University of Cincinnati

Date: 3/20/2017

Janae' Collier-Green, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Health Education.

It is entitled:
Skin Tone, Age, and Body Image Representation in Health and Beauty Advertisements in Women’s Health Magazines

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Committee member: Rebecca Vidourek, Ph.D.
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Skin Tone, Age, and Body Image Representation in Health and Beauty Advertisements in
Women’s Health Magazines

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate School
of the University of Cincinnati
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In the of Health Promotion and Education Program
of the College of Human Resources, Education, Criminal Justice and Human Resources

April 2017

By

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Abstract

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION FOR THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN HEALTH PROMOTION AND EDUCATION, PRESENTED ON MARCH 20TH 2017 AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI, CINCINNATI, OHIO.

TITLE: Skin Tone, Age, and Body Image Representation in Health and Beauty Advertisements in Women’s Health Magazines

DOCTORAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Dr. Laura Nabors (chair), Dr. Rebecca Vidourek, and Dr. Bradley R. A. Wilson

This dissertation is comprised of two studies. Study one examined the representation of skin tone and age in health and beauty advertisements and cover pages of women’s health magazines. Study two examined the representation of body shape in health and beauty advertisements and cover pages in women’s health magazines.

Study One Abstract

Understanding how women’s magazines portray skin tones and age of women in health advertisements is needed to understand how print media may be contributing to perceptions of skin tone representation and age. Moreover, magazines are a common source of health information for women (Warner & Proccacino, 2003); and unlike electronic media, readers have the opportunity to linger over and return to advertisements in print media. For study one, three highly circulated magazines targeting females’ health within the United States were examined
over a two-year period (2015-2016). The three women’s health magazines selected for this study were: Shape, Women’s Health, and Self. The author and an undergraduate research assistant coded advertisements (beauty and health advertisements) and magazine covers independently. The findings of this study suggest lighter skin tones and younger ages were valued or used within women’s health magazines. The exclusion of persons with darker skin tones and older aged characters may be associated with consideration of these groups as “out-groups” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2002). Further research, reviewing a broader range of years, is needed to replicate study findings. Moreover, research with advertisers and magazine editors is needed to determine why women with darker skin tones and older females are not represented in health magazine advertisements and cover pages.

Study Two Abstract

The media may be playing a role in shaping views of women as needing to be “thin,” creating concerns about how women may internalize the messages they view. This study contributed to the literature by measuring the frequency of occurrence of different types of body shapes represented in women’s magazine health advertisements. The purpose was to examine whether the preponderance of advertisements in popular women’s health magazines featured a “thin body ideal.” Three highly circulated magazines targeting females’ health within the United States were examined over a two-year period (2015-2016). The three women’s health magazines selected for this study were: Shape, Women’s Health, and Self. The author and an undergraduate research assistant coded advertisements (health and beauty advertisements) independently. As expected, many of the characters in the health and beauty advertisements represented thinner body shapes. The strong representation of thinner body shapes further supports the thin ideal within the United States, where thin body shapes are associated with health and beauty. Future research
should review all of the body shapes across health magazines and other women’s magazines and
determine how women who read these magazines picture the women portrayed and how they
view themselves compared to the women they see in print.
Acknowledgements:

First and foremost, I want to thank God for giving me the willpower to overcome every hurdle in life that tried to kill my spirit. Without God, I would not be able to accomplish any of the academic achievements I have accomplished. With His grace, God blessed me with an amazing support system that has always been in my corner, cheering me on to become better in every aspect of my life: my magnificent Mommy, my delightful Daddy, super sister Jazmine, and my lovely husband Eddie. The four of you have built me to be stronger than life. To my wonderful educational team, Dr. Nabors, Dr. Vidourek, and Dr. Wilson, thank you for your hours of service to my educational experience and improvement. My dissertation was not possible without you. Dr. Bleuzette Marshall, thank you for funding my research and being an amazing mentor throughout my college experience.
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Study One: Health and Beauty Advertisements in Health Magazines:

What is the Role of Skin Tone and Age?
Introduction

The media influences many of their viewers from repeated messages. Lupton (2003) suggests that mass media plays a major role in portraying medicine, health care, illness, and health risks in ways that contribute to people’s understanding of these phenomena. Understanding how magazines portray lighter and darker skin tones for women in health and beauty advertisements is needed to understand how print media may be contributing to perceptions of skin tone representation. Moreover, magazines are a common source of health information for women (Warner & Proccacino, 2003); and unlike electronic media, readers have the opportunity to linger over and return to advertisements in print media. All skin tones of women and all ranges of age need to be represented in health and beauty messages, so they know the value of taking care of their health and the value of their beauty. Thus, the current study sought to investigate the representation of skin tones and age of women in beauty and health advertisements popular health magazines.

Magazines and Skin Representation

Regarding health advertisement content in women's magazines, it appears there are health disparities in information content. For example, Duerksen and her colleagues (2005) evaluated whether variations in health messaging and content existed in health-related advertisements across advertisements with pictures of women in different ethnic groups among women’s magazines. Results suggested that the advertisements with content selling health diminishing products, like cigarettes, where frequently found in magazines targeted toward African American women with African American women represented in the pictures that went with the advertising. In contrast, comparable health-diminishing advertisement content in mainstream magazines
rarely featured pictures of people. On the other hand, the health-promoting advertisements in mainstream magazines featured pictures of people who had white faces.

Duerksen and her colleagues (2005) proposed that mass media outlets have the power to influence viewers’ beliefs and attitudes from repeated messages, which can motivate the viewer to change his or her behavior. Furthermore, health behaviors are cultivated through repeated messages and portrayals as suggested by Gerbner’s (1973) Cultivation Theory (1973). Hence, the type of behavior and product associated with particular models and representations play a key role in shaping the reader’s expectations.

Similar to Duerksen et al. (2005), Mastin, Andsager, Choi, and Lee (2007) provided a snapshot of the representation of African American women in health advertisement messaging, emphasizing the potent role of the media in messages about health behaviors. They contended that women’s identities are influenced by the media they review. People are seeking to learn about their health care through reading health messages and seek to read those messages they identify with, and, therefore, the person portrayed in the message, is important. Their research indicated that some advertisements of women with darker skin tones lacked educational value and therefore women with darker skin tones were identifying with, if you will, messages that did not convey important health information to them. There was an underrepresentation of women with dark skin tones in advertisements that would be helpful for improving their health behaviors, according to these researchers.

Meyers (2011) evaluated how the representation of Black, darker skin tones, has an influence on the perceptions of the product in comparison to lighter skin tones, through measuring attitudes. The author predicted that attitudes toward advertisements would have a positive association for participants based on their identification with skin tone. As predicted,
participants’ attitudes were more positive for the models with light skin tone versus models with dark skin tone. The results confirm the role of colorism is still pervasive in how consumers value products.

Similar to Meyers (2011) evaluating the impact of skin tone of models, Baumann (2008) measured the level of attractiveness toward skin tones in complexions. Baumann (2008) highlighted the beauty value of light skin tones being seen as more attractive. This rooted history is connected to Caucasian race, lighter skin tones, creating a segregated culture during slavery times was measured by an individual's skin tone. The lighter a person's skin tone, the more connected a person is to being white or Caucasian, (intelligence, power, privilege, capital) in comparison to the darker skin or being African American (aggressive, unintelligent, worker) (Baumann, 2008). For women of both races, lighter skin tones indicate more merit due to their significant presence within the advertisements. Also, lighter skin tones were synonymous with the ideal of innocence and purity, whereas dark skin tones suggest a tainted and unclean image (Baumann, 2008).

The impact of these representations can be magnified for readers who identify with characters within the advertisements. Heightening the salience of a particular identity can influence perceptions and behaviors (Forehand et al., 2002). As identity salience is heightened readers are more likely to be attracted to the product in the advertisements because the identity serves as a positive cue (Duerksen et al., 2005). The presence of skin tones within advertisements serves as a mechanism to gain readers’ interest in health (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Applying the social identity theory, the placement of faces of color can target specific groups due to skin tone identification with the people depicted in the advertisement. Mastin et al. (2007) suggests companies use the social identity theory to construct direct-to-consumer advertisements that
stimulate the consumer’s interest in the advertisement. Hence, the role of racial representation is relevant when constructing health messages, because readers are more likely to be attracted to messages that relate to their identity.

I wanted to discuss two theories, in particular, that are consistent with messaging in magazines, and these are social identity theory and cultivation theory.

**Social Identity Theory**

As social identity theory suggests physical characteristics are a way in which people identify themselves with groups, and skin tone is considered an identifier of self as it relates to racial identity (Forehand et al., 2002; Meyers, 2011). Skin tone is the color of someone’s skin, in regards to the lightness or darkness of his or her skin color. Reviewing skin tone representation within magazine beauty and health magazine advertisements is relevant because the strong representation of a certain skin tone will reinforce the idea of colorism within the United States. Colorism is the act of society (media outlets) placing a positive value on lighter skin tones in comparison to darker skin tones (Meyers, 2008). As women’s health magazines aim to serve as a resource of health information, a variety of skin tones is needed to connect to all women.

In society, there is a pervasive message that lighter skin tones are symbolic of attractiveness (Meyers, 2011). Associating lighter skin tones with beauty creates a negative perception of how darker skin tones are viewed. Darker skin tones are more stereotypically associated with roles that are aggressive or uneducated; versus lighter skin roles which are associated with being educated and powerful (Leaks, 2014). Evaluating the skin tones of women featured in women’s health magazine’s advertisements illustrates who is being addressed in the messages conveyed by media sources. This dissertation examined the skin color of women represented in health and beauty advertisements and on the cover of popular health magazines
for women. It was anticipated that women with darker skin tones would be under-represented in advertisements and on magazine covers.

**Cultivation Theory**

In addition to social identity theory, I believe that George Gerbner’s (1973) Cultivation Theory is a mechanism to help explain the impact of health messages. Cultivation Theory focuses on the assessment of constant messages from media outlets that have the potential to shape public opinion (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). Constant images projected from media outlets serve a role in shaping reality for the viewers. This underscores the importance of understanding media messaging. Women’s health magazines may serve as a valuable tool in constructing messages about African American women. Women may then absorb information about health issues through the advertisement content within the magazines.

A secondary research question for Study One, was the age representation of women in magazine advertisements and cover pages.

**Magazines and Age Representation**

Within television media, there is a consistent underrepresentation of older women among characters. Most characters may appear younger or middle-aged. In comparison to their counterparts, males tend to be in older age groups of over fifty, where women are in younger age groups under fifty (Downing, Harris & Voorhees as cited in Elasmar, Hasegawa & Brain, 1999). The representation of younger models within women’s health magazines excludes the opportunity for older women to relate or connect to health messages as immediately as younger women, which is consistent with social identity theory (e.g., Forehand et al., 2002).

Wasylkiw, Emms, Meuse, and Poirier (2009) conducted a content analysis of the role function of women within advertisements, comparing health and fitness magazines to fashion
and beauty magazines. The researchers coded age as a variable to measure the differences amongst the female characters. For all types of magazines, the majority of the female characters (80.72%) were classified as being between the ages of 21 and 30. Similar to the argument for skin representation, directing advertising using younger models within fitness and fashion magazines excludes the majority of women who are seeking health information. Measuring the representation of age will provide information about how advertisements in women’s health magazines are treating age when projecting messages.

**Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The following research questions and subsequent hypotheses were examined in the current study:

Research questions – (1) What are the skin tones of women represented in advertisements in health magazines and on the cover of popular health magazines for women? (2) What are the ages of women represented in advertisements in health magazines and on the cover of popular health magazines for women?

**Hypotheses -**

H1: Women with darker skin tones will have lower representation in health advertisements than women with lighter skin tones.

H2: Women with darker skin tones will have less representation in advertisements for beauty products than women with lighter skin tones.

H3: Women with darker skin tones have lower representation on cover pages than women with lighter skin tones.

H4: Women with lighter skin tones would be younger in health advertisements than women with darker skin tones.
H5: Women with lighter skin tones would be younger in beauty advertisements than women with darker skin tones.

**Methods**

**Sample**

Three highly circulated magazines targeting females’ health within the United States were examined over a two-year period (2015-2016). The three women’s health magazines selected for this study were: Shape, Women’s Health, and Self. Shape is the highest circulated magazine in this study with 2.5 million circulations (Shape Magazine, 2016). Shape magazine’s content consists of 28 percent reviewing Fitness and Sports, 27 percent Health and Nutrition, and 27 percent Beauty and Style, 6 percent Lifestyle, and 4 percent other types of topics (Shape Magazine, 2016). Women’s Health is the second most circulated magazine of the three women’s health magazines with 1.5 million circulations. Women’s Health magazine focuses 26 percent on Beauty, 17 percent on Fashion, 17 percent on Health and Fitness, 14 percent on Food & Nutrition, and 11 percent on Relationship and Lifestyle (Women’s Health Magazine, 2015). Self is the smallest circulated women’s health magazine with a circulation 1.4 million issues (Self Magazine, 2016). Information about Self’s magazine content was not available. However, this author’s review of issues of magazine headings and tables of contents indicated following topics are covered: Self-Image, Self- Starter, Self-Motivate, Self-Worth, and Self-Nourish. The sample for this study included all issues of the three selected magazine advertisements published from January 2015 - December 2016. The publication frequency is monthly for each magazine, with exception to combination issues.
Instrumentation

**Skin Tone.** For the current study, a version of the Fitzpatrick Classification Scale was used to categorize the skin tones of women in magazine advertisements and on covers provided a foundation for evaluating the representation of women with darker skin tones in health and beauty advertisements in popular health magazines (Fitzpatrick, 1988; http://www.mdskinmd.com/skincare-information-nj/the-fitzpatrick-scale-skin-typing-specialist-monmouth-nj/, accessed January 2, 2017). According to Sachdeva (2009), the current Fitzpatrick skin type classification scale consists of six different skin tones in relationship to their reactivity to the sun. The skin tones range from very fair or light skin tone (Type I) to very black or dark skin tone (Type VI). The Fitzpatrick Scale is used to examine skin tone in the dermatology field and is also used for clinical purposes (e.g., Fasugba, Gardner, & Smyth, 2014; Roberts, 2009). The Fitzpatrick Classification Scale (Fitzpatrick, 1975 as cited in Fitzpatrick, 1988) provides an outline of the skin tones that are represented in society today. For this study, skin tones from the Fitzpatrick Scale (see Fitzpatrick, 1988) were applied to faces. This scale (see Appendix, http://www.mdskinmd.com/skincare-information-nj/the-fitzpatrick-scale-skin-typing-specialist-monmouth-nj/) was used to examine skin tone of women’s skin tones in advertisements in popular health magazines. Dark skin was categorized as being consistent with levels V and VI on the adapted scale and levels I-IV were associated with light colored skin that could burn by five experts in the field of Health Promotion and Education (Fitzpatrick, 1988). The skin tone colors in the Fitzpatrick Scale have good clinical utility and have been used in many dermatological studies (Fitzpatrick, 1988).

**Coding Skin Tone.** If there was a woman character present, then the advertisement was coded for skin tone and age representation. The types of skin tone of each character present in
Advertisements were coded based on a modified version of Fitzpatrick’s Skin Type Classification Scale, a six-point scale of skin tones (Fitzpatrick, 1988). As mentioned, this scale is used to code skin tone, with I-IV for lighter skin tones and levels V and VI were for brown and black skin tones (Fitzpatrick, 1988). A panel of five experts in health psychology, two doctoral students, one physician, and two health professors, ranging in age from 25-69 years of age viewed the adapted scale used in this study and Fitzpatrick’s color wheel (Fitzpatrick, 1988). There was unanimous agreement that skin tones for faces one through four on the adapted scale represented skin tones that were lighter and would burn, while the skin tones for faces five and six represented dark skin tones that would not burn.

**Age.** The age of the characters within the magazine advertisements was coded based on Furnham and Skae’s (1997) analysis of British Television advertisements and Furnham, Babitzkow, and Uguccioni’s (2000) analysis of gender stereotyping in television advertisements. Both studies operationalized age into three categories, young (under 30 years, not including children), middle aged (31-60 years), or old (over 60 years). These categories were also used for this study.

**Process of Review by the Institutional Review Board**

The Institutional Review Board at the University of Cincinnati reviewed this study and determined it to be in the Non-Human Subjects research category (see letter in Appendix A).

**Content Analysis**

A content analysis was an appropriate approach for this study because the method could be used to record the types of messages of advertisements, providing support for which messages are the most prominent and are, therefore, expected to have to have the greatest impact on the audience. Neuendorf (2002) explains a content analysis as:
“Summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method (including attention to objectivity/inter-subjectivity, a priori design, reliability, validity, generality, replicability, and hypothesis testing).” (p. 20).

The current study uses a coding scheme (item six in the coding scheme) to identify the types of health messages in the magazines. Specific codes were developed to assess skin type, age and product type for this study, and the categories developed by Brown and Knight (2015) were adapted to code types of products in advertisements and content of messaging in advertisements. Information about key ideas gained from content coding, agreed upon through a series of meetings between the first author and the research assistant (disagreements resolved by consensus), is presented in the discussion in the position statement.

Coding Procedures

The coding of the advertisements in the magazines described below was conducted by two independent coders, the author and an undergraduate student at the University of Cincinnati. The undergraduate coder was trained by the author to use the coding system (See Appendix B). The undergraduate researcher was trained on issues of health magazines prior to 2011. When coding advertisements, each coder used the coding categories (presented in Appendix B) and coded every full page advertisement within the magazine, beginning with the cover. The author and the undergraduate coder reached 85% agreement in coding on sample issues before beginning the coding process. The undergraduate coder then coded 25% of the advertisements and cover pages for 2015-2016 for the three health magazines used in this study.

The author and the undergraduate research assistant coded advertisements and magazine covers independently. Each coder reviewed each magazine advertisement in each magazine and the cover page. When an advertisement was reviewed, the coder would evaluate if the
advertisement applied to one of the health and beauty categories. If the advertisements did not apply to one of the categories, the coder would code the advertisement as other, and discontinue coding for the advertisement. If the advertisement matched a health and beauty category, the coder would code the advertisement based on the full and clear presence of female adult characters within the advertisement. Each character in the advertisement was coded individually. The author and undergraduate research assistant entered data from the coding form into the SPSS Program so that interrater reliability could be determined. Percent agreement was used to determine interrater reliability among the coders.

The following information reviews coding processes and categories:

**Advertisement Characteristics.** The name, month, and year of the magazine as well as the name of the company advertising and page location of the advertisement were coded to locate the advertisements within a specific woman’s magazine. In addition, the type of product advertised was also coded. Health and beauty advertisements were categorized to determine the type of advertisement of the product within the magazine; products not defined, and other health or beauty advertisements were not coded beyond the advertising characteristics. Product types were coded to determine what kind of health or beauty product was being advertised within the magazine. Appendix C presents the definitions of different types of advertisements. The author and the undergraduate coder met regularly to discuss products and results of these coding meetings and the themes uncovered during these meetings are presented in the position statement in the conclusions section of this paper.

**Beauty.** Lazar (2011) suggested in many societies, beauty is associated with being feminine and is measured by physically characteristics, such as, skin type, complexion, body shape, size, and appearance. In the aforementioned study, beauty advertisements pertained to the
marketing of cosmetics, fragrances, skincare, hair, and body management products and services. The product types of each beauty advertisement were: cosmetics (eye liner, blush, lip gloss, foundation), fragrances (perfume, cologne, body spray, and body mist) and skin care (Anti-Aging Cream, Facial Mask, Skin Cream, Facial Scrub).

**Health.** The coding categories provided by Crawley, Hisaw, and Illes (2009) were adapted to define health advertisement product types for the current study. The authors coded health on messages that addressed different types of products (e.g., over-the-counter products, prescription products), and by types of medical conditions (e.g., serious, life-threatening conditions, chronic, mental health, infectious disease; see Appendix C). The health product type categories adapted for this study are serious, life-threatening conditions (a condition that may require medical treatment or care by a doctor in order to prevent significant or long lasting effects to health (diabetes, hypertension, heart disease), chronic, nonlife-threatening conditions (non-serious health problems or illnesses such as allergies or dermatologic conditions), infectious diseases (non-life-threatening acute conditions such as colds or ear infections, or symptoms associated with such conditions), prescription products (a drug an individual may access with the approval of a health care professional and involvement of health insurance), supplements (tablets that assist with the improvement of overall health), over-the-counter products (drugs an individual may access without prescription from a health care professional and without health insurance involvement), and messages (providing informational content about a health-related subject such as, “Got Milk?”; see Appendix C).
Results

Intercoder-reliability

There were 986 advertisements featuring women coded by the first author. Advertisements were randomly assigned to be double coded by the undergraduate research assistant. The undergraduate research assistant coded 276 of the same advertisements that the first author coded. The researcher and undergraduate student coded all of the cover pages ($n = 19$). The intercoder reliability results are presented in Tables 1-4. Table 1 presents the percentage of agreement for representation of women in the advertisements, skin tone and age representation in the advertisements are in Tables 2-3, and agreement for skin tone and age on the cover pages is presented in Table 4.

Insert Tables 1-4 here

Demographics

The total sample included 59 women’s health magazines with 3,208 advertisements. Health and beauty advertisements with female character representation included 28% ($N = 905$) with the majority of the health 90% ($n = 429$) and beauty 95% ($n = 476$) advertisements featuring female characters. There were more beauty advertisements 52% ($n = 476$) than health advertisements 48% ($n = 429$) that featured female characters.

Skin tone representation of characters across health and beauty advertisements was as follows: very fair 10% ($n = 94$), fair 58% ($n = 523$), medium 17% ($n = 152$), olive 2% ($n = 70$), brown 2% ($n = 57$), and black 1% ($n = 10$). Age representation amongst female characters in both health and beauty representation was as follows: younger than 35 years of age 52% ($n = 473$), middle aged [35-60 years] 48% ($n = 431$), and older than 60 years of age <1% ($n = 2$).
Skin Tone, Age & Cover Pages

Fifty-nine cover pages were reviewed. There were 21 (35.6% of the sample) from Self magazine, 20 from Shape magazine (33.9% of the sample) and 18 from Women’s Health Magazine (30.5% of the sample). Cover pages represented female characters with lighter skin tones (89.8%, n = 53) more frequently than darker skin tones (10.2%, n = 6). Younger aged women (under 35 years; 69.5%, n = 41) were more commonly seen on cover pages, followed by middle aged women (28.8%, n = 17) and there was only 1 older aged woman (over 60 years) depicted on a cover page.

Skin Tone, Age & Health Advertisements

Results indicated that 92.8% (n = 400) of the characters on health advertisements presented as a lighter skin tone and 7.1% (n = 31) represented darker skin tones. There were 209 advertisements for younger characters, 220 advertisements for middle aged characters, and 2 characters were in the oldest age group. Results of a chi-square analysis were significant, $X^2 = 8.49, p = .014$, showing that middle-aged and older characters were more likely to have darker skin tones (67.7%, n = 21) than younger aged characters (32.3%, n = 10). There was not a difference between younger characters (49.8%, n = 199) and older characters (middle aged plus over 60 years; 50.2%, n = 201) for lighter skin tones.

Skin Tone, Age & Beauty Advertisements

Results indicated that characters in beauty advertisements were typically featured with lighter skin tones (92.4%, n = 440) and 7.6% (n = 36) of characters were portrayed with darker skin tones. There were 270 younger characters in beauty advertisements and 206 characters were in the middle age groups. It is especially noteworthy that there were no older characters represented
in beauty advertisements. Although a chi-square analyses revealed no significant differences, I believe the percentages are useful information. Models who were more likely to have lighter skin tones were younger (57%, n = 251) rather than being middle aged (43%, n = 189).

**Conclusions**

Examining the representation of skin tones and age in women’s health magazines is vital to understanding how magazine advertisements are contributing to the perceptions of health for African American women. I argue that studying the representations of skin tone and age within magazine advertisements is important because media outlets serve an active role in influencing health perceptions from the framing of their advertisements that exposes readers to health resources and knowledge about their personal health needs (Duerksen et al., 2005; Lupton, 2003; Warner & Proccacino, 2003). Study findings showed strong support for the notion that women with lighter skin tones would be represented on cover pages and in health and beauty advertisements. I believed that women with darker skin tones would be represented less because these skin tones are not considered to be as attractive as lighter skin tones and I will further address my ideas in my position statement. My ideas are rooted in previous literature (e.g., Duersken et al., 2005). Results of this study also supported the notion that older women would be less present on cover pages and in health and beauty advertisements. This is consistent with previous research (Wasylkiw et al., 2009).

My research extended the literature by assessing both skin tone and age in health and beauty advertisements. Specifically, my hypothesis that women with lighter skin tones would be younger in beauty advertisements was not supported statistically, although data were trending in that direction. My hypothesis that women with lighter skin tones would be younger in health advertisements was supported. Directing research toward understanding how several variables
impact advertising is important, and a direction for future research. The undergraduate coder and I had opportunities to examine the content of advertisements through a series of meetings. I will explain the results and their meaning in my position statement, reflecting my understanding of skin tone and age in advertisements and cover pages in relation to the products being advertised. My position statement will also further explore the meaning of study findings, in relation to my background as well as relevant research.

**Author’s Position Statement**

Applying the cultivation theory (Gerbner, 1973; Shanahan & Morgan, 1999), outside viewers may process that women with more fair skin tones have more important health concerns than those who have a darker skin tones. The impact of repeating the presence of characters with lighter skin tones on the cover page may gradually shape the view of the predominantly Caucasian women’s social reality as well as value in the health industry. Incorporating women of darker skin tones on the cover page of women’s health magazines is significant, because the cover page shows what is valued within women’s health. Magazine companies are strategically thinking about how to create the best cover page to grab the eyes of current and potential readers. Women’s health magazines need to diversify their representation of models to be more inclusive of all skin tones, which would present opportunities to connect to more current and potential readers with just a glance at their cover page. As these magazines aim to serve the community of women at large, the need to intentionally place women of darker skin tones is necessary to connect to African American women seeking to improve their health. It also is important, as stated in the abstract of this paper, to ensure that women of all skin tones are represented in magazines so that there is not a perception that a group that is not represented is an “out group” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2002).
**Cover Pages.** The cover page is the first advertisement viewers see in stores, so the characters represented on the cover help determine whether a reader will gravitate to the magazine. Results of this study suggested that women with lighter skin tones have the most representation on the covers of popular women’s health magazines. Seldom are brown skin tones present on cover pages. The cover being the first observed advertisement for the magazine means it potentially carries the strongest impact on how the reader will connect to the magazine. The skin tone of the character on a magazine cover impacts a reader at a much greater distance than that of the cover text, since the text is so much smaller than the cover image. As a result, individuals who do not relate to the skin tone on the cover page may be less attracted to the magazine because they do not notice an immediate similarity beyond the image being a woman.

**Health Advertisements.** Women with darker skin tones have lower representation than women with lighter skin tones in health advertisements. Content coding was conducted for post hoc analyses of type of product. It was observed that women with darker skin tones have the most representation in health advertisements relating to prescription products. The most frequent company representing women with darker skin tones was Nexaplanon. Nexaplanon is a birth contraception company that requires approval from a doctor. Placing African Americans within birth contraception advertisements suggests a message of encouragement for African Americans not to have children or that preventative action is needed to eliminate the possibility of having a child. Nexaplanon is a contraception that reduces the possibility to have children for three years until the next dosage is installed into the arm of the patient. With little representation throughout the magazine, African American women have a small amount of exposure to advertisements that assist in shaping a positive social reality. Since there are very few advertisements of African Americans within health-related advertisements, the weight of the advertisements that they are
placed in has more of an impact because there are fewer advertisements to associate African Americans with products. Nexplanon does not provide a positive sense of health for oneself, but rather gives African American women a small perspective on their health priorities. Continuously exposing a reader to African Americans in these advertisements may begin to create a social construct that African American women should not have children. Thus, the call to have more advertisements that focus on the current health needs of African American women is necessary to ensure women’s health magazines are actively supporting women on their path to improve their health.

Similar to darker skin tones, lighter skin tones are most represented in prescription advertisements; however, light skin tones are most frequently present in Stelara advertisements. Stelara is a prescription product that treats psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. Unlike Nexplanon, this prescription product is focused on preventing pain for the individual. Although individuals of both skin tones are present in prescription advertisements, one product focuses on removing the opportunity of life and the other focuses on reducing pain. These results are a preliminary view of coding skin tone by the many types of health products possible in the advertisements. In her future research, this author will continue to code content of products to learn more about representation of women with different skin tones and women in different age groups by type of product in the advertisements.

**Beauty Advertisements.** Darker women have less representation in beauty advertisements. Hygiene wellness products are the most common advertisements featuring darker women. Pantene and Dove illustrate the most representation of darker skin tones within their advertisements. Pantene advertises shampoo products and Dove advertises body wash. The major difference between the advertisements is that Pantene has the darker skin toned character
in their advertisements with a lighter skin toned character. The pattern of having darker skin tones sharing the advertisement with lighter skin tones is common amongst the advertisements that include darker skin tones. However, Dove showcases the darker skin toned woman by herself within the advertisement.

Lighter skin tones have more representation in beauty advertisements. Unlike darker skin tones, lighter skin tones are frequently featured in skincare products, specifically skincare products that focus on anti-aging concerns. L’Oréal anti-aging cream is the most frequent skincare product showcasing lighter women. The L’Oréal cream advertisement focuses on the facial features of beauty, versus the hygienic aspects of beauty.

The lack of darker skin tones in beauty advertisements illustrates society’s continuation of placing value on lighter skin tones rather than darker skin tones. The social learning theory would suggest the messages of lighter skin tones having a higher value based on the repeated roles in beauty advertisements may influence the reader’s action to desire a lighter skin tone and value lighter tones. Hence, the industry of skin lightening creams was created to reinforce the value of lighter tones being accepted as beautiful versus darker skin tones. In addition, the cultivation theory would suggest the recurrent images of lighter skin tones would shape the viewer’s reality to value lighter skin tones over darker skin tones due to the heavier representation in the beauty advertisements. The images of lighter skin tones in beauty advertisements underscores the pervasive ideologies of how society views beauty within women’s health magazines.

**Skin Tone and Age in Advertisements.** Evaluating skin tone and age representation within health and beauty magazine advertisements and cover pages assists in the understanding of how advertisements are excluding large demographics that experience the same health and
beauty concerns as do the characters represented most commonly in advertisements. Analyzing these advertisements opens the opportunity to assess different patterns within advertisements that may influence the readers’ perceptions of health and beauty. Readers learn from repeated exposure to print media, which has the power to shape the value of health and beauty in relation to skin tone and age (e.g., Bauman, 2008). By including darker shades and older models, the media would help shift this perception so society would then start honoring diversity more thoroughly and embrace older people as sources of wisdom and experience and begin venerating our elders rather than denigrating them.

There is a large gap between the much more prevalent representations of young, light-skinned characters to that of older, dark-skinned characters. The lack of younger, darker skin tone characters in health advertisements may suggest the health concerns facing the younger African American demographic are not being met. As younger women with darker skin tones have a small representation amongst the health advertisements, the roles they serve are vital in assisting to combat health concerns facing the African American community. In relation to the cultivation theory (e.g., Gerbner, 1973), the advertisements expose the viewers to messages that direct the mindset of young African American women to not have children. The role of younger characters with darker skin tones needs to be expanded within health advertisements that proactively expose them to health concerns within the community. Exposing them with relevant health advertisements may have the power to assist in shaping a positive social reality on health issues they are able to combat with the appropriate health resources, such as prescription products or health messages.

With the exposure to lighter skin tones and younger age characters in advertisements, the reader may begin to observe these patterns and associate youthfulness with lighter skin tones and
beauty. Applying the cultivation theory (Gerbner, 1973), the constant images of youthful characters in beauty advertisements shapes the reality of what beauty is within the North American culture. The underlying messages of light skin tone and youthfulness in association with beauty has the power to exclude darker tone readers from feeling accepted within the industry of beauty.

**Study Limitations**

As with all research, there are limitations within this study. First, the sample consists of the observations of two years of three women’s health magazines. Also, the relatively younger age and gender of the coders could have influenced their opinions. Thus, study methods should be replicated with multiple coders of different ages and with males and females as coders. Reviewing a broader range of magazines over a longer period would allow for a better evaluation of the representation of skin tone and age. Another limitation to the study was not reviewing the messages within the health and beauty advertisements. Reviewing the messages of the advertisements, with the observation of age and skin tone, would provide a dense understanding of what messages are being projected onto age groups and skin tones.

**Summary and Directions for Future Research**

The findings of this study suggest lighter skin tones and younger ages are valued within women’s health magazines. As a result, Caucasians who are younger may be more likely to resonate with advertisements and cover pages on the popular health magazines that were reviewed for this study. The exclusion of characters with darker skin tones and older aged characters may lead to negative attitudes towards “outgroup” or towards advertisements that target an out-group (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001). Women’s health magazine companies need to evaluate the larger
impact skin tone and age within advertisements because the advertisements have the power to improve or diminish their life choices.

In spite of the limitations, this study addresses critical issues for women’s health magazines. A future study could focus on improving understanding of the messages within beauty and health advertisements. Focusing on the messages of these advertisements will provide deeper knowledge about how skin tones and ages are portrayed within advertisements and how the representation of skin tones and ages may change based on the message or product associated with the advertisement. In addition, further research should evaluate the representation of skin tone and age within food advertisements, as food additionally influences health. Lastly, future research may include different types of magazines (fashion, African American, cooking, etc.) to compare the differences in skin tone and age representation within magazines. Comparing across different types of magazines will provide a holistic perspective on how age and skin is represented across different genres of magazines.
References


Forehand, M. R., Deshpandé, R., & Reed, A., II. (2002). Identity salience and the influence of differential activation of the social self-schema on advertising response. *Journal of
Applied Psychology, 87(6), 1086-1099. doi:10.1037//0021-9010.87.6.1086


Table 1. Percentage Agreement between Raters for Women and Health and Beauty Advertisements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Agreement</th>
<th>99.10%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>165</td>
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</table>

Note. 986 Advertisements were coded by the first author and 275 of these were coded by both the first author and the undergraduate coder.
Tables 2-3. Percentage Agreement between Raters for Skin Tone and Age Representation in Advertisements.

HEALTH & BEAUTY ADVERTISEMENTS & SKIN TONE FOLLOWED BY AGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skin Type Scale</th>
<th>I</th>
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<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>VI</th>
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<td>Percentage of Agreement</td>
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<td>97.60%</td>
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<td>90%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<td>100%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $n$ represents the number of advertisements that were coded by the author and the undergraduate research assistant.
Table 4. Percent Agreement for Cover Pages and Skin Tone and Age Representation

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<tr>
<th>Skin Type Scale</th>
<th>I</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>
Study Two: Portrayal of Body Image in Advertisements in Women’s Health Magazines
**Introduction**

Over the past two decades, there has been an increase in the prevalence of advertisements in the media; with so many viewers and subscribers, it is only natural that people are being highly influenced by advertising content. Exposure to media images of thin and beautiful women may negatively affect the body image and emotional well-being of young women (Yamamiya, Cash, Melnyk, Posavac, & Posavac, 2005). The negative effects of thin idealized female body shapes in media outlets are associated with the increase of eating disorders among women (Choi, Leshner, & Choi, 2008). Yamamiya et al. (2005) highlight that,

“… in the United States, 94% of female television characters to which the media frequently associates happiness, desirability, and success in life are thinner than the average American woman. In addition, the media also explicitly instructs viewers on how to attain thin bodies by dieting, exercising, and body contouring surgery, encouraging female consumers to believe that they can and should be thin” (p. 75).

These pervasive messages of thinner body shapes may suggest the United States’ culture values thinner body shapes over heavier body shapes. The thin body shapes portrayed in many media messages may project unrealistic expectations for women in terms of showing and encouraging a body shape that is very difficult to attain (Cafri, Yamamiya, Brannick, & Thompson, 2005; Markula, 2001).

The “artificial beauty” condition occurs when female figures are airbrushed and have had professionals work on their make-up that makes them look more flawless than they look in reality (Yamamiya et al., 2005). Just as the media is portraying women as looking flawless, in terms of beauty, presenting women as always being thin may also create an unrealistic expectation about what the female body shape should be (Cafri et al., 2005). The media may be
influencing women’s views that they need to be “thin,” which can be very concerning if women may be believing the messages they view and thinking they need to be very thin to fit a thin ideal (Cafri et al., 2005; Markula, 2001). The current study contributed to the literature by measuring the frequency of occurrence of different types of body shapes represented in women’s health magazine advertisements. The purpose was to examine whether the majority of the advertisements featured a thin body ideal.

Statement of Problem

The idea of beauty in the United States may fluctuate based on how the media is showing what is ideal. For instance, between the 1400’s and 1700’s, the body shape ideal was a woman who was curvy; today the body shape ideal reflects a thin shape for women (Cafri et al., 2005). The “thin ideal” has received significant research attention because of the impact body shape in relation to beauty perception in Western cultures (Cafri et al., 2005). Harrison (2001) suggested that exposure to thin-images within magazines could be related to eating-disorder symptomatology for females. This is concerning because achieving an overly thin body may not be consistent with good health, as reducing nutrient intake may be related to achieving a very thin body (Cafri et al., 2005).

Literature Review

Markula (2001) outlined how magazines (Self, Shape, and The New Weekly) characterizing body image as thin may be related to females having a changed view of what a woman’s body should look like. Markula (2001) questioned the reasoning behind why magazines devote space to counseling women with body image problems, but continued to publish images of narrowly defined thin body ideals. Markula (2001) examined the first three articles published on body image distortion in 1994 in Self, Shape, and The New Weekly

In their 1994 articles, Self, Shape, and The New Weekly magazines suggested that for some women, who have extreme body dissatisfaction, viewing thin women can contribute to their perceptions of thinness being important, which can be related to eating problems (Markula, 2001). Despite the fact that editors of Self and Shape claim they represented healthy women in their magazines, these magazines may still typically illustrate perfect bodies that are thin and muscular (Markula, 2001). Thus, although women’s health magazines strive to educate readers about possible health issues in regards to body image, they may not be showing a range of images that reflect different types of body shapes.

Morry and Staska (2001) investigated the relationships among exposure to different images in magazines, body shape dissatisfaction, and eating disorder symptoms in men and women. They used a survey to examine men’s views of ideal masculine images (muscular) in men’s fitness magazines and women’s perceptions of exposure to ideal female images (thin body shapes) in women’s magazines typically focusing on beauty. Participants for their study were 150 students taking psychology courses. Several questionnaires were used to survey perceptions including: the Self-Objectification Questionnaire (Noll & Fredrickson, 1998), the Body Shape Questionnaire (Cooper, Taylor, Cooper, & Fairbum, 1987), the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire (Heinberg & Thompson, 1995), and the Eating Attitudes Test (Garner & Garfinkel, 1979). Results indicated that magazine exposure is associated with perceptions of thinness being an ideal body shape for women (Morry & Staska, 2001). It was concluded that
sociocultural ideals of slimness in women are being internalized and are related to perceptions of what one’s body shape should be like. Morry and Staska’s (2001) conclusions complimented those of Markula (2001) by suggesting that the sociocultural ideals of thinness may be related to eating problems for women.

Tiggemann and McGill (2004) investigated how social comparison influences women’s perceptions of thinness as being important for women’s body shapes. Fredrickson and Roberts’ (1997) self-objectification theory “asserts that women are uniquely subject to cultural and interpersonal experiences in which the female body is inspected, evaluated and treated as an object valued primarily for others’ use” (p. 650 as cited in Harper & Tiggemann, 2008). Thus, Tiggemann and McGill drew upon this theory and anticipated that media images would influence women’s mood and perceptions of body shape. A sample of 126 women viewed magazine advertisements containing full bodies of models, body parts, or products. Study findings indicated that exposure to a full body or body part image, which typically showed a thin body, was related to increased negative mood and feeling dissatisfied with one’s own body. Thus, it remains important to continue to examine the body shapes of models in magazines, because these images may be influencing women’s perceptions of what their bodies should be like.

Similar to Tiggemann and McGill (2004), Harper and Tiggemann (2008) examined the effect of media images to determine whether viewing thin body shapes would increase negative feelings about body shape amongst women. Harper and Tiggemann recruited 90 undergraduate women to view magazine advertisements featuring a thin woman, advertisements featuring a thin woman with at least one attractive man, or advertisements where no people were featured. Reed et al.’s Physical Appearance State and Trait Anxiety scale was used to measure weight anxiety (Reed, Thompson, Brannick, & Sacco, 1991). Surveys were administered both immediately
before and after viewing the advertisements to measure changes in mood and body satisfaction. Results suggested that exposure to thin body shapes in magazine advertisements was related to negative feelings, body dissatisfaction, and increases in weight anxiety (Harper & Tiggemann, 2008).

Wasylkiw, Emms, Meuse, and Poirier (2009) conducted a content analysis of women appearing in advertisements in fitness and health magazines versus fashion and beauty magazines. A sample of 10 popular women’s magazines were reviewed. Five magazines focused on fashion and beauty and five focused on fitness and health. Advertisements were reviewed if there was at least one woman present (Wasylkiw et al., 2009). Two judges were trained in the use of a coding schema. The coding categories included: a description of the advertisement (e.g., products being advertised, size of advertisement, and number of people in the advertisement) and a description of the models (e.g., demographics, body type, and body conceptualization). Results suggested that female models appearing in both types of magazines were primarily young, thin, and Caucasian. The current study is a partial replication of the aforementioned study, in order to determine whether body shapes of women’s health and beauty advertisements in health-oriented magazines were primarily oriented toward women with thin body shapes.

**Beauty & Health Advertisements**

Lazar (2011) suggests being beautiful is associated with being feminine, shown by skin type and complexion, body shape, and appearance. Lazar (2011) defines beauty advertisements as products relating to the marketing of cosmetics, fragrances, skincare, hair, and body management products and services. This study will adapt Lazar’s (2011) definition of beauty advertisements and define beauty advertisements as the marketing of cosmetics, fragrances, hygiene, and skincare products.
The coding categories provided by Crawley, Hisaw, and Illes (2009) were adapted to define products in health advertisements for this study (see Appendix C). The authors coded health messages that featured different types of products (e.g., over-the-counter products, prescription products), and also coded types of medical conditions (e.g., serious, life-threatening conditions, chronic, mental health, infectious disease). The health product type categories adapted for this study included type of health condition, type of health message (subject of message), and type of product (e.g., prescriptions, supplements, over-the-counter drugs).

**Body Shape Scale**

The most common types of measures are those presenting figure drawings to examine perceptions of body shape (Gardner & Brown, 2010). One well-known scale is Stunkard’s Figure Rating Scale (as cited in Gardner & Brown, 2010). Stunkard’s Figure Rating scale consists of nine figures of increasing size with accompanying numerical ratings from 1-9 (as cited in Thompson & Altabe, 1990). In their review of figure drawing scales, Gardner and Brown presented reliability and validity data for a number of scales in their review paper. They indicated that the psychometric properties for the Stunkard Figure Rating Scale were good after review of several studies (for example, they reported that “concurrent validity of .99 and convergent validity of .05-.62” p. 109). Moreover, this scale has been used in many other studies to assess body shape (e.g., Scaglioni et al., 2006; Thompson & Altabe, 1991). The version of the Stunkard Scale used in this research was accessed from Hatami et al. (2015).

**Bandura’s Theory**

Social Learning theory suggests that viewing an ideal model may influence learning and beliefs. Observers acquire mainly symbolic representations of what is appropriate through observations of models (Bandura, 1973). According to the social learning theory, behavior is
learned by observing what happens to others. Thus, perceptions of ideal images and what “looks” appropriate may be observed from reviewing models in magazine advertisements. Later in his development, Bandura (2001) proposed the Social Cognitive Theory. According to Bandura (2001), the Social Cognitive Theory provides a framework to understand how symbolic communication influences human thought. Following Bandura’s theory, one might conjecture that the perceptions held by an individual will be influenced by the social constructs projected by media outlets, such as body shapes represented within magazines. The current study applies the Social Cognitive Theory by examining the representation of body shapes within health and beauty advertisements placed in women’s health magazines.

In the current study, the goal was to review women’s body shapes in health and beauty advertisements in women’s health magazines to determine whether women’s health magazines are following the trend of showcasing thin, idealized body shapes or if they are providing a range of body shapes that are inclusive to all types of women. This study addresses the following research questions and hypotheses:

**Research Question**

(1) What types of body shapes are represented in health and beauty advertisements in women’s health magazines?

The hypotheses for research question one were as follows:

H1: Women with thinner body shapes will be represented more frequently in health advertisements than women with heavier body shapes.

H2: Women with thinner body shapes will be represented more frequently in beauty advertisements than women with heavier body shapes.
(2) What is the primary content of products in magazine advertisements for women with heavier body shapes?

Methods

Sample

The three highly circulated magazines targeting females’ health within the United States that were used in Study 1 were also used in this study. The three women’s health magazines were: Shape, Women’s Health, and Self. All issues from 2015-2016 of the aforementioned magazines were reviewed, and advertisements were selected for review by the first author.

The research methods were similar to those for Study 1. The same coding form was used (see Appendix B). The same coding procedures were used in this study.

Procedures. The author and a research assistant independently reviewed magazine advertisements and coded the body shapes of the women. The undergraduate coder was trained by the author and these two coders reached 85 percent agreement while using the coding forms, prior to beginning formal analyses for this study. The undergraduate coder reviewed some of the advertisements to determine intercoder reliabilities for the six body shapes. Data from the coding forms were entered into the SPSS program for analysis. Percentage agreement was used to determine interrater reliability. In addition, the coders met weekly to perform content analyses to determine what products were presented. In these weekly meetings, they also addressed research question two and the investigator recorded their perceptions in weekly notes that provided an audit trail for examining this question based on the coders’ perceptions.

Results

There were 905 advertisements coded by the first author. Advertisements were randomly assigned to be double coded by the undergraduate research assistant. The undergraduate research
assistant coded 275 of the 905 advertisements. The intercoder reliability results are presented in Tables 5-7.

Insert Tables 5-7 here

Table 5 presents the percentage of agreement concerning representation of women in the advertisements; there was excellent agreement. Table 6 presents body shape representation for all of the body shapes. Interrater reliabilities were from poor to good for all six body shapes (see Table 6). Table 7 presents body shapes categorized as being thinner (I-III) and heavier (IV-V). Agreement between raters was good when ratings were for two body shapes – thinner and heavier body shapes. Thus, comparison of thinner to heavier body shapes were used in analyses.

**Body Shape and Health Advertisements**

There were 429 health advertisements. The majority of characters in health advertisements 78.6% \( (n = 337) \) were thinner (body shapes I-III, thinner shapes on the scale), no presence of body shape was coded for 16% \( (n = 69) \) of the advertisements, and heavier body shapes (levels IV-V) had the lowest representation in the advertisements 5.4% \( (n = 23) \).

**Body Shapes and Beauty Advertisements**

There were 476 beauty advertisements. Results indicated that majority of characters in beauty advertisements 65.8% \( (n = 313) \) were thinner, no presence of body shape was coded for 32.6% \( (n = 155) \) of the advertisements, and 1.7% \( (n = 8) \) represented heavier body shapes. The results of content coding are presented in the position statement. The position statement is in the conclusions section (below).

**Conclusions**

Examining the representation of body shapes in women’s health magazine advertisements is vital to understanding how magazine advertisements are contributing to women’s perceptions of
what their bodies should be like. I argue that studying the representation of body shape within magazine advertisements is important because media outlets serve an active role in influencing health and beauty perceptions. Results of this study indicated thinner body shapes were more likely to be represented in beauty and health advertisements in health magazines. It is noteworthy that heavier body shapes were not represented in the advertisements, providing evidence that women with heavier body shapes are not represented in health magazines.

Author’s Statement

Body Shape Representation. Throughout the magazines, different types of body shapes were present, but the most represented body shape was the thinner body shape. The consistent representation of thinner body shapes may project an ideal body shape. In relation to Bandura’s (1973) Social Learning Theory, these thinner body shapes may become the model of what health and beauty “looks” like in society today. Consistent with previous studies, the thinner body shapes remain pervasive within media outlets. As women’s health magazines serve as a resource to all women, demonstrating a diverse representation of body shapes is needed to indicate all shapes are valued. Excluding heavier body shapes may indicate to readers that these body shapes are not common. As a result, a heavier shaped reader may feel women’s health magazines are no different than other media outlets that portray women to be smaller than the average women.

Content of Magazine Advertisements. The other coder and I observed that companies such as, Jergens, Aveeno, and Naturtint tended to have multiple advertisements in one magazine. Although the companies have multiple advertisements within the same magazine, they do not change the model’s body shape. The repeated exposure to thinner models may begin to influence the reader’s perception of what health and beauty “looks” like. Thus, the readers of the women’s health magazines may be more likely to be more attracted to thinner body shapes over heavier
body shapes due to the familiarity of the thin body shape. Unfortunately, the lack of representation of heavier body shapes may influence readers to dismiss larger body shapes.

The social learning theory (Bandura, 1973) would suggest that if readers are being exposed to different types of advertisements that “represent” their body shape, they may begin to positively associate the possible benefits and outcomes of using the products in these advertisements. For example, if heavier women were placed in health advertisements that suggest eating more supplements or working out, the heavier body shaped reader may begin modeling the behavior due to the consistent exposure. With the majority of the representations of heavier body shapes relating to beauty, the opportunity for women of heavier body shapes to receive messaging improve their health by taking supplements and engaging in healthy behaviors is not present.

Unfortunately, the health advertisements that represented women of heavier body shapes was Hydroxycut, which suggests that losing weight is the solution. Hydroxycut advertisements illustrate the comparison of before and after taking supplements to reduce weight. These advertisements demonstrate that losing weight quickly is a value within our culture, versus taking positive steps of accepting one’s body shape. Hydroxycut supports the thin ideal of having a smaller shape, as opposed to valuing one’s current body shape through healthy activity. As women’s health magazines strive to enhance women’s health, the role of product exposure from their advertisements plays a vital role in creating resources to improve their readership’s health. Implementing more advertisements that speak to the needs of heavier body shapes begins with the demand from the magazine requesting these body shapes in their advertisements.

Women with thinner body shapes are more frequently represented in health and beauty advertisements than women with heavier body shapes. As previously mentioned, the most
common product type that includes heavier women is supplements. The supplements advertised are Hydroxycut, focusing on losing weight in a fast manner, versus taking care of oneself and enhancing one’s current figure through proper dieting and exercise channels. However, thinner women are most represented in prescription advertisements. The most frequent prescription company that showcases thinner women is Stelara. Stelara is a prescription product that treats psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis.

Unlike Hydroxycut, the company that frequently has heavier body shapes in their advertisements, Stelara, focuses on eliminating or preventing pain. Both products demonstrate a concern to improve one’s life. However, Hydroxycut focuses on improving the viewer’s life by losing weight quickly. These images may perpetuate the ideal shape of what looks appropriate for women, which is losing weight and being smaller. These symbolic messages of before and after pictures have the ability to influence the reader’s thought of the ideal body shape based on the social constructs illustrated in the images. As a result, having a larger range of body shapes in different types of health advertisements is vital to illustrate health is represented in different sizes.

Beauty advertisements had the most advertisements where body shape was not present in the advertisements. Rather, the emphasis was on the facial features of the model. The majority of the cosmetics advertisements (Maybelline, L’Oreal) showed the neck and above in their advertisements. Without presentation of the body shape, the reader is able to focus more on the product (cosmetics, anti-aging creams, lotions), rather than the body shape. Emphasizing the facial features of models illustrates the importance of facial features over body features. This may suggest that beauty is within one’s facial features rather than in one’s body.
However, the second most represented body shape within the beauty advertisements is a thinner one. Thinner body shapes are most present in hygiene and wellness product advertisements. Specifically, lotion advertisements presented full body models that have higher exposure of skin to highlight the quality of the product. The body exposure allows for readers to view more of the thin body type, allowing the opportunity to compare models to their current body state. Pantene, a hair care company, exhibits women with a thinner frame. Jergens, a lotion company, advertises a similarly “thinner” body shape. Unfortunately, heavier body shapes are the least represented type of body shape in advertisements for beauty products. The low representation of heavier body shapes may indicate that heavier body shapes are not as valued as thinner body shapes.

Study Limitations

As with all research, there are limitations. Similar to study one, a limitation for this study is the sample of the study was for two calendar years and used only three women’s health magazines. Similar to Study 1, the age and gender of the coders may have influenced their opinions when coding advertisements. Expanding the amount of women’s health magazines would provide a larger sample of popular media outlets to review. Another limitation is that this researchers did not include food advertisements. Including food as a product category might create opportunities to evaluate how bodies are represented within these types of advertisements.

Summary and Future Directions

Analyzing body shapes within health and beauty advertisements can assist in evaluating the tone of women’s health magazines in contribution to the thin ideal within society. Reviewing body shape representation opens the opportunity for an assessment of patterns within advertisements and magazines that influence the readers’ perceptions of what a woman’s body
should look like. Previous studies have suggested the thin ideal is an unrealistic standard projected on women from media outlets (Cafri et al., 2005; Markula, 2001). Results of this study were consistent in showing that thin women were over-represented. Advertising and magazine companies need to evaluate their placement of thinner models within advertisements. Readers can become molded by the images and figures placed within magazine advertisements. Showcasing women of all body shapes is needed to create a more inclusive stance on health and beauty in the United States. Future research should include different genres of magazines (African American, fashion, cooking) to compare the differences between body shape representation amongst the genres of magazines. Therefore, comparisons can be drawn between the different types of genres.
References


doi:10.1017/S0033291700030762

doi:10.1007/s11199-007-9379-x


doi:10.1177/0193723501252004


doi:10.1016/j.bodyim.2004.11.001
**Table 5.** Percentage Agreement between Raters for Women and Health and Beauty Advertisements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women in Health</th>
<th>Women in Beauty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Agreement</td>
<td>99.10%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. 905 Advertisements were coded by the first author and 275 of these were coded by both the first author and the undergraduate coder.
Table 6. Percent Agreement for Body Shape Representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body Shape</th>
<th>Body I</th>
<th>Body II</th>
<th>Body III</th>
<th>Body IV</th>
<th>Body V</th>
<th>No Presence of Body Shape</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Agreement</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>85.20%</td>
<td>91.70%</td>
<td>81.30%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. There were not heavier body shapes coded. Thus, body shapes 6-9 (heavier body shapes) were not present in the advertisements.
Table 7. Percent Agreement for combined Body Shape Representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body Shape Thinner</th>
<th>Thinner (I-III)</th>
<th>Heavier (IV-V)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Agreement</td>
<td>97.40%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A IRB Approval

Institutional Review Board - Federalwide Assurance #00003152
University of Cincinnati

Date: 10/19/2016
From: UC IRB
To: Principal Investigator: Janae Collier-Green
CECH Academic Affairs
Re: Study ID: 2016-7767
Study Title: Content Analysis of Women's Health Magazine Advertisements

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) acknowledges receipt of the above referenced proposal. It was determined that this proposal does not meet the regulatory criteria for research involving human subjects (see below): No human subjects – literature review only relating to appearance of models in advertisements in women's health magazines. Ongoing IRB oversight is not required.

Please note the following requirements:

Statement regarding harmonization and good clinical practices. The Institutional Review Board is duly constituted (fulfilling FDA requirements for diversity), has written procedures for initial and continuing review of clinical trials: prepares written minutes of convened meetings and retains records pertaining to the review and approval process; all in compliance with requirements defined in 21 CFR Parts 50, 56 and 312 Code of Federal Regulations. This institution is in compliance with the ICH GCP as adopted by FDA/DHHS.

Thank you for your cooperation during the review process.

45 CFR § 46.102(d): Research means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.

45 CFR § 46.102(f): Human subject means a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains:

1. data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or
2. identifiable private information.

Intervention includes both physical procedures by which data are gathered (for example, venipuncture) and manipulations of the subject or the subject's environment that are performed for research purposes.

https://epas.research.cchmc.org/ePAS_PRD/Doc/0/H3NC2HDFGI649D3QPDQ9HBAT9... 10/21/2016
Interaction includes communication or interpersonal contact between investigator and subject.

Private information includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, and information which has been provided for specific purposes by an individual and which the individual can reasonably expect will not be made public (for example, a medical record). Private information must be individually identifiable (i.e., the identity of the subject is or may readily be ascertained by the investigator or associated with the information) in order for obtaining the information to constitute research involving human subjects.

FDA regulations apply whenever an individual is or becomes a participant in research, either as a recipient of a FDA-regulated product or as a control, and as directed by a research protocol and not by medical practice. FDA-regulated activities involve individuals, specimens, or data, as patients or healthy controls, in any of the following:

a. any use of a drug or biologic, other than the use of an approved drug or biologic in the course of medical practice
b. any use of a device (medical or other devices, approved or investigational) to test the safety or effectiveness of the device
c. any use of dietary supplements to cure, treat, or prevent a disease or bear a nutrient content claim or other health claim
d. the collection of data or other results from individuals that will be submitted to, or held for inspection by, the FDA as part of an application for a research or marketing permit (including foods, infant formulas, food and color additives, drugs for human use, medical devices for human use, biological products for human use, and electronic products.)
e. activities where specimens (of any type) from individuals, regardless of whether specimens are identifiable, are used to test the safety or effectiveness of any device (medical or other devices, approved or investigational) and the information is being submitted to, or held for inspection by, the FDA.
Appendix B Coding Schema

1. Name of Magazine:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Magazine</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Health</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shape</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Company Advertised (Crest, Cover Girl, Tylenol, Camel)

3. Month of Issue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined Issue</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Year of Issue

5. Page Number

54
6. Health or Non-Health Advertisement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health (medicine, cigarettes, exercise, food)</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beauty</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If coded number 3, do not continue coding the advertisement.

7. Product Type (categorical):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serious, Life-Threatening Conditions</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronic, Nonlife-Threatening Conditions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infections Disease</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescription Product</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplements</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over-the-Counter Product</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Health:</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragrance</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin Care Product</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmetics</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifestyle Activities</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hygiene Wellness | 13
---|---
Other Beauty: | 14

8. Gender Representation

| Only Women | 1 |
| Predominately Women | 2 |
| Only Men | 3 |
| Predominately Men | 4 |
| Mixed Gender Representation (50/50) | 5 |

If there is presence of no human character do not continue coding

- If 3 is selected, no presence of a female characters, do not continue coding.

9. Presence of female character in ad

Looking from Left to Right, Top to Bottom, is there a female character present?

_____1____Yes
_____2____ No

- If yes, code the character for Skin Tone, Age, Body Shape, and Role (Numbers 10-13)
  - If no, enter 99 for remaining variables.

ID number for female character.

Brief descriptor of female character.
10. Skin Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skin Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Fair</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Skin Types**

1. Very Fair
   - always burns
   - cannot tan

2. Fair
   - usually burns
   - sometimes tans

3. Medium
   - sometimes burns
   - usually tans

4. Olive
   - rarely burns
   - always tans

5. Brown
   - never burns
   - always tans

6. Black
   - never burns
   - always tans

http://www.mdskinmd.com/skincare-information-nj/the-fitzpatrick-scale-skin-typing-specialist-monmouth-nj/

11. Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger (under 35 years old)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-Aged (between 35 and 60)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. **Role**

Mark the role of the characters

- 1 = Main Character
- 2 = Sub-character

Looking from Left to Right, Top to Bottom, is there a second female character present?

- [____] 1 Yes
- [____] 2 No

- If yes, code the additional character for Skin Tone, Age, Body Shape, and Role

- If no, enter 99 for remaining variables.

ID number for female character.

Brief descriptor of female character.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skin Types</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Fair</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Skin Types**

1. Very Fair
   - always burns cannot tan
2. Fair
   - usually burns sometimes tans
3. Medium
   - sometimes burns usually tans
4. Olive
   - rarely burns always tans
5. Brown
   - never burns always tans
6. Black
   - never burns always tans

http://www.mdskinmd.com/skincare-information-nj/the-fitzpatrick-scale-skin-typing-specialist-monmouth-nj/

**Age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger ( under 35 years old)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-Aged ( between 35 and 60)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Over (over 60)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Role**

Mark the role of the characters

- 1 = Main Character
• 2 = Sub-character

Looking from Left to Right, Top to Bottom, is there a third female character present?

_____1____ Yes

_____2____ No

• If yes, code the additional character for Skin Tone, Age, Body Shape, and Role

  • If no, enter 99 for remaining variables.

ID number for female character.

Brief descriptor of female character.

• Skin Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skin Type</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Fair</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Skin Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger (under 35 years old)</td>
<td>Very Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-Aged (between 35 and 60)</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Over (over 60)</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Olive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://www.mdskinmd.com/skincare-information-nj/the-fitzpatrick-scale-skin-typing-specialist-monmouth-nj/
Appendix C. Coding Category Definitions

**Health Advertisement:**

- Serious, Life-Threatening Conditions: A condition that may require medical, or care by a doctor in order to prevent significant or long lasting effects to health (diabetes, hypertension, heart disease).
- Chronic, Nonlife-Threatening Conditions: Non-serious health problems or illnesses such as allergies or dermatologic conditions.
- Infectious Disease: Nonlife threatening acute conditions diseases such as colds or ear infections, or symptoms associated with such conditions.
- Prescription Product: A drug an individual may access with the approval of a health care professional and involvement of health insurance.
- Supplements: Tablets that assist with the improvement of overall health.
- Over-The-Counter Product: A drug an individual may access without prescription from a health care professional and without health insurance involvement
- Message: Providing informational content about a health-related subject (got Milk)
- Other Health: Advertisement not relating to any of the previous categories

**Beauty Advertisement:**

- Fragrance: perfume, cologne, body spray, and body mist
- Skin Care Product: Anti-Aging Cream, Facial Mask, Skin Cream, Facial Scrub
- Cosmetics: Eye liner, blush, lip gloss, foundation
- Lifestyle Activities: non-mental health-related sleep disorder.
- Hygiene Wellness: Body wash, lotion, shampoo
- Other Beauty: Advertisement not relating to any of the previous categories
Appendix D. Body Shape Coding Schema

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body Shape</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body 1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body 3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body 4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body 5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body 6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body 7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body 8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body 9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Presence of Body Shape</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>