	2.70% (5)	12.17% (64)
Banking	0.40% (1)	0.30% (1)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.19% (1)
Beauty	44.84% (113)	23.95% (80)	43.63% (113)	60.00% (111)	12.36% (65)
Cigarettes	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.38% (2)
Education	1.19% (3)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
Fashion	12.70% (32)	49.10% (164)	20.46% (53)	17.30% (32)	61.79% (325)
Food/drink	1.98% (5)	0.60% (2)	2.32% (6)	2.16% (4)	0.19% (1)
Fragrance	17.86% (45)	7.78% (26)	11.58% (30)	5.41% (10)	7.22% (38)
Gum/mints	1.19% (3)	0.90% (3)	0.39% (1)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
Health	8.73% (22)	1.80% (6)	7.72% (20)	2.70% (5)	1.90% (10)
Home design	0.00% (0)	0.30% (1)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.19% (1)
Household goods	0.79% (2)	0.60% (2)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.19% (1)
Hygiene	5.16% (13)	1.20% (4)	2.72% (7)	3.78% (7)	0.57% (3)
Insurance	0.40% (1)	0.00% (0)	0.39% (1)	1.08% (2)	0.19% (1)
Liquor	0.40% (1)	0.30% (1)	0.00% (0)	0.54% (1)	0.19% (1)
Movies	0.00% (0)	0.30% (1)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
Music	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.39% (1)	0.00% (0)	0.38% (2)
Sex	0.79% (2)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.54% (0)	0.00% (0)
Technology	1.98% (5)	0.60% (2)	0.39% (1)	1.62% (3)	0.19% (1)

	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	<i>Elle</i>	<i>Glamour</i>	<i>Marie Claire</i>	<i>Vogue</i>
Travel	0.00% (0)	0.30% (1)	0.00% (0)	0.54% (1)	0.19% (1)
TV show	0.79% (2)	0.90% (3)	3.09% (8)	0.54% (1)	0.19% (1)
Underwear	0.40% (1)	3.29% (11)	0.77% (2)	1.08% (2)	0.95% (5)
Web site	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.54% (1)	0.76% (4)



Table A5

Advertising categories and percentages from the four seasons in fashion magazines

	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
Types of Ads				
Accessories	5.61% (42)	10.19% (27)	10.53% (38)	2.75% (5)
Banking	0.13% (1)	0.75% (2)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
Beauty	25.13% (188)	20.38% (54)	34.63% (125)	63.19% (115)
Cigarettes	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.28% (1)	0.55% (1)
Education	0.13% (1)	0.38% (1)	0.28% (1)	0.00% (0)
Fashion	50.67% (379)	33.58% (89)	34.90% (126)	6.59% (12)
Food/drink	0.40% (3)	0.75% (2)	1.66% (6)	3.85% (7)
Fragrance	8.16% (61)	23.40% (62)	6.93% (25)	0.55% (1)
Gum/mints	0.27% (2)	0.00% (0)	0.28% (1)	2.20% (4)
Health	3.21% (24)	4.15% (11)	4.43% (16)	6.59% (12)
Home design	0.13% (1)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
Household goods	0.68% (5)	0.38% (1)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
Hygiene	0.94% (7)	1.51% (4)	2.49% (9)	7.69% (14)
Insurance	0.27% (2)	0.00% (0)	0.28% (1)	0.55% (1)
Liquor	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.28% (1)	1.10% (2)
Movies	0.00% (0)	0.75% (2)	0.28% (1)	0.00% (0)
Music	0.13% (1)	0.75% (2)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
Sex	0.27% (2)	0.00% (0)	0.28% (1)	0.00% (0)
Technology	0.53% (4)	1.89% (5)	0.28% (1)	1.10% (2)
Travel	0.13% (1)	0.38% (1)	0.28% (1)	0.00% (0)
TV show	1.34% (10)	0.00% (0)	0.83% (3)	1.10% (2)

	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
Types of Ads				
Underwear	1.34% (10)	0.38% (1)	1.66% (6)	2.20% (4)
Web site	0.40% (3)	0.38% (1)	0.28% (1)	0.00% (0)

Table A6

## Subtle sexual stereotyping in fashion magazine advertisements

	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	<i>Elle</i>	<i>Glamour</i>	<i>Marie Claire</i>	<i>Vogue</i>
Relative size					
Yes	34.11% (13)	31.58% (12)	31.43% (11)	21.05% (4)	36.76% (25)
No	65.79% (25)	68.42% (26)	68.57% (24)	78.95% (15)	63.24% (43)
Function ranking					
Yes	42.11% (16)	55.26% (21)	45.71% (16)	52.63% (10)	42.65% (29)
No	57.89% (22)	44.74% (17)	54.29% (19)	47.37% (9)	57.35% (39)
Feminine touch					
Yes	52.78% (133)	55.39% (185)	50.58% (131)	47.57% (88)	58.17% (306)
No	47.22% (119)	44.61% (149)	49.42% (128)	52.43% (97)	41.83% (220)
Subordination					
Yes	27.38% (69)	26.05% (87)	20.85% (54)	17.30% (32)	31.56% (166)
No	72.62% (183)	73.95% (247)	79.15% (205)	82.70% (153)	68.44% (360)
Licensed withdrawal					
Yes	20.23% (51)	35.92% (120)	22.39% (58)	29.19% (54)	25.67% (135)
No	79.76% (201)	64.07% (214)	77.61% (201)	70.81% (131)	74.33% (391)



Table A7

## Subtle sexual stereotyping in fashion magazine advertisements by season

	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
Relative size				
Yes	28.57% (30)	35.48% (11)	43.18% (19)	27.78% (5)
No	71.43% (75)	65.52% (20)	56.82% (25)	72.22% (13)
Function ranking				
Yes	52.38% (55)	35.48% (11)	45.45% (20)	33.33% (6)
No	47.62% (50)	65.52% (20)	54.55% (24)	66.67% (12)
Feminine touch				
Yes	50.53% (378)	60.75% (161)	59.83% (216)	48.35% (88)
No	49.47% (370)	39.25% (104)	40.17% (145)	51.65% (94)
Subordination				
Yes	26.74% (200)	30.94% (82)	27.98% (101)	13.74% (25)
No	73.26% (548)	69.06% (183)	72.02% (260)	86.26% (157)
Licensed withdrawal				
Yes	30.48% (228)	16.60% (44)	25.21% (91)	30.22% (55)
No	69.52% (520)	83.40% (221)	74.79% (270)	69.78% (127)

Table A8

Type of dress worn by models in fashion magazine advertisements

	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	<i>Elle</i>	<i>Glamour</i>	<i>Marie Claire</i>	<i>Vogue</i>
Body display					
Nude	11.51% (29)	7.19% (24)	10.04% (26)	10.27% (19)	10.08% (53)
Partially	35.71% (90)	38.92% (130)	34.36% (89)	38.38% (71)	28.14% (148)
Normal	46.83% (118)	47.90% (160)	48.65% (126)	43.78% (81)	60.27% (317)
Face shot	5.95% (15)	5.99% (20)	6.95% (18)	6.49% (12)	1.52% (8)

Table A9

Type of dress worn by models in each of the seasons in fashion magazine ads

	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
Body Display				
Nude	7.49% (56)	12.83% (34)	9.70% (35)	14.29% (26)
Partially	30.35% (227)	38.49% (102)	41.83% (151)	26.37% (48)
Normal	57.35% (429)	45.28% (120)	41.83% (151)	56.04% (102)
Face shot	4.81% (36)	2.64% (7)	6.65% (24)	3.30% (6)



Table A10  
Location of models in fashion magazine advertisements

	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	<i>Elle</i>	<i>Glamour</i>	<i>Marie Claire</i>	<i>Vogue</i>
Location					
Bed	7.14% (18)	1.80% (6)	5.41% (14)	2.70% (5)	2.47% (13)
Home	7.94% (20)	8.68% (29)	3.47% (9)	4.32% (8)	12.17% (64)
Office	0.79% (2)	0.90% (3)	1.54% (4)	0.54% (1)	0.57% (3)

Table A11  
Location of models in fashion magazine advertisements in the four seasons

	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
Location				
Bed	3.34% (25)	4.15% (11)	3.32% (12)	4.40% (8)
Home	10.56% (79)	6.42% (17)	7.20% (26)	4.40% (8)
Office	0.94% (7)	0.38% (1)	0.55% (2)	1.65% (3)

Table A12

Percentages of models objectified in fashion magazine advertisements

	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	<i>Elle</i>	<i>Glamour</i>	<i>Marie Claire</i>	<i>Vogue</i>
Objectification					
Yes	50.79% (128)	33.53% (112)	42.08% (109)	47.03% (87)	25.48% (134)
No	49.21% (124)	66.47% (222)	57.92% (150)	52.97% (98)	74.52% (392)



Table A13

Models acting as victims or aggressors in fashion magazine advertisements

	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	<i>Elle</i>	<i>Glamour</i>	<i>Marie Claire</i>	<i>Vogue</i>
Victim					
Yes	2.38% (6)	7.19% (24)	2.32% (6)	1.08% (2)	9.13% (48)
No	97.62% (246)	92.81% (310)	97.68% (257)	98.92% (183)	90.87% (478)
Aggressor					
Yes	0.79% (2)	0.90% (3)	0.77% (2)	0.00% (0)	1.52% (8)
No	99.21% (250)	99.10% (331)	99.23% (257)	100.00% (185)	98.48% (518)

Table A14

Contact between two or more models in fashion magazine advertisements

	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	<i>Elle</i>	<i>Glamour</i>	<i>Marie Claire</i>	<i>Vogue</i>
Contact					
No contact	28.81% (17)	57.75% (41)	37.34% (20)	39.39% (13)	48.76% (59)
Simple contact	45.76% (27)	35.21% (25)	33.96% (18)	33.33% (11)	33.06% (40)
Intimate	16.49% (10)	5.63% (4)	18.87% (10)	21.21% (7)	15.70% (19)
Very intimate	8.47% (5)	1.41% (1)	9.43% (5)	6.06% (2)	2.58% (3)

Table A15

Contact between two or more models in fashion magazine ads by season

	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
Contact				
No contact	46.96% (85)	34.88% (15)	46.05% (35)	40.54% (15)
Simple contact	33.70% (61)	44.19% (19)	38.16% (29)	32.43% (12)
Intimate	13.81% (25)	18.60% (8)	10.53% (8)	24.32% (9)
Very intimate	5.52% (10)	2.33% (1)	5.26% (4)	2.70% (1)

Table A16

Sexual reference in the text of fashion magazine advertisements

	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	<i>Elle</i>	<i>Glamour</i>	<i>Marie Claire</i>	<i>Vogue</i>
Sexual reference					
Yes	13.10% (33)	5.39% (18)	9.65% (25)	12.97% (24)	3.61% (19)
No	86.90% (219)	94.61% (316)	90.35% (234)	91.35% (169)	96.39% (507)



Table A17

Females wearing less than males in fashion magazine advertisements

	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	<i>Elle</i>	<i>Glamour</i>	<i>Marie Claire</i>	<i>Vogue</i>
Females wearing less					
Yes	65.79% (25)	60.53% (23)	60.00% (21)	42.11% (8)	50.00% (34)
No	34.21% (13)	39.47% (15)	40.00% (14)	57.98% (11)	50.00% (34)



Figure 1. An example of a sexualized Bebe clothing advertisement.



Figure 2. This Marciano ad is an example of how women are objectified in advertisements in women's fashion magazines. The men in the ad are staring at her while she touches herself unnaturally in the middle of the street.





Figure 3. Ed Hardy sunglasses advertisement.





Figure 4. Clothing advertisement for Cesare Paciotti.



I 888-721-7219 - VERSACE.COM - ATLANTA - BAL HARBOUR - BIRMINGHAM - DALLAS - HOUSTON - LAS VEGAS - NEW YORK - PARADISE ISLAND - SAN PAULO - SOUTH COAST PLAZA - TROOPS - VANCOUVER

Figure 5. Versace advertisement.





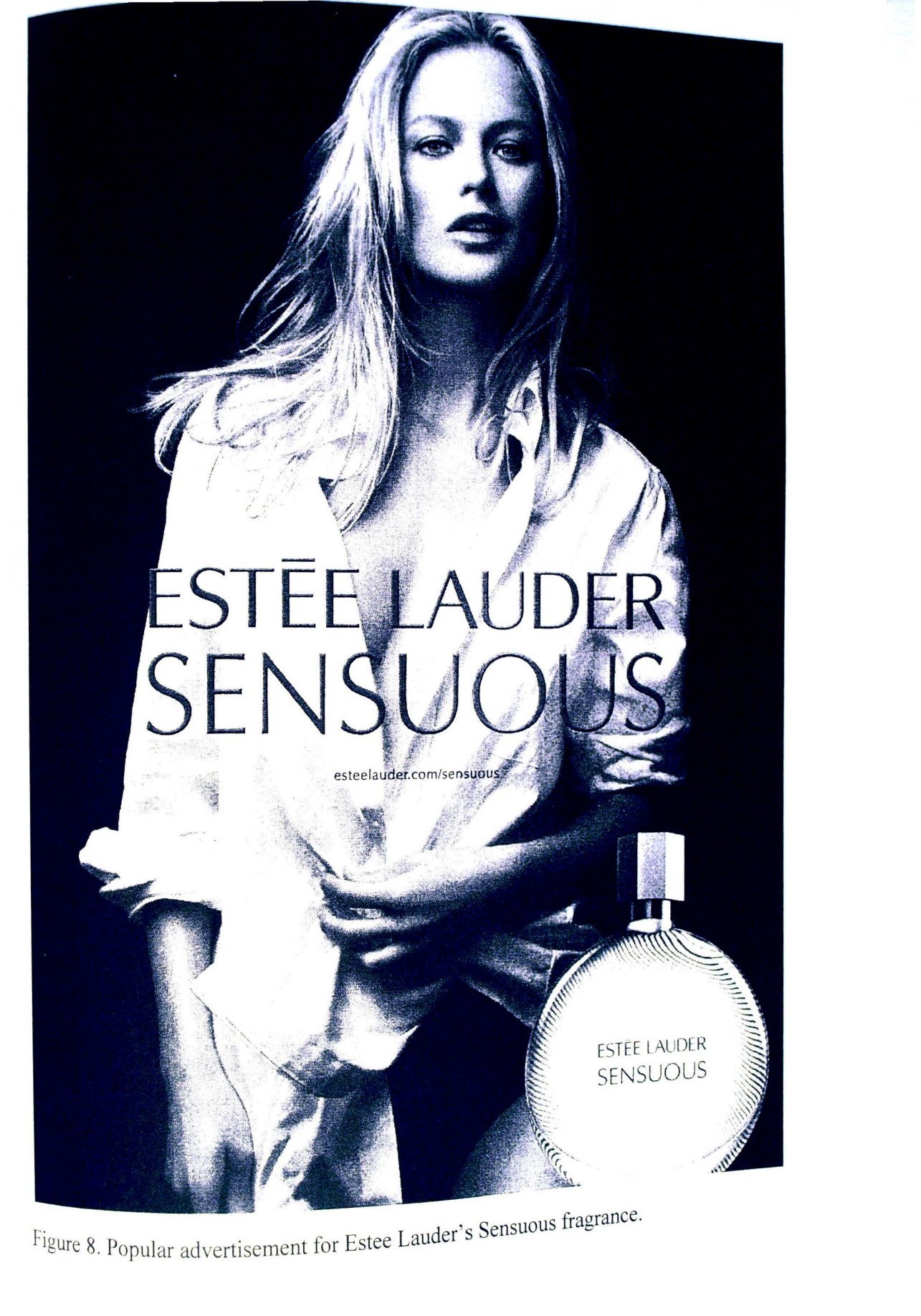
Figure 6. Eva Mendes for Calvin Klein's Secret Obsession fragrance.





Figure 7. Gisele Bündchen for Dolce & Gabbana's fragrance The One.





# ESTÉE LAUDER SENSUOUS

[esteeauder.com/sensuous](http://esteeauder.com/sensuous)

ESTÉE LAUDER  
SENSUOUS

Figure 8. Popular advertisement for Estée Lauder's Sensuous fragrance.





VICTORIA'S SECRET

[VictoriasSecret.com](http://VictoriasSecret.com)

Figure 9. Victoria's Secret advertisement.



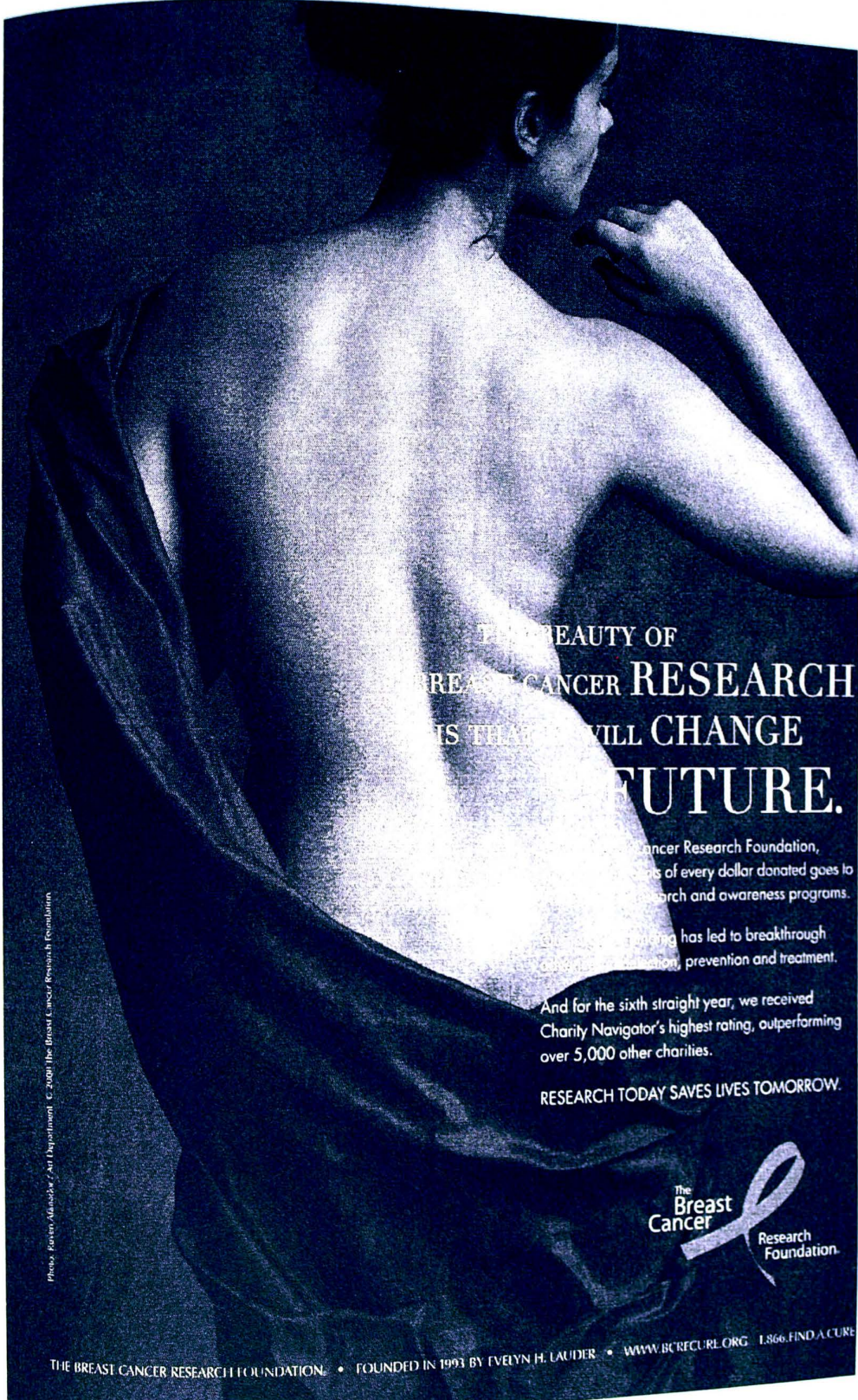
Nothing to wear

to Paris

that's why / BLUEFLY.COM

Figure 10. Advertisement for the online clothing company Bluefly.com.





THE BEAUTY OF  
BREAST CANCER RESEARCH  
IS THAT IT WILL CHANGE  
THE FUTURE.

The Breast Cancer Research Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, ensures that 100% of every dollar donated goes to fund breast cancer research and awareness programs.

Our research funding has led to breakthrough discoveries in diagnosis, prevention and treatment.

And for the sixth straight year, we received Charity Navigator's highest rating, outperforming over 5,000 other charities.

RESEARCH TODAY SAVES LIVES TOMORROW.



Photo: Robert Mapplethorpe / Art Department. © 2008 The Breast Cancer Research Foundation

THE BREAST CANCER RESEARCH FOUNDATION • FOUNDED IN 1993 BY EVELYN H. LAUDER • [WWW.BCREURL.ORG](http://WWW.BCREURL.ORG) 1.866.FIND.A.CURE

Figure 11. An advertisement for The Breast Cancer Research Foundation demonstrates body display does not have to be sexualized.



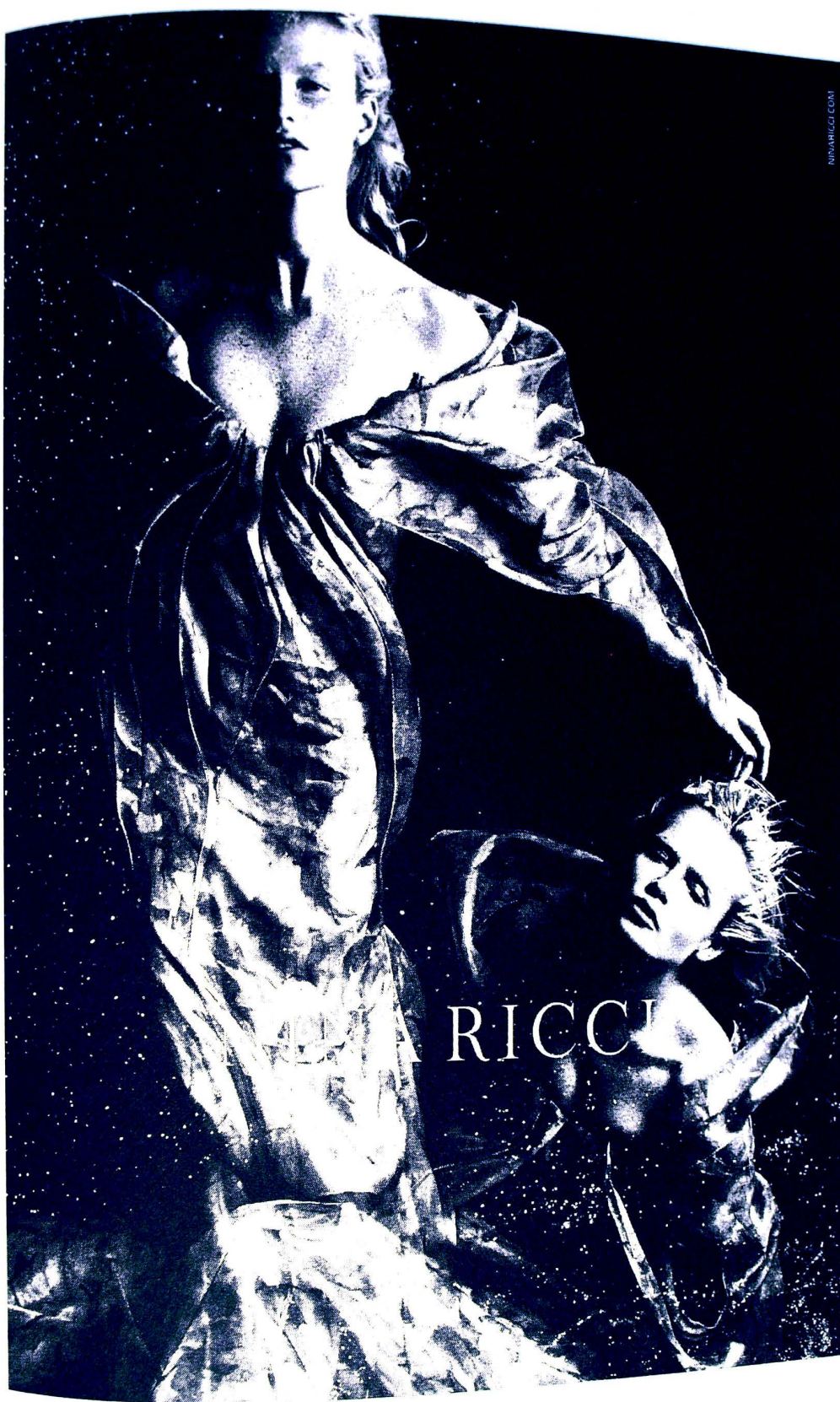


Figure 12. A Nina Ricci advertisement.





Figure 13. A Gucci clothing advertisement.



*Lashes you lust after*

NEW

**LASH FANTASY™ TOTAL DEFINITION™**

5X the impact • No clumps

Our first dual-ended Lash Separating brush and unique nourishing primer and mascara give you dramatically full, lusciously long, clump-free lashes.

Get Halle Berry's look with Lash Fantasy™ Total Definition™ in Black. Also in waterproof.

**REVLON®**



Figure 14. An example of an advertisement using sexual reference in text.





Our "business model" is designed to expose you to a more comfortable shopping experience.

For your convenience, most of what you see in our stores is: in stock, ready for immediate delivery and 20% to 25% less than non-stocked pricing. Want something you don't see, that's OK too. You'll enjoy it in approximately six short weeks.

Please visit [www.mgbwhome.com](http://www.mgbwhome.com) to view our collection and to locate a store near you.

furniture. lighting. rugs. accessories. photography.

800.789.5401  
[mgbwhome.com](http://mgbwhome.com)

**Mitchell Gold  
 + Bob Williams**

Figure 15. An example of a man being objectified in women's fashion magazines.

MIA MAESTRO, international actress,  
wears Movado watches at movado boutiques and  
select fine retailers nationwide.  
visit [movado.com](http://movado.com) for locations.

# MOVADO

THE ART OF DESIGN

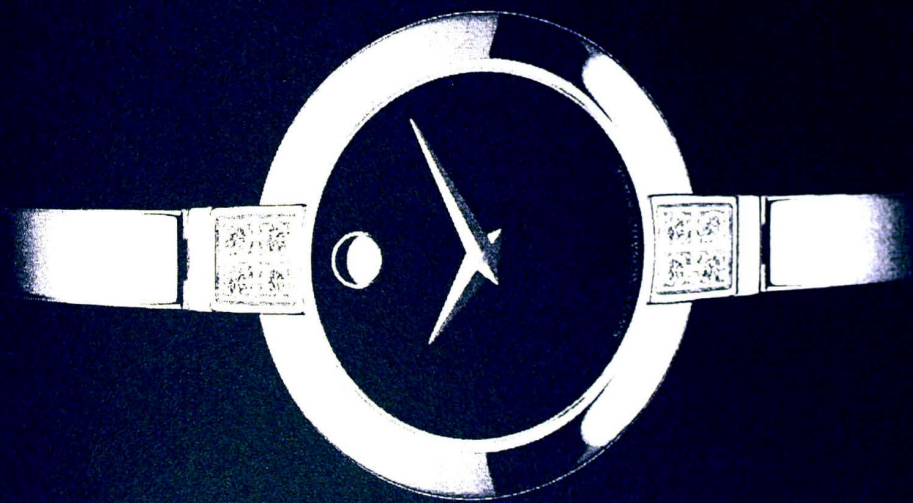


Figure 16. In accessory ads, sometimes the models were not wearing the accessory being advertised. In this Movado ad, the model is not shown wearing the watch in the advertisement.