THE EFFECTS OF MEDIA ON WOMEN'S BODY IMAGE

A Thesis

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION  This chapter will discuss relevant aspects of the popular press and background information pertaining to the thesis topic.

Advertising is an ever-present factor in our society. In the past years advertising has changed drastically. One example is cigarette advertisements, which have been banned from television and teenage magazines because of the potential effects on young women. Another area in which advertising might have a detrimental effect is related to body dissatisfaction. This exposure to certain kinds of advertisements is causing a reduction in body satisfaction in young women, with low self-esteem, which in turn could possibly result in eating disorders and other detrimental problems. Some advertising arousing concern includes Calvin Klein advertisements that portray Kate Moss, an extremely underweight model, who could be looked upon by young women as an ideal. McFarland and Baker-Baumann (1990) state, "consumerism fosters our body shame by developing cosmetics, fashions, and body types, which continually tell us that what we have is not good enough. As long as we are focused on the beautification of our bodies, we continue to accept the culture's denigration of the natural female body." This shows that the relationship between the self-esteem levels, attractiveness, thinness, and body image dissatisfaction is an important one in today's society. Hence, the purpose of this study is to evaluate the effects of advertising and media content on body image satisfaction.
Another factor according to the popular press is that the consumer market and self interest groups such as Boycott Anorexic Marketing are becoming increasingly angered at the advertisers for their portrayal of certain models (Armstrong, Lague, Lynn, Healy, Saveri, & Sheff-Cahan, 1993; and Elliot, 1994).

First, if it is true that these type of ads are resulting in eating disorders, the advertisers could face some pressure from the policy makers and parents. Also, advertisers have been made aware of problems that some of their ads might cause. One example is when Kate Moss, the so-called waif or abnormally thin model, posed with the rap singer Marky Mark in a Calvin Klein underwear ad. She was wearing only bottoms and was pressed up against Mark in a suggestive manner. Some mothers returned the jeans that they had purchased for their daughters in a personal boycott (Armstrong, Lague, Lynn, Healy, Saveri, & Sheff-Cahan, 1993). Moss also posed in her unmade bed only partially dressed in children's underwear for British Vogue. The magazine was overwhelmed with mail expressing allegations that the layout promoted "everything from pedophilia to anorexia" (Armstrong, Lague, Lynn, Healy, Saveri, & Sheff-Cahan, 1993, p.74).

Parents are very concerned that agencies are promoting models that make malnourishment look appealing. Conversely, according to the popular press, two doctors argue that the ads alone do not cause eating disorders. They expressed that only those teens who have a predisposing vulnerability are subject to eating disorders (Armstrong, Lague, Lynn, Healy, Saveri, & Sheff-Cahan, 1993). If young women show this predisposing vulnerability in the form of body dissatisfaction, then these ads could be a significant factor in the
prediction of eating disorders. Studies have shown that many women, who show forms of body dissatisfaction, have a chance of developing an eating disorder.

In addition, the super model image undergoes continual change. In the previous decades the type of model emerged from waif models, to the girl next door look, to the physically fit models of the 1980s. As a result of this constantly changing image, women can become unsure of what they are supposed to look like to be considered beautiful. A lean, angular body is preferred and has become a symbol of control, independence, and power, (McFarland & Baker-Baumann, 1990). One reason the media may have such power is that certain consumers are possibly not making a conscious or rational decision in looking to the media for direction. The format of the advertising is such that they suggest that with their product you can become the ideal.

The research available shows patterns with self-esteem levels and depression, but there is little research relating self-esteem to advertising exposure. The connections I am making are demonstrations of what advertising exposure can lead to, and its effects on body dissatisfaction levels of young women with low self-esteem. Richins (1993) argues that some ads portray an ideal image of life and that this promise is rarely attained. She explains, “Consumers are left with haunting images of perfection and an increasingly desperate realization that they will never achieve the idealized state depicted in advertising.” Also, the popular press depicts women as “endlessly struggling toward whatever ideal of beauty is in fashion” (Heyn, 1987, p. 13). The advertisers decide what is the ideal, and since the ideal changes so often, generations of families are confused. If a woman has developed reasonably
positive feelings about her body, and body shape, she can withstand the pressures of a culture. However, it is very difficult to ignore the billboards, the magazine covers and ads, the television commercials, and the radio ads which intrude on their daily lives.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW: *This chapter discusses the relevant literature pertaining to the thesis topic. It also discusses concepts and links between concepts.*

BODY IMAGE/BODY DISSATISFACTION

Central to attitudinal body image are feelings, thoughts, and behaviors, also known as body image (Cash, 1990; & Cash & Hicks, 1990). Body dissatisfaction is defined as not being satisfied with your present body image, regardless of the distortion or inaccuracy of that perception. Body image means how women think other people view them, and dissatisfaction is the condition in which they are unhappy with how they view themselves.

Peers and cultural attitudes and expectations have a greater impact than do parents and family (McFarland & Baker-Baumann, 1990). The greatest problem may be the severe body dissatisfaction among college women (Strober & Yager, 1989). Likewise, Garner and Olmstead (1984) used the Eating Disorder Inventory (EDI) and found that dissatisfaction among college age students was at least twice that of others among those who were vulnerable to "thinness", "bulimia", "ineffectiveness", "perfectionism", "interpersonal distrust", "interceptive awareness," and "maturity fears" (Klemchuk, Hutchinson & Frank, 1990).

Thompson (1986) found evidence that the more inaccurate women are about their body size, the worse they feel about themselves. Using silhouettes
ranging from very thin to very fat, Fallon and Rozin (1985) showed that normal
college women significantly overestimated their own sizes. They found that
women who were more dissatisfied with their bodies were more inaccurate.
Statistical analysis indicated that body image distortion was the same for all
groups, including those with and without eating disorders
(Gustavson, Gustavson, Pumariaga, Reinarz, Dameron, Gustavson, Pappas &
McCaul, 1990). This is a point which has great importance because it shows that
the women who have problems with their body image are not exclusively a
clinical population. Ben-Tovim and Crisp (1984); Birtchnell, Lacey and Hart
(1985); Cash and Green (1986); Casper, Halmis, Goldberg, Eckert and Davis (1979);
Garner, Garfinkel and Bonato (1987); and Norris (1984) provided evidence that
supports the notion that body-size distortion is not unique to individuals with
eating disorders.

Rosen et al. (1987) contend that low self-esteem is strongly related to
attempts to lose weight. Therefore, those women who are dissatisfied with their
weight tend to diet, thereby correlating low body dissatisfaction with low self-
esteen. Myers and Biocca (1992) support the notion of an elastic body image in
which actual body size is in conflict with a mediated ideal body image and an
unstable self-perceived body image. Also, they show that body dissatisfaction in
the form of an elastic body image, or inaccuracy of body image, is somehow
linked to low self-esteem. They also suggest that the feelings of dissatisfaction
with some aspect of the self are likely to occur when there is a discrepancy
between themselves and the model on an attribute that is important to the
individual. An individual's inaccuracy on weight, can increase feelings of
dissatisfaction. Likewise, Gray (1977) found body image distortions in normal
college students, with approximately 50 percent misperceiving their weight-related appearance. Similarly, Miller, Linke and Linke (1980) reported that 54 percent of college undergraduates surveyed were dissatisfied with their weight and in addition, Hueneman, Shapiro, Hampton, and Mitchell (1966) found that the young women they surveyed were generally dissatisfied with their weight, stature, and body dimensions.

In relation to the studies, it is shown that body image distortion and body dissatisfaction are not only limited to a clinical population. Therefore, it can be said that the average women can have a bad body image and can be dissatisfied without having a medical problem. Surmising, it is also apparent that those women could have become dissatisfied as a result of the media's constant bombardment of models with idealized images of attractiveness and thinness. For purposes of this study, body image/body dissatisfaction will be used in a nonclinical sense. The students will be measured using the Body Image/Attractiveness Perception Scale by Grubb, Sellers, and Waligroski (1993).

**SELF-ESTEEM**

Self-esteem has been defined as a general feeling of approval or disapproval toward oneself and it may vary with life's situations or one's control of certain events (Rosenberg, 1965). Disturbingly, studies show that young women's self-esteem is lower than any other age group and that women in general overestimate their body size (Klemchuk, Hutchinson, & Frank, 1990). Also, low self-esteem has been shown to be a major factor in determining eating disorders in women (Grant & Foder, 1986) and low self-esteem was reported to be the major factor in the prediction of anorexic behavior (Grant & Foder, 1986).
Josephs, Tafarodi, and Markus (1992) did a study to discover the source of self-esteem. Their results suggested that women’s self-esteem can be linked to a process in which connections and attachments to important others are emphasized. This identification process begins first within the family, followed by peers, and social institutions such as the media. McFarland and Baker-Baumann (1990) explain that differentiation, that which makes us different from our family and others, is an alterable process which also aids the individual in developing the definition of self. They concluded that this process also leads to defining a level of self-esteem for the individual. McFarland and Baker-Baumann (1990) explain the three dimensions of identity development as follows:

1. Individuals internalize specific feelings, beliefs and attitudes about themselves from what significant others say.

2. Individuals internalize the manner in which they are treated by significant others.

3. Individuals internalize identifications in the form of images which are generally unconscious but which are taken inside and made their own (Kaufman, 1985).

As a result, it is difficult for women to maintain a sense of self and body as culturally acceptable and at the same time establish a sense of their own individuality. It is no wonder that identity and self-esteem are deeply entwined with body image. Barach (1967) stated that people with low self-esteem are more exposed and more susceptible to external influences. This is the most important aspect of the study. Those with low self-esteem will be more sensitive to the advertisements with the idealized images of beauty/attractiveness and thinness and more likely to have body dissatisfaction resulting from TV advertising and
programming content. For purposes of this study, self-esteem is being used as a control variable to determine if levels of self-esteem do in fact have an effect on body image. Self-esteem will be measured using the standardized Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965).

SELF SCHEMA

Markus and Nurius (1986) present a conceptualization of the self, which is possible selves. They define possible selves as "representing an individual's ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming, and thus provide a conceptual link between cognition and motivation." These possible selves are important because they function as incentives for future behavior and they provide an evaluative and interpretive context for the current view of the self.

Many of the possible selves are the direct result of previous social comparisons in which the individual's own thoughts, feelings, characteristics, and behaviors have been contrasted to those of important others, such as friends, family, and models. Also, "individuals often think what others are, I now could become." This type of thinking is detrimental to women. In most cases they cannot become what others are because of body structure. The ideal look the media are presenting is not representative of society and those average women have no chance of obtaining that ideal by their own standards.

Myers and Biocca (1992) present their idea of self schema as "a person's own constitution of these traits that make them see themselves as distinctive and constitute their sense of 'me.'" The individual builds this sense of self from observation of one's behaviors, the reaction of others to the self, and more general social cues that suggest which attributes are most important. The social
cues are very important; not because they determine exactly what people perceive themselves to be, but because the cues influence which attribute groups will be most important in each individual's self schema (Myers & Biocca, 1992, p.8). Myers and Biocca hypothesized that "body image is moderately unstable and elastic; varying with context, mood and the presence of social cues." In adolescence when young women are developing a sense of the mature self, they may be highly sensitive to social cues.

Both the ideal self and the ought-self represent those parts of the self that can be most affected by the media (Colby, 1968; James, 1890/1948, Piers & Singer, 1971; Rogers, 1961; & Schafer, 1967).

**SOCIAL PHYSIQUE ANXIETY (SPA)/SOCIAL COMPARISON/ SHAME**

Festinger's social comparison theory states that "people best serve their need for self-evaluation by measuring their attributes against direct, physical standards." Also, when these objective standards are unavailable, individuals compare themselves with other people (Wood, 1989). A person's self-esteem is partly her assessment of herself against an ideal model. In earliest life, this model is typically a parent or significant adult -- even a media star (Mcfarland, Baker-Baumann, 1990). Higgins (1987) proposes a third representation of the self in the form of the self-discrepancy theory. Self-discrepancy has been defined as discrepancies between self-state representations and how they are related to different kinds of emotional vulnerabilities. "These are three domains of the self (actual, ideal and ought), standpoints on the self (own and significant other), and that they constitute each type of self-state representation" (Higgins, 1987).
It is proposed that different types of self-discrepancies represent different types of negative psychological situations that are associated with different kinds of discomfort. Discrepancies between the actual/own self-state (i.e. the self-concept) and ideal self-states (i.e. representations of an individual's beliefs about is or her own or a significant other's hopes, wishes, or aspirations for the individual) signify the absence of positive outcomes, which is associated with dejection-related emotions (e.g., disappointment, dissatisfaction, sadness). In contrast, discrepancies between the actual/own self-state and ought self-states (i.e. representations of an individual's beliefs about his or her own or a significant other's beliefs about the individual's duties, responsibilities, or obligations) signify the presence of negative outcomes, which is associated with agitation-related emotions (i.e. fear, threat, restlessness). Differences in both the relative magnitude and the accessibility of individuals' available types of self-discrepancies are predicted to be related to differences in the kinds of discomfort people are likely to experience.

Women deal with discrepancies of these states in different ways, but they deal with inconsistencies of the ideal self with dissatisfaction of their own bodies and inconsistencies in the ought-self with social physique anxiety. Also, shame is a painful and complex feeling state where it is not only a result of problems, but also a cause of problems. Falling short of the cultural ideal thus generates shame for women. In comparing herself to the ideal, the young woman will always fall short, particularly the young woman who is unable to see her body realistically, also known as a "disturbed body image" (McFarland & Baker-Baumann, 1990). These cultural standards promote a woman's tendency to have an idealized body image based on these standards. Whenever a woman becomes acutely aware that her real body falls far short of her ideal, she may experience deep feelings of shame. The body itself becomes a major source of shame since it does not measure up to the idealized cultural standard of beauty. Women feel that a fat or imperfect body says to the world, I am a failure. I am
weak, needy, and out of control (body shame), and is seen as the signal to the world that what it holds inside is defective and inferior, (self shame) (McFarland & Baker-Baumann, 1990). According to Nathanson (1987), the tendency to compare promotes feelings of shame or pride in the individual, depending on who she is being compared to and how she is being compared. This comparison is damaging to women again because of the idealistic standards set by the media. Others argue that consumers see these idealized images and consciously or unconsciously compare themselves and their lives with the idealized images. Consumers are then left with haunting images of perfection and the realization that they will never achieve the idealized state depicted in the advertising (Lasch, 1978; & Mander, 1977).

Again, Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory is directly applicable to the notion that consumers compare themselves with the people portrayed in the ads. This theory implies that ads with highly attractive models have the potential to shift evaluation standards for attractiveness. Although conceptually distinct, social physique anxiety is related to the concept of body image, first defined by Schilder as "the picture of our body which we form in our mind" (Schilder, 1935). Another related concept, body affect (also called body esteem), refers to the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction an individual has regarding various aspects of her body (Secord & Jourard, 1953).

It has also been shown that young women learn to become distressed about their body shape and size at an early age. VanderVelde (1985) points out, "every child learns that such bodily features as size, weight, strength, complexion, or looks are used with often painful accuracy by peers, classmates, teachers, and coaches to determine the pecking order in social and athletic
activities. Bodily ‘flaws’ become social liabilities and ever-present potentials for rejection and humiliation." For purposes of this study, social physique anxiety will be measured because I feel there is a proportional link between it and body image. Social physique anxiety will be measured using the Social Physique Anxiety Scale (Hart, Leary, & Rejeski, 1989). Shame and social comparison are discussed here because I believe that they have some effect on social physique anxiety and its link with body image.

**PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS/BEAUTY**

Physical attractiveness and beauty for purposes of this study can be defined as an ideal or an overall 'look,' incorporating both physical features and thinness. Also, assuming that women look to the media for ideals, beauty and physical attractiveness are nested within the model presented. Accordingly, sociocultural factors that equate females’ attractiveness to thinness were found by (Richards, Boxer, Petersen & Albrecht, 1990). Englis, Solomon, and Ashmore (1994) review literature on cultural definitions of beauty, with an emphasis on the argument that physical attractiveness is not a unidimensional construct as operationalized in most studies. They begin with the premise that most people strive to attain a certain ideal of beauty currently prevalent in their culture. They explain that media executives play a crucial role in shaping audience perceptions. The executives' theories in turn are important because “(1) they influence the selection of beauty types thought to appeal to a mass audience, and (2) they guide their choices of individuals who are judged to embody these ideals in both advertising and editorial formats.” Thus, cultural representations of beauty often result from the stereotypes held by media executives. Although
the media executives involved in this selection process may not necessarily be aware of the stereotypes they are presenting, their choices extend throughout popular culture. The different looks systematically cast in various mass media vehicles become icons of beauty, which then act as powerful role models for consumers to imitate. Furthermore, one content analysis of commercials found that one out of approximately every four messages was related to attractiveness (Downs & Harrison, 1985). Another factor is that media influences may contribute to the greater emphasis on physical attractiveness for women (Ogletree, Williams, Raffeld, Mason & Fricke, 1990).

Following this idea that women look to the media, many women also believe that they need to be thin to be sexually attractive (Cash, Winstead & Jandu, 1986). According to the halo effect, those with positive attributes are assumed to have many other positive attributes. This is believed to be that preferential treatment is given to more attractive individuals. Therefore, it is not surprising that physical attractiveness is considered an important part of experiencing positive social relations and developing a favorable self-concept (Hulfield & Sprecher, 1986).

Joseph (1982) goes further and explains physical attractiveness as an important and pervasive source of influence in a variety of interpersonal situations including peer popularity in children. One of his theories is that there are stereotypes that attribute positive qualities to people who are physically attractive. Again, this is also known as the halo effect. He found that physically attractive people were expected also to lead 'happier' and more 'fulfilling' professional and personal lives. Also found, was that in nursery schools a
child's physical attractiveness stereotype is manifested at an early stage in the
development of human social interactions. In addition, late maturation is
associated with greater self-doubt, social anxiety, and a tendency to withdraw
from social situations. All of the research indicates that there is a correlation
between physical attractiveness and popularity among adolescent peer groups.
This makes the need to be thin even more of a consuming passion for the
female adolescent (Dweck, Davidson, Nelson & Bradley, 1978) and goes back to
the idea that beauty and physical attractiveness need to include thinness in their
definition.

In addition, the roles of socioeconomic and cultural variables associated
with standards for feminine attractiveness and attitudes toward the body are
formed within our culture and across cultures (Garner & Garfinkel, 1981; &
Pumariega, 1986). Other theorists imply that ads with highly attractive models
have the potential to shift standards for attractiveness evaluations. Therefore,
defining beauty is one of the hardest problems in deciding which of the ads are
causing the change in body image and satisfaction levels of women. Englis,
Solomon, and Ashmore (1994) state that consumers are constantly in the
pursuit to acquire the latest products and services that will help them to attain
this stereotypical beauty. To benefit from this desire, marketers are competing
fiercely to position their products and to design advertising so as to create these
current ideals of beauty (Bloch & Richins, 1992).

Beauty as it is being defined has become an elusive quality for women.
Some women look to the media for the attractive look and on how to obtain
that look. For purposes of this study, beauty is being used as a benchmark for
those ads considered distorted and those that are not distorted.
In the screening of the ads, beauty is one scale that was used to determine which distorted ads were used.

**THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN ADVERTISING**

The role of women in advertising has changed drastically in the previous decades. This change has brought about changes in the way that consumers view advertising. Women are inclined to list weight as their leading concern about their appearance (Crisp & Kalucy, 1974 & Rosenbaum, 1979). One of the reasons women tend to compare themselves with models in ads is because of the way these models are portrayed. Likewise, Englis, Solomon, and Ashmore (1994) examined ideals of female beauty as represented in mass media vehicles of popular culture because "(1) there is a long history of using 'female beauty' to sell products to women as well as to men, and (2) rightly or wrongly—mass media consistently reinforce assumed linkages between women's appearance and their feelings of self-worth" (Bloch & Richins, 1992; Downs & Harrison, 1985; Ruble, 1983; & Tan, 1979). For purposes of this study, the role of women is being used in that, in advertising they have a direct link to the comparisons and evaluations women make about their own bodies.

**EATING DISORDERS**

The concept of eating disorders is not included in the design of this study, but I believe that it has a direct link to the underlying concepts that are included. According to the Eating Disorder Inventory in, Klemchuk, Hutchinson, and Frank (1990), undergraduates showed significant results when asked questions about prospective bulimic activity, a drive for thinness and body dissatisfaction.
Also, The University of Cincinnati’s Medical College which treats bulimic patients asked some of the patients how they felt about their bodies at puberty. The patients were repulsed, because they felt like they were starting to look like their mothers (Heyn, 1987). This follows the idea that body dissatisfaction among eating disorder patients begins early in age.

Typically when compulsive eaters diet, they are not only striving to control what they eat and to lose pounds, but they are also striving to attain the culture’s ideal body type. The belief in the ideal is, once I'm thin, everything will be all right. When I'm thin, all my bad feelings about myself will disappear and I will be in control. This is also true for those women not in a clinical population. This feeling of gaining control through an ideal body image is apparent through all populations of women. Accordingly, Joseph (1982) explained that an image of being in control has become equal to the ideal body image. Women’s ideal and ought-figures (ought-figures are what they believe others think their ideal weight should be) are thinner than their current figures. Again, women desire to be thinner than they think they should be and women with abnormal eating behaviors desire to be even thinner than what they think men find attractive (Zellner, Harner & Adler, 1989). For purposes of this study, eating disorders will not be measured. Future research could look into the prospect of a bad body image being the result of distorted advertising and link it to eating disorders.

**PRIMING**

Priming in this study has to do with why women compare themselves with the models in ads and why it affects their body satisfaction levels.
Berkowitz (1984; 1986) and Berkowitz and Rogers (1986) offered a beginning version of such a theory some years ago, emphasizing the media's short-run, and relatively transient influences on the thoughts and actions of audience members. Berkowitz (1986) noted that "the events depicted in the mass media can also have temporary effects on the adults as well as children in the audience so that, for a short time afterwards, their thoughts and actions are colored by what they have just seen, heard, and/or read." He also goes on to say that "it essentially holds that when people witness, read, or hear of an event via the mass media, ideas having a similar meaning are activated in them for a short time afterwards, and that these thoughts in turn can activate other semantically related ideas and action tendencies" (Jo & Berkowitz, 1991). Similarly, Fiske and Taylor (1991) explain that the presentation of a certain stimulus having a particular meaning 'primes' other related concepts, thus one would expect that thoughts with the same meaning as the presentation stimulus will come to mind. This suggests that the context of the programming can prime women when they see the idealized images of women in commercials.

Along with emotion, Berkowitz (1990), Bower (1981), Lang (1979), and Leventhal (1984) propose that ideas having emotional significance are also linked to particular feelings. The activation of these emotion-related ideas therefore lead to feelings and action tendencies that are associated with them. Yi (1993) discusses this in the context that priming has effects on consumers' evaluations of brands. Yi has shown that an ad context (e.g., television advertising and context of programming) can effect the interpretation of ambiguous product information in the ad by priming or activating certain product attributes in consumers' knowledge (Yi, 1990a, 1990b). Richins (1991)
states that audiences look through magazines for tips, examples, and perhaps prototypes of beauty which they may use as benchmarks for evaluating themselves.

Nevertheless, many studies show that people's interpretation of information often depends on the currently active knowledge-structures "where knowledge structures refer to cognitive representations of generic concepts, including the attributes constituting the concept and the relationship among the attributes" (Higgins and King, 1981; and Wyer and Srull, 1981). Research in social cognition has shown that the accessibility of certain concepts is enhanced by prior exposure to the concepts (Higgins & King, 1981; & Wyer & Srull, 1981). According to this idea of priming, the ads women see on their TV are primed by the programming. The programs with the highest ratings tend to have beautiful/attractive women who are ideallistically thin. Also in this programming, if a woman tends to be a little overweight, they present her in a format where she is dieting.

Other authors who agree with this idea are Mitchell and Olson (1981). They say that the advertising context can prime or activate certain attributes, and guide interpretations of product information in the ad. These interpretations may result in the creation or modification of beliefs about the advertised brand, which will affect consumers' evaluations. Also, advertising context is often negatively or positively balanced and can trigger overall affective reactions. This overall affect generated by the context can be transferred to one's attitude toward the ad, which can subsequently influence brand evaluations (MacKenzie, Lutz, & Belch, 1986). Since brand evaluation can be altered by the advertisement, this idea can be extended to self evaluation. Yi (1990) makes some advances in
going beyond the studies of the time. He incorporates research on priming and affect transfer in investigating the effects of two important aspects of the advertising environment: "1) the cognitive context that increases the salience of product attributes; and 2) the affective context that induces feelings." He also goes on to say that active or accessible concepts serve to direct attention to selective aspects of information and are likely to be used in subsequent interpretations. This would suggest that highly accessible attributes are more likely to be used in interpreting product information in a given advertisement. So, if the audience is being primed by the context of programming, these aspects are highly accessible to them to interpret the advertisements with idealized women portrayed. The comparison gives them a negative view of themselves.

Erdley and D'Agostino (1988) state that people unconsciously generate affective reactions to the context in which advertisements appear, and that these context-generated affective responses may influence subsequent judgments. These judgments can cause a basis for evaluation which will lead them to be dissatisfied with their bodies. Also, Fazio (1976) has shown that affective reactions can be triggered by the presence of an ad and that these affective reactions influence later perceptions and evaluations.

The basic discussion of Yi (1990) supports the idea that priming a certain attribute increases the likelihood that this attribute will subsequently be used to interpret the ad information, and thus will affect advertising effectiveness. This study "supports a body of research in social cognition showing that a temporary increase in construct accessibility from recent activation can affect people's judgment of an object" (Wyer & Srull, 1981). In this study, I am trying to show that the basic premise of the relationship of priming to television advertisement
is that if the viewer pays attention and processes the ad, the context of the program will enhance her perceptions and cause her to evaluate her body and attractiveness.

The following sections are links of the previous concepts.

**LINK BETWEEN MEDIA, BODY DISSATISFACTION, AND BODY DISTORTION**

This link shows that the media has an adverse effect on women. Also that body dissatisfaction and body distortions are partly due to the media's representation of women.

As a result of an obsession with image, the body has become a slave. Women are involved in a co-dependent, exploitative relationship with their bodies. They have come to believe that they can achieve a sense of harmony, peace or happiness by having the perfect body. The culture has advanced this obsessive pursuit and in doing so has fueled the shame women feel about their natural bodies. "Body image, our inner view of our outer selves, is a critical factor in our overall definition of ourselves. It is highly influenced by early physical and emotional interactions with our parents, by cultural standards of beauty and by feedback from others, (McFarland & Baker-Baumann, 1990).

Body weight is a primary source for women's dissatisfaction with their bodies (Berscheid, Walster & Bohrnstedt, 1973). While attractiveness-based advertising and programming is certainly not the only or perhaps even the primary cause of body image distortions, it is a major determination (Garfinkel & Garner, 1982; & Commerci, 1988). Myers and Biocca (1992) argue attractiveness-based media messages are a contributing factor to these distortions, while Richins (1991) suggested that idealized images raised comparison standards for attractiveness and lowered satisfaction with one's own
attractiveness. All of these authors have shown how the three concepts are linked. They have shown in their results that media, dissatisfaction, and distortion are all related, but this is best shown by the ideas of Markus and Nurius (1986). An individual is free to create any variety of possible selves; yet the pool of possible selves derives from the categories made prominent by the individual's particular culture, family, and from the models, images, and symbols provided by the media and by the individual's immediate social experience.

**LINK BETWEEN MEDIA, DIET, SELF-ESTEEM, AND BODY DISSATISFACTION**

There is a multitude of new diets emerging which presents to women the idea that dieting is the way to a happy life. Women are generally dissatisfied with their bodies and the increase in the variety of different diets is communicating to them that they should be dissatisfied. A study at the University of California showed that four out of five fourth-grade girls diet to stay thin. These girls have not even reached puberty yet, when the problem of automatic weight gain and blossoming start for them. Also, physical maturation for girls moves them away from the cultural ideal of being thin, whereas for boys, the weight spurt is predominately due to an increase in muscle and lean tissue. This difference is why women's level of dissatisfaction is much higher (McFarland & Baker-Baumann, 1990). The popular press submits that "Dieting, first suggested by family and friends, soon becomes a young woman's primary means of controlling her weight. Fitting into a size six may be a superficial achievement, but for many young women, a small dress size is a powerful measure of self-worth" (Schwartzberg, 1990, p. 27). Likewise,
McFarland and Baker-Baumann (1990) have equated dieting and thinness with the cultural stereotypical masculine qualities of power and independence, stating that "women equate binging and fat with the cultural stereotypical feminine qualities of weakness and dependence." Root (1986) explains that women's obsession with thinness is reflected in the fact that the number of articles dealing with diets and dieting which appear annually in women's magazines has doubled between 1959 and 1979.

According to Moore-Striegel, Silberstein, and Rodin (1986) low self-esteem and a negative body image are generally antecedents of attempts at weight loss by women. Fitting within this link, another study by Moore-Striegel, Silberstein, and Rodin (1986) showed that young women who try to diet usually show lower self-esteem levels and a negative body image. Rosen, Gross, and Vara, (1987), Moore-Striegel, et al., (1986), and Dykens and Gerrard, (1986) have also found a relationship between weight-loss attempts and negative self-esteem.

Some researchers have moved away from adolescence to college students. They showed that body dissatisfaction, weight preoccupation, and eating disorders are also becoming increasing salient problems on the college campus (Gandour, 1984; Pyle, Halvorson, Newman & Mitchell, 1986; Whitaker & Davis, 1989). Other studies have shown the association of body and weight dissatisfaction to low self-esteem and depression (Dykens & Gerrard, 1986; Rosen, Gross & Vara, 1987).

Mintz (1988) described a significant relationship between eating disorders and low self-esteem, as well as a negative body image with obsessive thoughts about weight and appearance. Another study showed self-esteem in women
was related to attitudes about their physical attractiveness and deviation from normal weight (Lerner & Karabenick, 1974). Rosen et al. (1987) also contended that negative self-esteem is strongly related to attempts to lose weight. Ironically, there is now a heavy emphasis on food products in advertising and a trend for women to enhance their appearance (Ogletree, Williams, Raffeld, Mason & Fricke, 1990). This contrasting factor has made it almost impossible to discern whether it is more important to try the new products, diet, or both. Markus and Nurius (1986) deal with this problem by explaining that those who hope to lose 20 pounds hold an image of their possible self as thinner, more attractive, and happier with an altogether more pleasant life. Thus they assume diet is more important than some foods. Also, among females, preoccupation with weight, especially with the possibility of being overweight, is so pervasive that is has been termed a 'normative discontent' (Tobin, Silberstein & Striegel-Moore, 1985).

College age women expressed more preoccupation with being or becoming overweight and reported more anxiety about fatness, more dietary restraint, and more body-image avoidance. This preoccupation was associated not only with more negative body-image affect, but also with a strong cognitive and behavioral investment in physical appearance (Cash, Wood & Phelps, 1991).

Most studies have shown that women are less satisfied with their bodies than men and that body weight was a primary source of their dissatisfaction (Salusso-Deonier & Schwartzkopf, 1991; Fallon & Rozin, 1985; Berscheid, Walster, & Bohrnstedt, 1973). Others explain these findings as being due to sociocultural factors that equate females' attractiveness to thinness (Richards, Boxer, Petersen & Albrecht, 1990). Others have related body and weight
dissatisfaction to poor self-esteem and depression (Dyken & Gerrard, 1986; &
Rosen, Gross & Vara, 1987).

The obsessive thoughts among female college students showed that they
had a desired weight that was 14 pounds lighter than their actual weight (Miller
et. al., 1980). Also, this study found that 70 percent of the female subjects
thought they were at least slightly overweight even though only 39 percent
could be classified as such from skinfold measurements and self-reported
weights. This again shows that a large percentage of women are not only
dissatisfied, but are distorting their body image.

**LINK BETWEEN MEDIA, PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS, AND SPA**

Women with low levels of self-esteem tend to compare themselves to
models in ads; they also tend to use the ads to interpret others' perceptions of
how they are supposed to look. This is known as social physique anxiety. This
anxiety is a result of what they believe others think about them. This can also be
a factor resulting from the media because the media present those idealistcally
attractive models and when the women do not look like that, they assume
others think they are not beautiful.

Also, a number of theorists point to the importance of physical attributes
for a young woman's self-image, especially since the self-image evolves from
how one interprets and responds to others' perceptions of one's self
(Coopersmith, 1967; Erickson, 1968; & Gergen, 1971). Similarly, Ennis,
Solomon, and Ashmore (1994) examined ideals of female beauty as represented
in mass media vehicles of popular culture because "(1) there is a long history of
using 'female beauty' to sell products to women as well as to men, and (2) rightly or wrongly—mass media consistently reinforce assumed linkages between women's appearance and their feelings of self-worth" (Bloch & Richins, 1992; Downs & Harrison, 1985; Ruble, 1983; & Tan, 1979).

**LINK BETWEEN PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS, BODY DISSATISFACTION, SELF-ESTEEM, AND EATING DISORDERS**

This link is based on the concept that the physical attractiveness of models leads to body dissatisfaction. This in turn is based on the assumption that those with low self-esteem will have greater levels of dissatisfaction. And finally, low self-esteem is a major factor in the cause of eating disorders.

Abnormally thin and attractive models create a feeling of unhappiness among young women about their bodies, and their confidence levels are reduced, which can lead to eating disorders. Another study showed self-esteem in women was related to attitudes about their physical attractiveness and deviation from normal weight (Lerner & Karabenick, 1974).

Ellis (1974) found that negative self-esteem contributed to devastation which led to bulimic and anorexic behavior. Grant and Foder (1986) also reported self-esteem to be the major factor in the prediction of anorexic behavior. Mintz (1988) showed that there was a relationship between eating disorders, a low level of self-esteem, and body dissatisfaction. Garner and Garfinkel (1981) concluded that self-esteem and body satisfaction played a role in the clinical literature of eating disorders.

Furthermore, the varying levels of low self-esteem in young women is something that has been shown to exist, yet advertisers could be conditionally
lowering this level to points where eating disorders can be a result. It has been shown that depression, body dissatisfaction, and negative perceptions of attractiveness have also resulted in eating disorders a significant amount of time (Grubb, Sellers, & Waligroski, 1993).

**LINK BETWEEN MEDIA, ATTRACTIVENESS/THINNESS, SOCIAL COMPARISON, AND CONTRAST EFFECTS.**

This link adds the idea of contrast effects, where contrast occurs when the same face is judged more attractive when presented in a series with less attractive faces than when presented with more attractive faces (Wedel, Parducci & Geiselman, 1986). In Kenrick and Gutierres (1980) the respondents were exposed to extremely attractive stimuli to see whether the media influenced their standards of attractiveness. They hypothesized that exposure to unattractive models compared with an average girl would result in an enhanced perception of the average girl. Also, exposure to attractive models would result in decreased perception of the average girl. Kenrick and Gutierres (1980) also confirmed the hypothesis that when bombarded with highly attractive models in the media, the typical female reacted with a lowered assessments of her own beauty.

Another point of view is Silverstein et al., who concluded that "...present day women who look at the major mass media are exposed to a standard of body attractiveness that is slimmer than that presented for men and that is less curvaceous than that presented for women since the 1930s," (Myers & Biocca, 1992). This standard may not be promoted only in the media, but given the popularity of television, movies, and magazines, the media are the most likely to be among the most influential promoters of the attractiveness/thinness
standards. This trend toward a thinner body for women in the media has become more than just thinness. Other positive attributes are beauty and success (Downs & Harrison, 1985; Garner & Garfinkel, 1980; & Kaufman, 1980). Downs and Harrison (1985) also showed that stereotypes of attractiveness have become powerful sources in the television advertising market of the creation of television commercials. DeFleur (1970) and Gerbner and Gross (1976) explain that "the crucial research question is not so much how the media affect specific attitudes or behaviors, but how they affect audience conceptions of social reality, or perceptions about the facts, norms and values of society through selective presentations and by emphasizing certain themes." Furthermore, the main objective of Tan (1979) was "to determine effects of exposure to beauty commercials on the perceived importance of beauty commercial themes in social relations by female viewers." Also, Richins (1991) states the idealized media images of attractive people can be regarded as prototypes that are used by audiences to evaluate their own looks and to guide their own consumption activities. The media has an obvious influence on social comparisons of females and obvious control over the standards of attractiveness/thinness.
HYPOTHESES

H1: Young women with below average self-esteem who are exposed to advertising and media content containing idealized images will lower their body image perception and attractiveness compared with those with average to above-average self-esteem, who will show a minimal effect.

H2: Young women with below-average self-esteem who are exposed to advertising and media content containing idealized images will increase their physique anxiety compared with those with average to above average self-esteem who will show a minimal effect.

H3: Young women with below average self-esteem who are exposed to advertising and media content containing idealized images will increase their body weight distortions compared with those with average to above average self-esteem who will show a minimal effect.

Hypothesis one, two and three are all interaction hypothesis between self-esteem and the relevant conditions. The purpose of hypothesis four is to test is whether distorted commercials presented in distorted programming will have an additive effect.

H4: Exposure to distorted commercials and distorted programming content will have a greater effect on body image than nondistorted commercials and nondistorted programming.

MEASUREMENT OF HYPOTHESES

1. Self-esteem will be measured using Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Inventory.

2. Body image perception, attractiveness, and physique anxiety will be measured using a combination of Grubb, Sellers, and Waligroski’s Body Image/Attractiveness Perception Scale and Hart, Leary, and Rejeski’s Social Physique Anxiety Scale. Attractiveness will also be measured as a pretest hidden within Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Inventory.

3. Distortion of weight will be measured in a pre-test post-test measurement. The pre-test is weight questions hidden in Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Inventory, within the experiment with the demographic questions, and as a post-test where their actual measurements are taken.
CHAPTER III

METHOD: This chapter deals with the experimental design, with the operationalization of the variables, and with the procedures.

Subjects

Forty six female volunteers from undergraduate classes at Ohio State participated and to have an equal number of students in each cell only thirty two students were measured. Eight students in each condition were studied. Their ages ranged from 21-27.

Design

The experiment used a two-by-two fully factorial design. Cells were high idealized images in content of programming and high idealized images in advertising, high idealized images in content and low idealized images in advertising, low idealized images in content and high idealized images in advertising, and low idealized images in content and low idealized images in advertising all while controlling for self-esteem. Eight were run in each cell.

Selection of Stimulus

The original list of 150 commercials was obtained from one week's worth of programming approximately six hours a day on the four national networks and one week of prime time commercials. The commercials obtained were edited to separate the commercials from the programming and then edited to separate the commercials with women ages 18 - 30, and those other commercials not falling into this category, and repeats. The final thirty two

30
commercials were selected by a panel of sixteen students similar to the subjects run in this study. The first six selected the distorted commercials from the original 150. They were asked to evaluate the women models in the ads on two rating scales, where "1 = Not attractive" and "7 = Very attractive," and where "1 = Overweight" and "7 = Underweight." Thirty commercials that were rated 5.5 and higher were chosen to represent the "distorted commercials," and thirty commercials that were rated 2.0 and lower were selected to represent the "nondistorted commercials" for the next stage. Then ten other undergraduates evaluated the group of sixty commercials selected in the first stage. The final list of commercials included the sixteen top rated distorted commercials and the sixteen bottom rated nondistorted commercials.

Instruments

Two standardized instruments and two nonstandardized were used.

Self-Esteem Scale (see Appendix 1). This brief self-report questionnaire is a well accepted, valid, and reliable instrument measuring several areas of self-worth (Rosenberg, 1965).

Reliability: Internal Consistency

Several studies have established the reliability of this index. Dobson et al. (1979) and Fleming and Courtney (1984) reported high Cronbach alpha indicating high internal consistency. Fleming and Courtney (1984) also found a high test-retest correlation as did Silber and Tippett (1985). The actual range of scores on the SES scale as reported by Rosenberg (1965) is 1 to 4 in the general population of adolescents. The reason for the range maximum being four is that the original scale was a four point scale.
*Validity: Convergent*

The SES is associated with many self-esteem-related constructs. For example, Lorr and Wunderlich (1986) reported a correlation between SES scores and confidence and between SES scores and popularity. Reynolds (1988) found that SES scores were related to overall academic self-concept. The Rosenberg measure was highly correlated with the Lerner Self-Esteem Scale, with "beeper" self-reports of self-esteem, and with peer ratings for an adolescent sample (Savin-Williams & Jaquish, 1981).

Fleming and Courtney (1984) also demonstrated negative relationships between the SES and several concepts associated with low self-regard, such as anxiety, depression, and anomie. In addition, these authors reported that SES scores correlated with general self-regard, with social confidence, with school abilities, and with physical appearance. Finally, Demo (1985) found SES scores correlated well with scores on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and with peer ratings for self-esteem.

The 10 questions are:
1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
9. I certainly feel useless at times.
10. At times I think I am no good at all.
These questions will be answered on a five point scale with "strongly disagree," "disagree," "neither disagree nor agree," "agree," and "strongly agree" responses. This was used as a pre-test and control.

**Social Physique Anxiety Scale** (see Appendix 2). This is a 10-item scale that is accepted, valid, and reliable instrument, measuring several areas of Physique Anxiety (Hart, Leary, and Rejeski, 1989).

*Reliability: Internal Consistency*

Fenigstein, Scheier, and Buss (1975) reported a high Cronbach's alpha for this scale indicating high inter-item reliability. Also, an eight-week test retest reliability was high.

*Validity: Convergent*

To examine validity, 93 women and 94 men completed the SPAS in a battery of measures that included self-consciousness (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975); fear of negative evaluation (Leary, 1983b); interaction anxiousness (Leary, 1983c); body cathexis (Langston, 1979) and (Secord & Jourard, 1953); body-esteem, (Franzoi & Shields, 1984); and social desirability, (Reynolds, 1982). To examine the criterion-related validity of the SPAS, a study was conducted to compare the reactions of women who scored low or high in social physique anxiety during an actual evaluation of their physiques, a procedure that was designed to parallel evaluations commonly performed in exercise-based programs. Initial support for the validity of the SPAS would be obtained if high scores expresses greater apprehension and tension during such an evaluation than low scorers.
As expected, high SPA women reported being significantly more stressed during the physique evaluation than low SPA women. Women who scored high on the SPAS also indicated that they felt less comfortable about having their body evaluated by the researcher. Furthermore, high physique-anxious women reported more frequent negative thoughts about their body appearance during the evaluation than did low physique-anxious women.

Together, these data provide evidence that scores on the SPA are related to state physique anxiety experienced during an actual evaluation of one's physique.

The 10 questions are
1. I’m uncomfortable with the appearance of my body.
2. I worry about wearing clothes that might make me look too thin or fat.
3. I wish I weren’t so uptight about my body.
4. I’m bothered by the thought of other people evaluating my weight or muscle tone.
5. When I look in the mirror I don’t feel good about my body.
6. My body makes me nervous in social settings.
7. I’m uncomfortable with how fit my body appears.
8. When I’m in a bathing suit, I feel very nervous about my body.
9. When it comes to my body, I’m shy.
10. I don’t feel relaxed when others are looking at my body.

The 10 items will be answered with "strongly disagree," "disagree," "neither disagree nor agree," "agree," and "strongly agree" responses. The range of this scale is 0 to 5.

*The Body/Image/Attractiveness Perception Scale* This scale, developed by Grubb, et al. is a nonstandardized instrument. Other items were adapted from Grubb, et al. that required subjects to rate their self-perception of body weight/size and attractiveness.
In the pretest subjects were asked:

1. I am comfortable with my weight and body size.
2. I think I am attractive.
3. Other people think I am overweight.

In the posttest subjects were asked:

1. I feel attractive.
2. I would rate my weight and body size as overweight.

From these pre and posttest means, change scores will be computed.

Demographic/Weight Questionnaire (see Appendix 3). This is a nonstandardized questionnaire that will ask their age, height, and weights. This will be used to compare with their actual, ideal, and ought-to weights.

Procedure

Subjects were tested in two separate private rooms in the Journalism Building. They were randomly assigned to each condition by the order they filed into the room and the hour they were tested (i.e.: Those that signed up on Monday at 5:30 and Tuesday at 6:30 were placed in the low content, low distortion control group or the high content, high distortion experimental group and those that signed up on Monday at 6:30 and Tuesday at 5:30 were randomly placed into the high content, low distortion control group or the low content, high distortion experimental group, etc.) Students were randomly assigned by color coding. Each group were given a set of instructions and an oral explanation of the experiment. They were given the Self-Esteem Scale plus the additional questions on weight and body image and given a few minutes to complete it. The additional questions were 5, 9, and 13 in appendix A.
The first experimental group or condition one was shown a 30-minute edited program of "Baywatch" with 4 commercials at the beginning, 4 commercials after 5 minutes of the program, 4 commercials after 15 minutes of the program, and 4 commercials after 25 minutes of the program, which contained all idealized images.

The first control group or condition two was shown a 30-minute edited program of "Baywatch" with 4 commercials at the beginning, 4 commercials after 5 minutes of the program, 4 commercials after 15 minutes of the program, and 4 commercials after 25 minutes of the program, which contained all nonidealized image commercials.

The second experimental group or condition three was shown a 30-minute edited program of "Wonder Years" with 4 commercials at the beginning, 4 commercials after 5 minutes of the program, 4 commercials after 15 minutes of the program, and 4 commercials after 25 minutes of the program, which contained all idealized image commercials.

The second control group or condition four was shown a 30-minute edited program of "Wonder Years" with 4 commercials at the beginning, 4 commercials after 5 minutes of the program, 4 commercials after 15 minutes of the program, and 4 commercials after 25 minutes of the program, which contained all nonidealized image commercials.

Both groups then took the SPA Scale blended with the Body Image/Attractiveness Perception Scale and the additional questions matching the ones in the pretest, 11 and 12 in appendix B. The next step was for both groups to answer the demographic questionnaire with age, height, and weight questions. They were then debriefed and asked some qualitative questions.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS: This chapter deals with the variables tested and the results.

The three dependent variables that were operationalized are attractiveness, perceived body weight and physique anxiety. For each dependent variable, the data were analyzed using a 2 X 2 between subjects design.

An item analysis was done on the Self-Esteem questionnaire and question 8 (I wish I could have more respect for myself) was not correlating with the rest of the items. Therefore I took out the item and the Cronbach’s alpha on the SES is .72. I also computed a Cronbach's alpha for the posttest, the Social Physique Anxiety Scale, and it is .93. These both show a high reliability.

The use of self-esteem as a control was abandoned because the measured variable was unusable. The SES scale had a possible range from 1 to 5. As reported earlier, Rosenberg (1965) shows the SES varies from 1 to 4 according to the four point scale in the population of adolescents. However in this experiment there was minimal variance. SES only ranged between 3.9 to 4.9. Because there was minimum variance between subject's self-esteem levels, hypothesis one, two and three could not be tested. See table 1 for individual subject scores. The mean for this scale was 4.340 and the standard deviation was .326. I went ahead with the testing of the three dependent variables without self-esteem as a control because of the lack of significant variance between means.
ATTRACTIVENESS

Effects of the manipulation on the first dependent variable was assessed by computing a change score between pretest and posttest perceptions of attractiveness (see Table 2). This was done by subtracting the score on pretest question 9 (I think I am attractive) from the score on posttest question 11 (I feel attractive). The means for this scale were zero in all conditions except three. The reasoning for the difference in the third conditions means is one subject in all four conditions changed their view of their attractiveness.

An ANOVA was run and no significant main or interaction effect was found for the first test (see Table 3).

BODY WEIGHT

The effect on body weight was also assessed by using a change score between posttest minus pretest perceptions of body weight. This was assessed by subtracting the score on pretest question 5 (I am comfortable with my weight and body size) from the score on posttest question 12 (I would rate my weight and body size as overweight) (see Table 4). The means on this scale varied more than the attractiveness scale, but the greatest mean was in condition four and only .500 or half of a scale movement. Also, the mean for condition two was negative which showed that those respondents felt more comfortable with their body weight after viewing the tapes. Another noticeable difference is that condition three showed a zero mean. This does not mean no change, it shows that subjects opposite responses canceled each other out.

An ANOVA was run and no significant main or interaction effect was found for the second test (see Table 5).
SOCIAL PHYSIQUE ANXIETY SCALE

The third dependent variable was the Social Physique Anxiety Scale. The ten items from the Social Physique Anxiety Scale were summed and used as the third dependent variable (see Table 6). All of the questions responses ranged from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" on a five point scale. The ranges of scores for the Social Physique Anxiety Scale are 1 to 5.

An ANOVA was run and no significant main or interaction effect was found for this test (see Table 7).
Table 1

SELF-ESTEEM VALUES BY FREQUENCIES

MEAN: 4.340
SD: .326
Table 2

CHANGE SCORES FOR ATTRACTIVENESS BY VIEWING CONDITION.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONDITIONS</th>
<th>COND. 1</th>
<th>COND. 2</th>
<th>COND. 3</th>
<th>COND. 4</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATTRACTIVENESS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.250</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.453</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Condition 1: Distorted programming, distorted commercials; Condition 2: Distorted programming, nondistorted commercials; Condition 3: Nondistorted programming, distorted commercials; Condition 4: Nondistorted programming, nondistorted commercials. Only one subject in all four conditions made a change between pre and posttest answers.
Table 3

**TWO WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF ATTRACTIVENESS BY PROGRAMMING AND ADS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program (A)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>2.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ads (B)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>2.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program * Ads (AB)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>2.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (S/AB)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p.05

F(A): Main effects for variable A

F(B): Main effects for variable B

F(AB): Interaction between variables A & B
Table 4

CHANGE SCORES FOR WEIGHT PERCEPTION BY VIEWING CONDITION.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONDITIONS</th>
<th>COND. 1</th>
<th>COND. 2</th>
<th>COND. 3</th>
<th>COND. 4</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEIGHT AND BODY SIZE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEANS</td>
<td>.375</td>
<td>-.125</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.500</td>
<td>.188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.188</td>
<td>.354</td>
<td>.538</td>
<td>.857</td>
<td>.821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Condition 1: Distorted programming, distorted commercials; Condition 2: Distorted programming, nondistorted commercials; Condition 3: Nondistorted programming, distorted commercials; Condition 4: Nondistorted programming, nondistorted commercials. Negative responses for that condition mean the subjects responded they felt more comfortable with their weight and body size after viewing the tape. A zero mean does not mean no change, it was canceled out by another subjects opposite response.
**Table 5**

**TWO WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF BODY WEIGHT BY PROGRAMMING AND ADS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program (A)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>.187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ads (B)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program * Ads (AB)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>2.987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (S/AB)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.670</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p.05

**F(A):** Main effects for variable A

**F(B):** Main effects for variable B

**F(AB):** Interaction between variables A & B
Table 6

PHYSIQUE ANXIETY SCALE (POST MEASURE) BY CONDITION.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONDITIONS</th>
<th>COND. 1</th>
<th>COND. 2</th>
<th>COND. 3</th>
<th>COND. 4</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHYSIQUE ANXIETY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEANS</td>
<td>3.229</td>
<td>2.979</td>
<td>3.115</td>
<td>3.510</td>
<td>3.208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.904</td>
<td>.748</td>
<td>.456</td>
<td>.455</td>
<td>.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Condition 1: Distorted programming, distorted commercials; Condition 2: Distorted programming, nondistorted commercials; Condition 3: Nondistorted programming, distorted commercials; Condition 4: Nondistorted programming, nondistorted commercials. The range of scores was 1 to 5.
Table 7

**TWO WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF PHYSIQUE ANXIETY BY PROGRAMMING AND ADS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program (A)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.347</td>
<td>.775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ads (B)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program * Ads (AB)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.834</td>
<td>1.863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (S/AB)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.448</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p.05

F(A): Main effects for variable A

F(B): Main effects for variable B

F(AB): Interaction between variables A & B
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION: This chapter deals with a discussion of results, future research changes and notable results.

I found no significant results as the result of a variety of factors. There was very little variance in means on the self-esteem questionnaire, instruments were not sensitive, pre and posttest measures were given on the same day, manipulation was weakened by the statement of purpose of the experiment during recruiting with the Human Subjects Review Committee at Ohio State. I had to mention the purpose of the experiment and the expected direction of results because of the restriction impressed by HSRC.

First, the lack of variance between means on the self-esteem questionnaire, or pretest questions, prevented the testing of the first three of four hypotheses. This was a major drawback in discussing the results because no results could be tested based on the hypothesis determined.

Second, the instruments sensitivity was a problem because they only had a five point scale. Minor changes were not notable.

Third, pretest and posttest measures were given on the same day as a result of time constraints. This created a variety of problems. One, subjects were informed prior to the viewing what was going to happen. Two, subjects remembered their answers from the pretest and gave the same answer on the posttest.
Fourth, since the rooms provided for the experiment were classrooms, there were many interruptions and distractions. Some subjects brought their toddler children, maintenance personnel came in to empty trash, and there were some minor technical problems.

Fifth, the Human Subjects Review Committee at Ohio State required full disclosure of events of the experiment. They required the sign up sheets and solicitation sheets to explain all steps involved. Prior to signing up for the experiment, subjects were aware that they were to first answer some questions, then view a tape, then answer more questions, then have their height and weight measurements taken. This provided them with too much information. They admitted in debriefing that they were aware of the true meaning of the experiment prior to participation.

Future Research/Changes

More emphasis needs to be placed on self-esteem. The lack of variance between means caused a significant amount of problems in this particular procedure. The questionnaire needs to be emphasized, explaining explicit instructions and providing them with extreme privacy to answer honestly. The use of more than one self-esteem questionnaire should also help in detecting variance between subjects.

The instruments could be adapted to detect minor changes. They could be changed to ten or possibly fifteen point scales.

Pretest could and should have been given days or even weeks prior to the posttest rather than minutes. For best results giving the pretest weeks possibly months in advance would have been the most successful. Also, pretest and
posttest scales could be distinguishable by using variations of agree and disagree and the posttest using variations of the statement "describes me and this statement does not describe me" in the posttest. Using this method, the subjects would not be able to just remember what they had said before, they would think a little more and answer more truthfully.

A better environment for the experiment could have solved some of the problems with attention. Rooms with no windows in the doors, more private rooms, and rooms with sound proofing could have alleviated many of these problems.

Even though there is not much room for discussion on the rules and regulations of the Human Subjects Review Committee, possibly with more time and discussion, they might have allowed a more disguised way of explaining the experiment to the perspective subjects prior to the experiment.

Using some type of silhouette to identify with pre and post to the viewing of the tapes could have possibly showed changes in the subjects perception of themselves or with computer techniques. The computer techniques used could have presented the subjects with approximately thirty variations of a silhouette. They could pick one that best represents their own body image pre and post to the viewing of the tapes. With so many variations, it would be almost impossible to determine which silhouette they chose at the beginning of the experiment.

The final suggestion for future research is to incorporate some type of mood scale. This could show that mood may change and that the resultant factor may lead to changes in body satisfaction as a long term effect. Also, the mood of the subjects prior to the experiment could be cause for changes.
Notable Facts

The Cronbach’s alpha reported for both the pretest (SES) and the posttest (SPA) were both high. This shows a high reliability of the standardized questionnaires, following with the other authors’ reported results.

Looking beyond, there was another notable fact that was determined. Women feel they should be thinner than what other people think. This was found in questions of actual, ideal and ought to weights. On average, across all groups, women think they should be three pounds thinner than what others think they should weigh. This could be a result of numerous factors. One, the media could be causing this effect. Two, family members could be causing this effect. Three, this effect could be caused by a combination of numerous social, mental and biological factors. I would like to believe this is a result of the media depicting women as thinner than their healthy weight, but based on the design, there is no way to prove what is causing this effect.

After looking at all the problems with this particular experimental design, I believe that the results I predicted can be found. I believe that the media have a considerable effect over the viewing public. The effect I predict could be more of a long-term cumulative effect. If so, the best way to determine the effects would be to develop a long-term experimental design or survey. Use of a survey would also make it possible to study exposure to different types of media. The typical person in the real world is exposed to numerous forms of the media. Using a study design measuring television commercials, magazine advertisements, billboards, television programming, etc., would have been much more effective in documenting if the media do what I believe they do.
Effects could be taking place in fleeting, short-term ways. New technology can be used to pursue this dramatically different conceptualization of this effect. There are techniques in which the subject dials his/her response right to a computer during viewing of video tapes. The computer can collect responses every two seconds on a variety of details, such as how the respondent feels, like or dislike, good or bad, and a variety of other responses. The use of the dialing techniques could also have determined if certain commercials were more effective than others, and if parts of the commercials or programs do indeed make people feel bad about themselves, at least for the short term.

All in all the effect of media on women is a factor today. Other researchers have shown this effectively. With the use of a better design I know that the hypothesis can be proven correct.

Recent survey research has shown significant relationships between mass media usage, body dissatisfaction and eating disorders. According to Harrison and Cantor (1995) media use significantly predicted body dissatisfaction in women. It also showed a significant relationship between media consumption and women's eating disorder symptomatology. It showed that it is stronger for magazine reading than for television viewing. It also showed that body dissatisfaction was more strongly related to television viewing than magazine reading. This research backs up my theory that media has an effect on women.
LIST OF REFERENCES


APPENDIX A
PRETEST

Circle the answer that best describes you.

1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neither Disagree nor Agree   Agree

2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neither Disagree nor Agree   Agree

3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neither Disagree nor Agree   Agree

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neither Disagree nor Agree   Agree

5. I am comfortable with my weight and body size.

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neither Disagree nor Agree   Agree

6. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neither Disagree nor Agree   Agree

7. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neither Disagree nor Agree   Agree

8. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neither Disagree nor Agree   Agree
9. I think I am attractive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree nor Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

10. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree nor Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. I certainly feel useless at times.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree nor Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12. At times I think I am no good at all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree nor Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

13. Other people think I am overweight.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree nor Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
APPENDIX B
POSTTEST

Circle the answer that best describes you.

1. I'm uncomfortable with the appearance of my body.

   Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither Disagree nor Agree Agree
   Strongly Agree

2. I worry about wearing clothes that might make me look too thin or fat.

   Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither Disagree nor Agree Agree
   Strongly Agree

3. I wish I weren't so uptight about my body.

   Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither Disagree nor Agree Agree
   Strongly Agree

4. I'm bothered by the thought of other people evaluating my weight or muscle tone.

   Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither Disagree nor Agree Agree
   Strongly Agree

5. When I look in the mirror I don't feel good about my body.

   Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither Disagree nor Agree Agree
   Strongly Agree

6. My body makes me nervous in social settings.

   Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither Disagree nor Agree Agree
   Strongly Agree

7. I'm uncomfortable with how fit my body appears.

   Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither Disagree nor Agree Agree
   Strongly Agree

8. When I'm in a bathing suit, I feel very nervous about my body.

   Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither Disagree nor Agree Agree
   Strongly Agree

59
9. When it comes to my body, I’m shy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree nor Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

10. I don’t feel relaxed when others are looking at my body.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree nor Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. I feel attractive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree nor Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12. I would rate my weight and body size as overweight.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree nor Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
APPENDIX C
DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your age?
   ________years old

2. What is your height?
   _____feet _____inches

3. What is your weight?
   _____pounds

4. What is your ideal weight?
   _____pounds

5. What weight would you say others feel is your ideal weight?
   _____pounds
APPENDIX D
DEBRIEFING SCRIPT:

Now that the experiment is over I would like to explain to you the true purpose of the experiment. I was trying to determine if the media (advertising and programming) has any effect on the body image of women. My hypothesis was that women with low self-esteem have a greater chance of reducing their body image satisfaction as a result of distorted commercials and programming. Distorted meaning, women models in the commercials who are idealistically beautiful and who are underweight. Another purpose of this experiment was to determine if the media has any effect on social physique anxiety. Social physique anxiety is having anxiety toward your own body as a result of feeling that other people think you should look different.