2016

Portrayals of Gender in the Media: A Content Analysis Approach to Identifying Gender Oppression and Legitimation of Patriarchy in Magazine Advertisements

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PORTRAYALS OF GENDER IN THE MEDIA:
A CONTENT ANALYSIS APPROACH TO IDENTIFYING GENDER OPPRESSION
AND LEGITIMATION OF PATRIARCHY IN MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS

A thesis submitted to
The Graduate College of
Marshall University
In partial fulfillment of
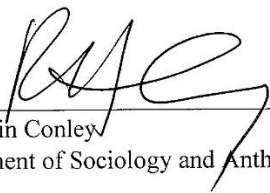the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
in
Sociology
by
Autumn M. O'Toole
Approved by
Dr. Robin Conley, Committee Chairperson
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Dr. Kristi Fondren
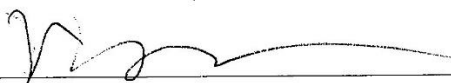
Marshall University
May 2016

APPROVAL OF THESIS

We, the faculty supervising the work of Autumn M. O'Toole, affirm that the thesis, *Portrayals of Gender in the Media: A Content Analysis Approach to Identifying Gender Oppression and Legitimation of Patriarchy in Magazine Advertisements*, meets the high academic standards for original scholarship and creative work established by the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and the College of Liberal Arts. This work also conforms to the editorial standards of our discipline and the Graduate College of Marshall University. With our signatures, we approve the manuscript for publication.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my gratitude to those who contributed to successfully completing this research and writing of this paper. Firstly, my committee members, who gave me the time that they didn't have. Thank you Dr. Robin Conley for chairing my committee and providing me the opportunity to work with you. Dr. Kristi Fondren for introducing me to feminist theory and providing support in the writing process. Dr. Maggie Stone for providing me such an encouraging environment and endless support. I am also grateful to all of the faculty in the Sociology and Anthropology department for the education I have received and the experiences I have gained.

    I also want to acknowledge the support from those closest to me. To my husband Will, thank you for the words of support and patience. Most importantly my daughter Lily, thank you for never complaining about my lack of presence during the writing and research process and unconditional love. This was because of you.

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ABSTRACT

Advertisements are among the most pervasive forms of media. Portrayals of gender in advertisements constitute a significant subject of social research based on this pervasiveness and the influence that advertising media have on audiences. This influence is based on the notion that media is an institutional vehicle for ideas about products, lifestyles, and oppression. In this study, the institution of media is examined through an analysis of representations of patriarchy and gender oppression in media advertisements. The primary research question is: In what ways can we identify gender oppression and the support of hegemonic masculinity and systems of patriarchy in the media? This study is based on a qualitative content analysis of *Life* and *Time* magazine advertisements years 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010.

INTRODUCTION

Gender portrayals in advertisements have been an important area of research in sociology and related fields. Goffman (1979) started a discussion about gender in advertisements that changed the way advertising media are observed and regarded. The present research is largely influenced by a critique of gender in societal structures and how gender based oppression is embedded within these structures.

The purpose of this study is to examine trends in portrayals of gender in advertisements with the goal of observing typical images of women, systematic oppression, and the support of patriarchy. The main research question is: In what ways can we identify gender oppression and the support of hegemonic masculinity and systems of patriarchy in the media? The study explores advertisements to identify the portrayals of types of women and men, power relations between genders, and sexual suggestiveness. This research attempts to fill gaps in understandings about gender portrayals in advertisements including gender relations of power, by specifically examining the frequencies in occurrence of patriarchal representations in advertising media.

The analysis of the data consisted of a qualitative examination of magazine advertisement content in seven different years, including 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. The data were comprised of 535 total images from *Life* and *Time* magazines. Major themes of advertisement portrayals observed and discussed within the study include, the hegemonic male, the domestically-oriented woman, the work/business woman, and the sexualized woman.

The first chapter discusses the relevant literature pertaining to gender in advertisements and the influence of advertisements on media audiences and backgrounds of Marxist feminism, gender, and body theory. Chapter Three outlines the methods of data collection and interpretation. In Chapter Four I present the data collected and trends observed through the data.

In the final chapter I discuss the data in light of the relevant theory and draw conclusions about gender portrayals, power relations, and societal systems in advertisements.

CHAPTER I

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will review the relevant literature on the multiple waves of feminism and content analyses of gendered advertisements. The three waves of feminism will be explored as background information pertaining to the analysis of advertisements in 1950. I will specifically outline second wave feminism as it is particularly relevant to the time-periods from which my data are drawn. The existing research on gendered advertisements will be explored, including content analyses of gender portrayals, especially women as sexual objects and power differences in advertising.

Waves of Feminism

Second wave feminism is an important aspect relating to this research because it marks the time period at the starting point of inquiry. Second wave feminism began in the post-World War II era and extends through the sexual revolution, ending around the 1980s. Much of the movement was based on the ideas of equal rights, social justice, and resistance to oppressive gender power relations. Its' most important contribution was consciousness raising; it was "a form of structured discussion in which women connected their personal experiences to larger structures of gender" (Hewitt, 2002. p. 414). Second wave feminism sought to improve conditions of equality that were not fulfilled by first-wave feminism. First wave feminism began with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment which allowed women to vote in political elections (Evans, 2003). I chose to start the research inquiry around the time period of second wave feminism because concerns about gender equality and sexual oppression became a part of everyday social consciousness. Second wave feminism "shattered a set of legal structures that upheld inequalities between women and men but also challenged prevailing 'commonsense'

everyday practices built on the assumption that women were naturally docile, domestic, and subordinate" (Evans, 2003, p. 1). Second wave feminism differed largely from first wave because the movement sought to redefine normative gender roles in society rather than simply promoting political change.

Around the end of the 1980s until 1992 a new phrase, "third wave feminism," began being used to describe a movement that sought similar results to second wave feminism. "Third wave feminism was aimed at a more cultural arena with pro-sexual attitudes, assertion of 'girl power', and use of body as a theater" (Hewitt, 2002, p. 428). Third wave feminism is an important movement to discuss in terms of this research because of the change in attitudes about sex, race, and body from second wave feminism. "The culture of this emerging generation was assertive, multicultural, and unabashedly sexy. Gone were the rules and the academic theory (mostly). In their place were powerful, sexual women who claimed to have no limits" (Evans, 2003, p. 215). The movement's icons of femininity and empowerment have been likened to Madonna and Carrie Bradshaw of the hit HBO television program 'Sex and the City' (Scanlon, 2009, p. 127). 'Sex and the City' is a show about single, sexually active women living in New York City in the late 1990s. Third wave feminists could identify with the show's message of sexual freedom of expression and independence, as one of the biggest areas of difference between second and third wave feminism is sexuality. "Second wave feminists explored the concepts of pleasures and dangers of sex for women, and are remembered for the ignition of sex wars. Second wave feminism is unfortunately paralleled to the legacy of feminism's negative sensibility about sex, and Third wave feminists were critical of its ideals about sexuality" (Scanlon, 2009, p. 141).

Gender in Advertising

Gender in advertising is not a new research topic. In 1979 Erving Goffman wrote a ground-breaking work titled *"Gender Advertisements,"* which explored gender portrayals in advertisements, outlining images of subordination and facial and bodily suggestions of power relations between men and women. He explored concepts of natural and ritualized expressions.

> In ordinary life we conspire to provide the same kind of 'natural' expressions, but we can only do this by means of behavioral style or at particular junctures in our course of activity-moments of ceremony, occasions for giving sympathy, sudden access to friends, and similar junctures in the daily round, as determined by a schedule we know little about as yet. So both in advertisements and life we are interested in colorful poses, in externalization; but in life we are, in addition, stuck with a considerable amount of dull footage. Nonetheless, whether we pose for a picture or execute an actual ritual action, what we are presenting is a commercial, an ideal representation under the auspices of its characterizing the way things really are (Goffman, 1979, p. 84)

Goffman discusses the concept of media advertising as a vehicle for structuring behavior of social audiences. His study of natural expressions, ritualization, and execution of actions forms a basis for constructing and representing gender ideals. Many other researchers have based their coding and concepts of gender portrayals on Goffman (Cuneen & Sidwell, 1998; Kang, 1997; Smith, 1996). Kang's (1997) work utilizes Goffman's model of decoding behavior and analyzes the gender behavior portrayed in advertisements, observing changes in women's images from 1979 to 1991. Kang hypothesized that much change in advertising occurred based on,

> A revolutionary change in the workplace and in society since women began to come into the workforce. Women nowadays not only are gaining ground in workforce participation, but also are filling positions once held primarily by men. If women have changed and if society has therefore been altered, then it would seem that portrayals of women in advertising have surely also changed to reflect both the new social status and the new image of the American woman. (p. 983)

However, the research did not reflect this change in gender in the workplace. Kang's research showed that few changes had been made in the images of women in magazine advertisements since Goffman's 1979 study. The findings indicated that the images of women in 1997

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advertisements did not significantly change from the images found in 1979 advertisements

(Kang, 1997). In fact, in some coding categories, the magazine advertisements from 1997

showed more stereotyping of women than those from 1979 (Kang, 1997).

Cuneen and Sidwell's (1998) research focuses largely on advertisements based in *Sports*

Illustrated for Kids magazine to "discern gender-role portrayals of models" (p. 41). Cuneen and

Sidwell highlight the importance of their research as it focuses on the enduring effect of

advertising, in that the advertisements were directed toward children and that "advertising is an

incidental (i.e. unexpected, unplanned) but significant socialization agent…Ads are related

directly to behavior: a message is encoded and a tangible product is pursued and perhaps

purchased" (Cuneen & Sidwell, p. 41).

Advertising messages are thus a product that can be mirrored by social audiences in

behavior. In basic terms, one "consumes" an advertisement and, along with it, the gender

portrayals to be used in the construction of one's own gendered self. Cuneen and Sidwell's

(1998) results suggest that males were depicted in both prominent and supporting roles much

more regularly than females and gender stereotypical depictions also persisted in product

advertising.

Following this idea that advertising is a persuasive form of socialization, Kroma's (2002)

research illuminates the important role of the advertising industry in the perpetuation of gender

stereotypes, specifically in the farming world. This research collected petrochemical

advertisements between 1975-1976 and 1995-1996 and conducted "a content and contextual

analysis of pesticide advertisement focusing on both the linguistic structure of the narrative and

the imagery of the advertisement" (Kroma, 2002. p. 4). Kroma (2002) argues that the

"marginalization of women and other minority groups in farming occurs through the denial of

their participation as farm workers and farm managers with critical decision making roles" (p. 11). The study also suggests that "the advertising industry plays a key role in that denial process" (Kroma, p. 11). The systematic oppression of women through media is evident in both the exclusion of females (and minority groups) and the support of the systems that structure social institutions, like patriarchy, as highlighted in Kroma's study.

The oppression of women in advertisements is identified by "the symbolic erasure of women as farmers at one cultural instance and their symbolic representation as care-givers and social reproduction agents at other cultural instances" (Kroma, 2002, p. 11). The present study also addresses the over-representation of patriarchal systems, like U.S. agricultural farming advertisements, and the resultant under-representation and damaging image of women in the same advertising.

Sex in Advertising

In addition to discussions of gender, research has also focused on the portrayal of sexuality in advertising. In Reichert and Carpenter's (2004) research, sex in advertising is explored with an analysis of sexual explicitness in advertising from the 1990s. This research informs the present study because it seeks to quantify the change in portrayals of sexuality in advertisements over time. Reichert and Carpenter found that research leading into the early 1990s suggested that the sexual explicitness of magazine advertising had increased in nature and frequency. The findings indicate that female and male in advertisements were portrayed in sexual manners from 1983 to 2003.

A similar study conducted by Hennink-Kaminski and Reichart (2011) sought to determine the nature of sexual appeals in cosmetic surgery advertising. Appeals, or the message of the media, in the study were categorized as rational or emotional. Rational appeals were based

on the cost-benefit analysis of purchasing advertisements products. Emotional appeals, which included sexual appeals, were based on the emotional relationship between the advertisement model or product and media audience (Hennink-Kaminiski & Reichert, 2011).

Much like Reichert and Carpenter's (2004) study, the results of Hennink-Kaminiski and Reichert's research suggest trends of the use of sexual insinuation in advertising. Their study reveals an increase in the use of sexual appeals in cosmetic surgery advertisements over time, reflecting a common trend in advertisements for branded consumer products and services. Based on these findings, which indicate that sex or sexual appeals are being used more in advertising in the last few decades, research into this change is needed to understand conceptually the driving forces behind the change. Hennink-Kaminiski and Reichert (2011) discuss the nature of "sexual appeals as unique because they (cause) emotionally compelling outcomes such as enhanced-self-esteem, sexual attraction, and, although to a lesser degree, a means for increasing the frequency of satisfaction from sexual behavior" (p. 53). This research suggests that the purpose of sexual appeals in advertisements is not solely to sell a certain product, but also induce sexual satisfaction in the advertising audience.

Baker (2005) conducted a study that focused on portrayals of women in magazine advertisements and the effect of the advertisement's message on magazine audiences. The author used content analysis with qualitative and quantitative coding methods to evaluate gender and bodies in advertisements. Baker also compared magazines geared towards different racial groups, finding that most black and white oriented magazine advertisements aimed to promote submission and dependency. Baker's findings on women's bodies suggest that,

> women are still shown primarily in submissive positions and as sex objects. Sexual women are often used in advertisements for men to imply a sexual relationship between the man who uses the product of the woman in the advertisement. Sexual women are also used in advertisements for women to imply that the product will increase the user's

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appeal to men. Advertisements continuously promote the message that a woman's ultimate goal is to attract men. However it is important to note that advertisements depict for us not necessarily how we actually behave as men and women but how we think men and women behave. (2005, p. 14)

Baker (2005) codes the women in sexually suggestive advertisements "sexual women." Baker discusses advertisements' messages which are marketed to "sell sex" or sell products or lifestyles through sexual attraction between the virtual space and physical reality. What is interesting here is that "sexual women" are not only aimed at men but also at women. Men receive a virtually constructed attraction between themselves and the message models, and women receive information about ideals, i.e. how to ideally attract a man.

In focusing more intensely on marketing to specific audiences, Milillo (2008) analyzed messages about sex in a study that concentrates on the differences in gender portrayals in both heterosexual and lesbian magazines. The author explored how messages about the body in lesbian media, specifically the physical appearance of the model in the photo, deviate from heteronormative media depictions. The study also observed body positions in magazine context and type. The study of this differentiation is very much a study of representation. The heterosexual portrayals of women's bodies follow normative societal structures, meaning that portrayals are constructed to ultimately benefit patriarchal demands. Lesbian media constructs of bodies may differ because the intention of representation that is marketed toward a specific social audience differs than that of normative standards. Milillo's (2008) findings suggest that body image and appearance are targeted to different audiences in different ways.

There appear to be significant differences in both the appearance of the model and the type and context of the advertisement. Specifically, heterosexual women's ads depicted a thin, passive female model, whereas lesbian bodies were more fluid in terms of physical appearance and positioned in more active ways. (Milillo, p. 390)

This difference may be based on the standards that normative, heterosexual magazines employ, meaning that heterosexual magazines follow normative ideals of gender and the body. Lesbian

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media may have more socially acceptable means of constructing gender and body portrayals in more fluid ways.

Feminist Methods

Feminist theory is used in sociology particularly in conjunction and collaboration with gender and sex research. As Chaftez (1997) states,

> The term 'feminist theory' is used to refer to a myriad of kinds of works, produced by movement activists and scholars in a variety of disciplines; these are not mutually exclusive and include: normative discussions of how societies and relationships ought to be structured, their current inequities, and strategies to achieve equity; critiques of androcentric classical theories, concepts, epistemologies, and assumptions; epistemological discussions of what constitute appropriate forms, subject matters, and techniques of theorizing from a feminist perspective; and explanatory theories of the relationship between gender and various social, cultural, economic, psychological, and political structures and processes. (p. 97)

Additionally, there is no consensus on the exact meaning of the word "feminist," making it difficult to differentiate explicitly between theoretical material pertaining to gender and gender-related theory that is specifically "feminist" (Chafetz, 1997). However, there are particular research methodologies that distinguish feminist strategies of social research from others. These methods include doing research that attempts to probe social realities that are multi-layered, symbolic, and embedded in mundanity (Lorber, 1991).

Marxist Feminism

According to Gimenez and Vogel (2005) modern Marxist feminism launched itself in the late 1960s with a goal to analyze why and how women are oppressed in a capitalism system. Marx did not specifically write about women's oppression in his classical works; however, his theoretical propositions provide powerful tools to analyze women's oppression in societal structures. Phenomena such as gender stereotypes have their foundation in societal structures and macro-processes, which can be examined using Marx's methodologies and theoretical contributions (Gimenez & Vogel). These foundations are evident in social institutions such as

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media, with advertising media being the most relevant to this research. Spitulnik (1993) states that,

> In Marxist theory, the question of media power has been formulated in terms of how mass media serve the interests of a ruling class e.g. legitimizing the authority of state institutions, building political and cultural consensus, and impeding the development of working class consciousness. (p. 296)

Analyzing media by way of Marxist feminism is important in the present study because it is centered on content analyses of advertisements and their portrayals of women. The media, as an agent of socialization, is a major tool that can be utilized by the ruling authority (e.g. the patriarchal and the hegemonic male order) to present depictions of oppression to impressionable audiences. According to Chafetz (1997) Marxist feminists argue that patriarchy is interwoven within the processes of capitalism such as the labor force. Working class men have advantages in both the household and the labor force, as women provide subservient domestic services and better paying jobs are reserved for men. The low wages or lack of job options force dependency of women on their husbands, putting women in a subordinate position as the domestic servant, which also serves to suppress their wages in the workforce (Chafetz, 1997). Chaftez argues that,

> an ideology of patriarchy, or male supremacy, fostered by capitalists, undergirds and sustains both forms of female oppression. This ideology justifies women's non-waged domestic responsibilities with reference to biologically rooted reproductive differences between men and women and justifies gender-based labor market inequities with reference to women's domestic obligations (p. 105).

The concept of patriarchy was most notably formed by Max Weber (1949) as a form organization where the father dominated the household (Barrett, 2014). According to Barrett (2014) early modern feminist theorists created a concept of patriarchy based on an over-arching category of male dominance. Early radical feminists conceptualized patriarchy as a system of domination completely independent of the organization of capitalist relations, which speaks in universalistic, trans-historical modes. There is a definitional confusion of the concept of

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patriarchy, as both patriarchy as the rule of the father and patriarchy as the domination of women by men exist (Barrett, 2014).

Critiques of feminist uses of Marxism involve questioning the "marriage" of both perspectives, which has been likened to a marriage between husband and wife. "Marxism and feminism is one and that one is Marxism" (Hartmann, 1979, p. 1). Critical feminists claim that the joining of both perspectives is unsatisfactory because the "feminist struggle is subsumed into the 'larger' struggle against capitalism" (Hartmann, 1979 p. 1). However, many feminist scholars agree that both

> Marxist analysis, particularly its historical and materialist method, and feminist analysis, especially the identification of patriarchy as a social and historical structure, must be drawn upon if we are to understand the development of western capitalist societies and the predicament of women within them (Hartmann, p. 2).

Feminism contributes important theoretical propositions of structural processes in society to Marxism (Levins, 2011).

In the present research, Marxist feminism is used to explain portrayals of oppression, specifically portrayals of women in advertisements. Advertisements, as a form of media, provide a vehicle for institutional oppression by capitalist/patriarchal systems. This institutional oppression exists through certain types of depictions that provide a standard for comparison between models in advertisements and media audiences. This research seeks to explain in what ways women have been oppressed through media, what kinds of oppression are apparent through the depictions of women and men, and how the oppressive images relate to societal events.

Gender Theory

Sex, sex roles, gender, and gender roles can be confusing terms when conceptualizing the construction of gender in the social world. In the natural sciences, these terms are consistently glossed over as general knowledge and not thoroughly examined and differentiated. Sex is most

often based on biology and what is natural. Recently, scientists have started to examine our sex

binary system more carefully, deepening our understanding of "female," "male," and those who

are fluidly moving between the two categories (Lorber, 1991). Lorber states,

> in the social construction perspective, both sex and gender are socially developed
> statuses. Biologists and endocrinologists who study hormones now have a much more
> complicated picture of sex. Female and male sex are no longer seen as two opposite,
> mutually exclusive categories. Sex is understood more as a continuum made up of
> chromosomal sex, gonadal sex, and hormonal sex, all of which work in the presence and
> under the influence of a set of environments. (p. 7)

According to Connell (2009), gender is a topic that deals with a great deal of prejudice, myths,

and falsehoods. The myths of scientifically proven differences between males and females based

on psychology and physicality remain within social consciousness even today. Contemporary

research on gender is due to the women's movement and the call for gender equality. This is

based on how gender is ordered around the world, which more often privileges men and

disadvantages women. With that being said, it is important to note the varying degrees of gender

inequality around the world and that no two definitions of gender are the same or are uncontested

(Connell, 2009).

In Parson's (1956) sex role theory, gender identity was straightforwardly assigned to

individuals from birth. Babies were put into pink and blue categories, which represented delicacy

and toughness, respectively (Connell, 2009). In a socialized adult version of blue and pink, the

former blue babies were taught to compete and maintain authority; the former pink babies were

taught to abide by beauty standards, to cook, and do what they are told for/by the former blue

babies. Connell (2009) states that sex roles are learned through socialization through agencies we

encounter in the social world, primarily family, peers, school, and media. Through interactions in

these social institutions, the conveyance of norms and values assigned to individuals of particular

sex roles sets the basis for expectations. Gender-appropriate behavior is the sum of behaviors

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and attitudes displayed as a result of socialization and interactions with others within institutions, and a process of receiving positive and negative sex role reinforcement. Critiques of this socialization model include challenges to its account of differences cross-culturally, and the suppositions that learning gender is only a matter of acquiring traits, that we learn gender passively, and that sex-roles are not learned outside the institution of family (Connell, 2009).

Some discussions about gender focus on the personal construction of identities, like sexuality and motherhood that involve interactions between individuals (Connell, 2009). However, to understand these personal relations of gender, one must account for gender on the large scale, particularly its construction through institutions, economies, ideologies, and governments. Beginning in the 1970s, the gendered pattern of organizations and institutions came into social consciousness through efforts by liberal and academic feminists (Connell, 2009). Connell states that

> corporations are gendered institutions, with a gendered history. Companies and stock exchanges from as early as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were defined as men's institutions. The creation of the modern form of capital was thus apart of the historical processes that created a masculinized public realm, which also included the emerging liberal state, and organs of public opinion such as the press (p. 115).

The organization or corporation is thus an entity with gendered structural patterns is advantageous to males and exploitative to females (Lorber, 1991).

Gender theory is relevant to this research because it provides insight into constructing gender and gender relations through an institution such as media. Advertisements maintain an authority in creating and challenging gender constructs and ideals. This authority is represented through the types of women and men portrayed in advertisements, as they constitute models for comparison from one gender to another.

Body Theory

Social science research about bodies often focuses on women's bodies, particularly the parts of women's bodies that are most evidently different from men's, namely the parts involved in reproduction and sexuality (Martin, 1998). "Men and women in the United States display and move their bodies differently, and these differences are sometimes related to gender. Men and women perform differently in gestures, walking, standing, and throwing" (Martin, 1998, pg. 495). Generally, women's bodies are often confined with their movements constricted. Think of men and women sitting on a bench: women's legs are often tightly closed together, and men's legs are often spread wide apart. These differences are even observed in early childhood (Martin, 1998).

This difference in embodied actions is significant because we use our bodies to construct meaning. Our bodies are influential in our social construction of reality, based on how we use them to live and maintain relationships with others (Martin, 1998).

> Gendered (along with 'raced' and 'classed') bodies create particular contexts for social relations as they signal, manage, and negotiate information about power and status. Gender relations depend on successful gender presentation, monitoring, and interpretation of bodies. Bodies that clearly delineate gender status facilitate the maintenance of the gender hierarchy. (p. 495)

While some social scientists suggest that gender is a performance (Butler, 1990, 1993), that we 'do gender' (West & Zimmerman, 1987), or that gender becomes embodied (Connell, 1987, 1995; Young, 1990), in feminist theory the body is the 'site' of gender (Martin, 1998). These perspectives offer different ways of theorizing how gender is constructed and displayed; however, all incorporate the body as a structure that is instrumental in defining gender.

Feminist perspectives on the body focus on women's experiences with their bodies (including embodiment), symbolic representations of the female body, and cultural and social

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implications of bodies, including the body and politics in feminist movements as it relates to reproductive and abortion rights (Dreifus, 1978; Gordon, 1976), power relations and patriarchal oppression (Firestone, 1970; MacKinnon, 1982; Mitchell, 1971), and embodied experiences of reproduction, menstruation, menopause, and pregnancy (Martin, 1987; O'Brien, 1981).

Davis (1997) separates feminist theory on the body into two strands:

> On the one hand, feminist scholars have been wary of any attempt to use the body as an explanation for socially-constructed differences between the sexes. On the other hand, they have been critical of approaches which treat the body as generic, thereby ignoring the specific features of women's embodiment. This has led to two separate, and opposing, strands within feminist theory on the body. (Davis, 1997, p. 8)

The first strand rejects the body as a basis for explaining difference while arguing that notions of bodily difference are too easily drawn upon to naturalize differences based on gender, race, or sexuality. This strand led to a sex/gender distinction that intended to dispel the natural difference doctrine and show differences between sexes as socially rather than biologically constructed. Here, feminist theorists concentrated on the cultural meanings attached to bodies rather than on how individuals interacted with and through bodies (Butler, 1990, 1993; Davis, 1997). The second strand, as Davis (1997) argues, "sees difference as essential for understanding embodiment, that is, individual's interactions with their bodies and through their bodies with the world around them" (p. 9). An example of work in this strand, Iris Young's *Throwing Like a Girl* (1990), provides useful insight into embodiment and experience for women in contemporary Western societies, outlining the physical constraints of femininity.

These strands contribute differing perspectives on theorizing about the body and its depictions in advertisements. In this research, I focus largely on portrayals of women and their bodies (e.g. where the body is set in relation to the environment, what the body is doing). I will

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discuss specifically how the body and its construction makes or represents effective changes in society.

CHAPTER II
METHODS

The purpose of this research is to identify how the media, specifically magazine advertisements, can reinforce patriarchal systems of oppression and hegemonic masculinity through portrayals of gender and gender roles. I used a qualitative approach to study gender in advertisements by conducting an inferential content analysis of advertisements in *Time* and *Life* magazines. The data includes a sampling population of 535 print advertisements from 1950 to the present. Evidence-based inferences of media messages are used in observations and data examination.

Inferential Content Analysis

In an inferential analysis, the researcher is attempting to reach conclusions beyond the data or samples (Warner, 2008, p. 5). The researcher wants to make evidence-based inferences about a sampling population and, on the larger level, inferences about the broader population that is represented in the sample. The method in this study includes constructing evidentiary arguments about the symbols and meanings in advertisements and their relationships to the social world and its systems. Content analysis is said to be one of the most important research techniques in the social sciences, as it seeks to understand data not as a collection of physical events but as symbolic phenomena (Krippendorf, 1980, p. 7).This method is used in the present study to construct meanings from media representations and qualitatively and quantitatively observe media portrayals of gender and gender oppression (Baker, 2005; Kroma, 2002).

Form of Media

The forms of media analyzed in this research are advertisements from different eras in American history. I randomly sampled advertisements from magazine compendiums in each of the following years: 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. I specifically chose 1950 to

be the starting point because it was the closest to the period after the end of WWII and the beginning of second wave feminism in the United States. Advertisements were chosen as the form of content because they have the accessibility and potential to influence large social audiences, as their existence is dependent upon selling something to an audience, whether it is a product or an idealized lifestyle. Additionally, advertisements are the most pervasive form of media because they have the most opportunity to connect their messages to broad audiences (Butler, 1989; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). These messages can spread within and outside of the intended social audience's geographic locality, most often through digital and print magazine.

Data Collection

In order to identify dominant gender portrayals represented in media, advertisements occurring in differing decades were obtained by random sample and analyzed by coding for certain sets of identifying characteristics. The chosen time period of this research focused on the beginning of each decade starting in 1950 and ending with contemporary advertisements, a total of seven chronological categories. A catalogue of *Life* and *Time* magazine advertisements, from 1950 to present, served as the sampling frame from which the advertisements were randomly selected. This catalogue was available through the Cabell County, WV Library, which holds compendiums of *Life* and *Time* magazine print advertisements from 1950 to 2010. The compendiums consist of weekly issues of *Time* magazine from 1950-2010 and *Life* magazine from 1950-1970, and monthly issues of *Life* magazine from 1970-May 2000. After May 2000 regular issues of *Life* magazine are discontinued. For *Life* (1950-1970) and *Time* (1950-2010) magazines this accounts for around 4-5 compendiums per year, 3-4 months per compendium, with a magazine representing each week in a month. In total there are approximately 9-12

magazines per compendium. For *Life* magazine (1980-May 2000) this accounts for 12 issues per year, though in 2000 there were only six issues.

I chose *Life* and *Time* magazines not only because of their availability, but also because they are not a specific magazine category; they include a variety of print and text geared toward a wide audience that is not based solely on a special interest, such as fashion, fitness, or hunting. It may have biased the research if I had chosen a fashion magazine, as it pertains to a very specific audience. Additionally, these magazines are easily available to other researchers for replicability and validity.

Sampling Plan

A total of 535 images were collected and reviewed with a mean of 76 images per decade. I based much of this sampling procedure on Milillo's (2008) "Sexuality Sells: A Content Analysis of Lesbian and Heterosexual Women's Bodies in Magazine Advertisements," in which two types of magazine catalogs (heterosexual and lesbian) were analyzed with a total number of 300 randomly selected images, 150 images per magazine catalog type, 25 images per magazine issue (p. 384). My study differs from Milillo's in its sampling frames. I have only two magazine sampling frames (*Time* and *Life*) from which data have been compiled. To fit the sampling frame, I collected more images per magazine and less images per issue which is different from Milillo's. This is because my study included multiple years and a larger population of magazine issues.

My study is similar to Milillo's (2008) in that I have chosen to randomly sample advertisements in catalogs as random sampling assumes no priori knowledge about the phenomena or research (Krippendorf, 1980, p. 66). An online number randomizer was used for

random sampling.[1] The total number of pages of the magazine catalog was indicated and each

randomized advertisement page that could be studied was observed and documented. The images

chosen were those that include advertisements portraying at least one adult body. Images that did

contain these criteria (e.g., advertisement containing an image of a material such as a car instead

of a human body) were dismissed and the next randomly generated number was used.

Coding and Variables

The major coding themes included *women's bodies*, *power*, and *the hegemonic male*. I

chose to observe *women's bodies* based on the advertisements' ability to convey meaning

through the use and representation of human bodies. *Power* is a distinct theme because gendered

relations, as displayed on the micro level in advertisements, reflect the broader patriarchal

system in which they are situated. *Hegemonic male* was defined as the ideal male body within

the present system of patriarchy in society. These nominal variables encompass themes proposed

in the research question namely identifying gender oppression in the media and the legitimation

of patriarchy through the representation of the hegemonic male. The following sections outline

the additional coding variables used to analyze my data set.

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[1] https://www.random.org/

Table 1. Content coding and variables

Women's Types, Body, and Power	Variable	Description
Bodies		
bodykitchen	bdkitchn	body portrayed in
bodywork	bdwork	place: kitchen, bed,
bodybed	bdbed	work, and home
bodyhome	bdhome	
Types		
domesticwoman	domesw	women's portrayal
sexywoman	sexyw	types: individual
beauty/fashionwoman	beautyw	descriptions below
work/businesswoman	workw	
infantwoman	infantw	
womanother	womoth	
Power		
subordinatewoman	subw	Power depictions:
equalqwoman	equalw	individual
dominantwoman	dominw	descriptions below
Hegemonic Male		
hegemonicmale	HM	male gender
nonhegemonicmale	nonHM	portrayals

Women's Bodies

Body: Coding of *women's bodies* is detailed with variables "bodykitchen," "bodybed," "bodywork," and "bodyhome". These variables accounted for the setting in which the body is placed. The utilization of these variables gave insight into the symbolic "place" of women in society as highlighted in image portrayals produced in a specific time.

Types: Coding of types of portrayals of women was detailed with variables "domesticwoman," "infantwoman," "beauty/fashionwoman," "sexy woman," "work/businesswoman". These variables accounted for the character portrayal of women in advertisements. Character portrayal takes into account the social setting and status of the woman (e.g., how the character is acting, who the character is, and the message of media). Each variable had coding qualifiers: "domesticwoman:" woman portrayed in domestic/home setting, taking care of children, maintaining home; "infantwoman:" woman was portrayed "infant-like" as related to male counterpart (an example of this would be an advertisement that portrayed the male spanking the female, or a male wagging his finger at female); "beauty/fashionwoman:" woman in cosmetic/clothing advertisement, wearing make-up, clothing, perfume; "sexywoman:" less than shirt and pants/dress, body placed in position indicating sexual suggestion.

The construction of the "sexywoman" category was based largely on Hennink-Kaminski and Reichart's (2011) study in which sexual appeal is defined according to sexual attractiveness, behavior, and decorativeness,

> Sexual attractiveness-appeals implied that the model is, or would be, perceived by others as being sexually attractive…sexual behavior appeals-implied that the model or models would be more likely to participate in sexual activity, and…sexual advertisements with no discernable benefit were judged to be 'decorative,' since the sexual content in the ad was present most likely to draw attention to the ad and was not part of the ad's message. (p. 47)

My category encompassed all of these aspects. The variable "work/businesswoman" was coded based on workplace appropriate clothing, body in workplace area, and suggestive accessories (i.e. briefcase).

Power

Power variables were utilized to code observations of power differentials or gender inequality portrayed in advertisements. These variables include: "subordinatewoman," "equalwoman," "dominantwoman". The inclusion of observations and variables about power depictions may give insight into gender power relations over-time. Each variable had coding qualifiers: "subordinatewoman:" in situations where female has a lower body placement/position than the male, or is serving male (food, paperwork). Categories of submissiveness included: physical restraint, meek attire, covering of mouth, kneeling down, covering of eyes, male's feet on body, face being held, and being physically abused by male.

Also used was "equalwoman:" not subordinate or submissive relationship; "dominantwoman:" situations involving female with higher body placement/position than male, being served by male. Categories of dominance included: power stance, dressed in business-like attire, open mouth, putting feet on body of counterpart, holding counterparts face, wagging finger at counterpart, hitting or yelling at counterpart, and holding a weapon.

Hegemonic Male

Coding of the depiction of the *hegemonic male* is utilized in this research because the use of the hegemonic male in an advertisement image may suggest support for systems of patriarchy. The variable "hegemonicmale" had coding qualifiers including: male, white, workplace power position, business attire, youthful (~21-50 years old), tall, muscular, and wide chest. The "non-hegemonicmale" category included non-white male, older than ~50 years.

CHAPTER III

DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this research is to identify how the visual content of magazine advertisements can support patriarchal systems of oppression and represent hegemonic masculinity through portrayals of gender and gender roles. This chapter presents an analysis of the data collected from seven years (1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010). The content analysis of these advertisements revealed trends of gender portrayals and variations among images during the data collection years.

Table 2: Data numbers out of total images in each year

Types[2]	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
HM	47.0	59.0	55.0	38.0	34.0	34.0	21.0
NonHM	3.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	10.0
DomesW	43.0	30.0	28.0	10.0	13.0	10.0	3.0
SubW	14.0	17.0	11.0	6.0	3.0	2.0	3.0
EqualW	0.0	8.0	6.0	6.0	1.0	4.0	6.0
SexyW	5.0	4.0	9.0	9.0	15.0	4.0	5.0
WorkW	11.0	13.0	13.0	4.0	9.0	10.0	8.0
BeautyW	17.0	17.0	7.0	6.0	6.0	2.0	1.0
DominW	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.0
InfantW	3.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Womoth	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	8.0

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[2] Individual descriptions of variables in Appendix B.

Body	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Bdhome	6.0	3.0	6.0	2.0	1.0	4.0	5.0
Bdbed	3.0	5.0	3.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0
Bdkitchn	23.0	7.0	8.0	2.0	0.0	1.0	1.0
Bdwork	5.0	10.0	5.0	0.0	5.0	2.0	8.0

1950

In 1950 the majority of advertisements portrayed the hegemonic male and domestic woman combined. Half of the advertisements studied contained images that included the presence of the hegemonic male type, which is characterized by being white, young (21-50), and wearing business attire. Depictions of hegemonic males also display male power. The portrayal of power coincides with prestigious job types, a body type that is tall and muscular, with a wide chest. A much smaller number of males -3 images out of 107- portrayed in advertisements were coded as non-hegemonic, meaning that the males in this group differed in some way from the hegemonic male group. This difference was usually attributed to race and age.

The hegemonic male was the most frequently occurring gender portrayal in the data from this year, accounting for about half or 43% of all images. Images containing the hegemonic male presented him equally as a father, businessman, and in recreational settings. Recreational was marked by outdoors-centered activities, cigarettes, and alcohol use. The use of recreational here is paralleled to a similar hegemonic male typology "frontiersman." Trujillo (1991) states that "media critics and scholars of gender have described at least five features of hegemonic masculinity in American culture: physical force and control, occupational achievement, familial patriarchy, frontiersmanship, and heterosexuality" (p. 15). Specifically the typology "romantic

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frontiersman of yesteryear and the present-day outdoorsman" describes males portrayed in recreational settings and in outdoor environments (Trujillo, 1991, p. 16).

The women portrayed in the advertisements were largely domestically-oriented, subordinate to the male counterpart, and shown using beauty or fashion products. Women who were characteristic of domestic-orientation usually were shown taking care of children, serving food, wearing wedding attire, or performing home maintenance. Half of domestically oriented women were displayed in a kitchen, six at other areas of the home, and three in bed. For example, in a dishwasher advertisement the woman was placed in the kitchen, maintaining her home while also watching her child through the kitchen window. In this image the hegemonic male was also present; he was not participating in any domestic duties, but was overseeing the woman while smoking a pipe.

The women in beauty and fashion advertisements were portrayed using products, washing hair, and modeling clothes. In most advertisements the woman was in a bathroom brushing her teeth while looking at herself in the mirror or coloring her hair. When women were shown subordinately, a powerful male counterpart was always present. Some of the women who were shown as subordinate to powerful men were serving food or drinks to the male. However, many of the women portrayed as subordinate were also working or in a work setting, suggesting employment. A dual categorization such as this served the purpose of displaying women in lower hierarchal positions relative to the male. For example, many women working[3] were secretaries to a male or flight attendants serving food to a male.

In addition to categories of domestic-orientation, subordination, work, and beauty, a smaller number of women were shown in sexually suggestive displays. Their attire was

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[3] While the author maintains that women shown domestically-oriented can also be defined within the realm of work, these data are observed through the advertisement's portrayal and is coded as such.

frequently minimal, consisting of lingerie and bikinis. This was characterized as sexually suggestive because in addition to attire, the women's bodies were usually positioned in a way that represented sexual engagement. In one example of the 1950 sexual woman, a clothing advertisement displayed a woman's body bent over with her legs spread wide apart. The woman was wearing a full face of make-up, high heels, and lace stockings that rose to her mid-thighs. The remaining types of women suggested an infant-father relationship. The images that presented this type of relationship were marked by women displayed as child-like. For example, one beer advertisement showed a man eating a sandwich and drinking beer while standing over a woman who was coloring Easter eggs at a table. Sitting beside the woman was a basket with a huge pink bow.

1960

Thematic content of advertisements in 1960 was similar when compared to those of 1950. The majority of all images portrayed the hegemonic male and domestic woman combined. Over half of the total advertisements included the presence of the hegemonic male image. The number of images portraying the non-hegemonic male group did not vary substantially from 1950, accounting for only two images in 1960. Furthermore, the hegemonic male was the most commonly occurring gender portrayal in the data from this year. Images containing the hegemonic male presented him as a father, businessman, and in recreational settings. A newly developed recreational hegemonic male type introduced in the 1960s was the Marlboro man. The Marlboro man was an advertisement portrayal that most often shows men participating in rugged/outdoors activities. The majority of hegemonic male portrayals were business-oriented, easily identified by their business attire and briefcases. Of the two images containing the non-hegemonic male, female counterparts were always present and portrayed as equals. A small

portion of images also contained a hegemonic male with a woman as an equal; these images were almost always in advertisements selling cigarettes.

The women portrayed in the advertisements largely represented domestic duties, subordination to a male counterpart, and beauty or fashion products. Domestically oriented women were usually displayed as caring for children, wearing wedding attire, or performing home maintenance. The women who were shown subordinate to a male counterpart were portrayed as the male's assistant, servant, or accessory, and occurred at around the same frequencies as those from 1950. The images portraying assistantship of the female to the male usually suggested a secretary-boss relationship, which is similar to the findings of the 1950s advertisements. In these images of the work/business woman, she was only shown as a secretary or flight attendant.

The women's bodies were presented largely at work and in kitchen settings, more than in any other physical place. As discussed above, an emerging percentage of advertisements suggested equality between men and women, which were mostly cigarette advertisements. Only four advertisements displayed women in a sexual manner, wearing lingerie or bikinis. This frequency of sexual suggestiveness is similar to 1950 images. For example, in one image a woman is sitting on a bed wearing a pink negligée. The focus of the advertisement is directed at her chest; the mid-point of the image actually directs attention down the woman's top. Not much changed dramatically between 1950 and 1960 in regards to the distribution of variables. Percentages of female and male types were very similar between the two decades.

1970

The advertisements in 1970 displayed similar images as compared to 1960 advertisements. The majority of advertisements portrayed the hegemonic male and domestic

woman combined. Over half of the total advertisements included the presence of the hegemonic male image. The images portraying non-hegemonic males remained unchanged from 1960, as these male images differed from the hegemonic male group based on race and age. The hegemonic male was the most frequently occurring gender portrayal for the year with depictions as father, businessman, and in recreational settings. The Marlboro man was the most frequently occurring image of the hegemonic male, typically portrayed as a stereotypical cowboy or rancher. An image from 1970 of the Marlboro man shows a male sitting on top of a horse, wearing a cowboy hat, and smoking a cigarette. The advertisement focuses on the male's strong jawline, where the cigarette is hanging from his mouth, and his broad chest.

Portrayals of women in 1970 were very similar to those of 1960 with the exception of women in work attire or a work setting, which occurred at a higher percentage than portrayals of subordination for this year. However, this is by a very small margin, with only three more images of the work/business woman than the subordinate woman. Twenty eight percent of women in advertisements were portrayed domestically similar to other data collection years. Since 1950 their frequency had dropped by about one-third per each decade year. In terms of work and domesticity, the bodies of women were shown less in a workplace setting than the 1960 data and more at various areas of the home, specifically in the kitchen. The display of women's bodies more at home and in the kitchen rather than in the workplace seems to contradict the rise in the portrayals of women working. In 1970 working women were only shown as secretaries and flight attendants which is consistent with the 1950 and 1960 data as well.

In smaller occurrences women were shown almost equally as beauty oriented, sexual, and equal to the males in advertisements. The images containing beauty oriented women can be

paralleled to those in the previous decades, as women were shown as modeling or using beauty products. Beauty advertisements in 1970 show images such as a woman modeling a watch on her wrist or curling her hair. The parallel between this decade and those prior is also true for the women in sexually suggestive advertisements, as they too were portrayed at the same rate in all three decades of data collection. There were two instances of dominance of women in 1970, both of which incorporated non-hegemonic males. This did not constitute a pattern but is noteworthy in that this kind of portrayal was absent from previous years examined. One advertisement portrayed a woman sexually and dominantly, which was not common among the data. In the image a non-hegemonic male counterpart was walking down a beach carrying a platter of drinks toward a woman laying on a blow-up raft. The scantily clad woman was wearing a small bikini and sunbathing on a sandbank. Her body, as it glistened from sun oil, was the focus of the advertisement. The woman's chest was directly in the center of the advertisement and, because her body was lathered in sun-tan oil, it quickly catches the eyes attention.

The percentage of sexually suggestive advertisements of women, however, had not changed significantly since 1960. This finding of sexual suggestiveness is based on images of women wearing a lesser amount of clothing, in addition to being posed in sexual positions or engagement. In one such image the male counterpart seems to be touching the woman in the genital area; this touching is suggestive, as it is not explicitly clear in the advertisement where his hand is, but the touch suggests sexual engagement.

1980

The advertisements in 1980 displayed similar images of males compared to 1970 advertisements. The majority of advertisements portrayed the hegemonic male and domestic women combined. Over half of the advertisements included the presence of the hegemonic male

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image. Similarities in the images of the non-hegemonic male were noticed between 1970 and 1980, as there was only one instance of a non-hegemonic male that was based on race. All other non-hegemonic males in the prior data were white and/or over the age of 50. The one non-hegemonic male image of this data year was that of an Asian-American man working as a flight attendant. Additionally, the hegemonic male was the most frequently occurring gender portrayal in the data from this year. Portrayals of the hegemonic male were similar to the previous data year, the most frequently occurring portrayal being the Marlboro man. The images present males frequently active in outdoor activities. In one image a man is wearing a yellow raincoat, sitting on a boat in a large body of water, presumably fishing.

Portrayals of women did change slightly from 1970. Although women were shown the most as domestically-oriented, the frequency of this depiction decreased by one-third from 1970. In an image portraying domesticity in 1980, a woman is wearing an apron while cutting vegetables. Her gaze is downward, as if suggesting she is mostly focused on food preparation and cooking. Women's bodies were shown solely in the home and kitchen in 1980. It is important to note that not many other images could be categorized based on coding criteria, as most images had no discernable physical setting. The number of domestically oriented women was almost equal to the amount of sexually suggestive advertisements, both accounting for 34% of images. The majority of sexualized women continued to be shown in lingerie and swimwear advertisements. One such image in 1980 portrayed a woman in a yellow raincoat holding a fish on a fishing pole. The depiction of this woman was sexualized rather that recreational, however, because her raincoat was the only piece of clothing and it was open enough to expose about half of her breast excluding the nipple. The attire in addition to her overall demeanor and gaze

suggest that this is not a normative fishing experience, and the intention of the advertisement is to attract viewers sexually.

Images of subordination, beauty, and equality of women were represented in 30% of the 1980 images. The characteristics of subordination mirrored the decades prior to 1980. The majority of employed women were shown working in roles that are subordinate to the hegemonic male. In the advertisements analyzed, they occupied jobs such as secretary or flight attendant. This is a trend that has been represented in all of the data in decades prior to 1980. There is a slight decrease in the percentages of women portrayed in working attire or environments from 1970.

1990

The advertisements in 1990 displayed similar images of males as compared to 1980 advertisements. The majority of advertisements portrayed the hegemonic male and females in a sexually suggestive manner combined. Over 60% of the total advertisements included the presence of the hegemonic male image. The frequency of images portraying non-hegemonic males remained the same as in 1980. This is a steady trend of male representation every data year thus far. The hegemonic male represented about half of all images and the non-hegemonic male represented only two or three images from the 1990 sample.

Additionally, the hegemonic male remained the most frequently occurring gender portrayal. New portrayals of the hegemonic male emerged in the 1990 data. These included more variety in work settings beyond the business settings that were seen in prior data years. Additions included one male as teacher and another as firefighter. Larger percentages of beauty-centered or appearance management advertisements emerged, including males in shaving advertisements and exercise equipment advertisements. Additionally, some advertisements presented males in a

sexually suggestive manner including bare chests and defined muscles. For example, one image of a male entirely focused on his chest; no other portion of the body is shown. This suggests that the body has become an object, and the intention of this objectification is attraction between the media audience and the male in the advertisement. Advertisements portraying the hegemonic male in a recreational manner were similar to those of the prior data years, as the Marlboro man remained a significant image. The images presented males most often as stereotypical cowboys riding a horse in a dusty outdoor setting. The males were either herding cattle with lassos or lighting cigarettes.

There is a break in the trend of female portrayals in 1990 in relation to decades prior. Portrayals of women in this year were dominated by sexually suggestive images rather than domestically oriented images of women in years past. Sexual-woman portrayals accounted for 27% of images and domestic-woman portrayals accounted for 24% of images. This difference is not statistically significant. Additionally, new sexualized women portrayals emerged through images of women as beauty queens and using exercise equipment. These images may not be explicitly sexual, but there are specific contexts to the images that suggest otherwise. One image coded as sexual showed a woman on a beach in a small bikini caressing her body while water splashed on her thighs. Her arms wrapped around her shoulders pushing her boobs together to create more cleavage.

Although emerging portrayals of women challenged the previously dominant categories, the domestically-oriented woman image maintained a significant presence. The domestic images of 1990 are very similar to those of prior data years, including the promotion of child-care, marriage, pregnancy, and home maintenance. However, women's bodies were only shown once at home and in bed, and not shown at all in the kitchen. Women's bodies in this decade were

almost exclusively shown in the workplace. New portrayals of women working emerge through images of nurses, waitresses, a florist, and a mechanic. It is important to note that even though there are new categories of women's work, they are still largely shown as secretaries in 1990. In relation to women working, instances of women's subordination to males in advertisements dropped by half from the previous decade in 1990.

2000

The advertisements in 2000 displayed similar images of males as compared to 1990 advertisements. The majority of advertisements portrayed the hegemonic male, women as domestically-oriented, and women working. Images of women performing domestically tended to portray her as motherly. One image showed a woman and a child baking together in a kitchen. This is a change from the 1990 data in which advertisements displayed women in a sexually suggestive manner more than all other women's portrayals. Exactly half of all images included the presence of the hegemonic male image. The images portraying males not ascribed to the hegemonic male group remained the same as 1990. This was further evidence of a strong trend of male portrayals: the hegemonic male represented about half of all images and the non-hegemonic male represented only two or three images in the entire data group. Additionally, as in all other decades, the hegemonic male remained the most frequently occurring gender portrayal.

In this year, males were displayed the most as compared to other data years as domestically involved and in recreational settings. Images of hegemonic males performing domestically show him as fatherly. One such image presents a male embracing a baby by holding him or her close to his chest. The Marlboro man remained a strong image accounting for

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hegemonic male portrayals. The men in Marlboro cigarette advertisements maintain the cowboy persona.

In the images of 1990, there was a higher ratio of sexual images of women to domestically oriented ones. This ratio was inconsistent with previous data years in which domestically oriented women dominated all other portrayals. However, in 2000, images of domestically oriented women and employed women occurred equally in the majority of advertisements containing women, accounting for 28% of image totals. In this year, women's bodies were shown at home more than any other setting, accounting for double the amount of workplace body settings.

A new image of the work/business woman emerged in this year. Half of the images that presented a woman working portrayed her as a business woman. This was in contrast to the images from prior years in which portrayals were mainly centered on secretarial and flight attendant positions. The women portrayed as business-like and in business attire represented a significant change in the portrayal of women because it suggests a rise in powerful images of women. For example, an advertisement in 2000 presented a woman in a business-suit, heels, and a briefcase. She is standing with her shoulders back, head held high, and gaze straight-ahead.

In 2000 women and men were equally depicted as sexualized. Women were also shown in a non-descriptive manner so that no specific type could be discerned. Although women were only shown as equal to men when they were working or in a business suit in half of the 2000 work/business woman images, it is still a positive change in advertisement portrayal when considered in light of the 1990 sample in which women were never shown as equals with their male counterpart. One example of this equality was an image in which two men and two women

are taking a picture while skiing. No discernable power differentials were displayed between the genders, all were portrayed equally to each other.

Portrayals of women displayed as dominant to males emerged in this year. It was, in fact, the same frequency as that of women shown as subordinate. These images were among the smallest percentages of female groups in 2000. A 2000 image presents a woman in a dominant position relative to a male. The woman is sitting in a deck chair on a cruise ship while a man is engaging her in conversation and serving her drinks. The male serving the woman is seemingly a captain given his uniform. This is interesting because the position of a captain is a more prestigious and hierarchically higher position than that of a waiter who would regularly serve food or drinks. This inclusion of a male in a prestigious position performing tasks outside of his job duties calls into question the motive behind the advertising message. Is the advertisement displaying a man choosing to serve a woman he is interested in or is it his job to serve the woman? This ambiguity leaves the viewer questioning if the woman is truly in a position of dominance. However, even the potential for dominance indicates a shift from advertisements of past sample years.

2010

The advertisements in 2010 displayed images of males a bit differently compared to advertisements from 2000. The majority portrayed the hegemonic male and women as working in non-descriptive categories, as there were almost no discernable workplace settings. An example of this is an image of a male and female in cooking aprons standing in front of a white screen. This is a slight change from the 2000 data in which advertisements displayed the majority of women at work and domestically. Slightly fewer than half of all images included the presence of the hegemonic male. The images portraying males not ascribed to the hegemonic male group

increased to about one-third of all male images. This was a significant change in images of males from prior years. In all other decades the non-hegemonic male only accounted for two or three images. While the hegemonic male portrayal still accounts for the majority of images in 2010 advertisements, the inclusion of diverse male portrayals is important because it may suggest the diversity of its readership grew. This diversity is suggested by the increase in images of non-white and older males. Another noteworthy change in male images is the absence of the Marlboro man. This is a product of the 2010 FDA restriction on the use of advertisements to sell cigarettes (Layton, 2010), rather than a reflection of that gender stereotype's sudden decline in relevance.

In 2010 the majority of images containing women were portrayals of women working and non-descriptive female images. No images of women working could be categorized as business oriented, as none were shown in business attire or in a business work setting. In one image a woman was working as a craftsperson, sitting at a desk stitching a wallet. Another advertisement presented a woman working as a scientist. The woman was standing with two men in a laboratory, wearing uniforms and safety goggles, surrounded by machines. In contrast to the years 1950 through 1980, 2010 included more images of women working in a variety of fields, a shift first noted in 1990.

Non-descriptive portrayals of women were presented at the same rate as images of women working, both accounting for 32% of image totals. These images contain no qualifying characteristics, meaning that the woman is not portrayed in a specific manner that can be described as oppressive or non-oppressive. The mere emergence of this category since 2000 was interesting because it suggested that women were becoming less stereotypically represented in advertising images. The existence of these non-descriptive portrayals suggested that women

began to be regarded more equally and neutrally in advertising. These characteristics are apparent in the context of the advertisement. For example, one image showed a woman standing in front of a white screen, her gaze forward with neutral affect. Her clothes were fitted but did not tightly cling to her body and, her attire was not specific to any work or social position. In another image a woman was smiling, her body position suggested she may be dancing, and she was wearing casual attire.

In 2010, women were portrayed in smaller percentages than previous years as equal to males, sexualized, and domestically oriented. Images of equality between genders in all seven years remained fairly similar with the exception of two years (1950 and 1990) in which no images of equality between genders were present. Portrayals of the sexualized woman and the domestically oriented woman remain fairly similar to all other years in terms of the way that the women are portrayed. In 2010, the domestically oriented woman was at its lowest percentage (6%) out of all seven years. One image showed a smiling mother sitting down in a chair, holding two babies. Images of subordination were also among the lowest percentages of the subordinate women portrayal type in this year. Women's bodies are shown the most in workplace settings, with about one-third of women's bodies at home.

Summary

In summary, trends of gender portrayals are apparent through an analysis of *Time* and *Life* magazines spanning from 1950-2010, with one representative year per decade. Particularly significant trends include: overall dominance of hegemonic male portrayals, steady decline in domestically oriented women portrayals over-time, rise in frequency of the work/business woman image, decline of subordinate portrayals of women (which is in some ways tied to the rise in women working), increasing equality between both genders over-time, and lack of non-

hegemonic male representation. Hegemonic male portrayals accounted on average for half of the images in all data years. This is a significant trend because it suggests that the representation of the hegemonic male in advertisements has not changed since the first data year, 1950. This also suggests that the hegemonic male image is a mainstay in media representations. Contrary to the over-representation of the hegemonic male image in advertisements, there was an under-representation of non-hegemonic males. Out of 535 images from seven years of data the non-hegemonic male image occurred only 22 times, and half of this total occurred in 2010 with 10 images. This relationship is indicative of the marginalization of the non-hegemonic male in the media.

Images of women presented domestically dropped steadily by about one-third in each data year until 1990. From 1990-2000 these portrayals remained at around the same frequency of the 1980 data, then in 2010 a sudden drop of about two-thirds of images occurred. The decline in frequencies of this image suggests that there was a shifting of attitudes towards this portrayal of women. This may suggest that this portrayal is, in some way, oppressive or merely an outdated depiction of women. In contrast to the decline of domestically-oriented images of women, work/business women portrayals gained frequency through the decades. This trend is based on the relationship of the working woman image portrayal compared to total images observed. It is important to note this relationship because of the change in magazine data available beginning in 1980. In 1980 *Life* magazine published monthly magazines, a change from the weekly publications of *Time* magazine. The monthly print of *Life* magazine continued to May 2000 when printing was limited to special issues only. Not only did images of women working rise throughout the data, the occupational fields in which women could engage also changed. In advertisements the majority of women working until around 1990 were secretaries and flight

attendants. Starting in 1990, advertisements started to portray women in more varieties of jobs; this continued throughout the rest of the data. Images began to emerge that portrayed women as nurses, mechanics, scientists, and professionals.

Related to the rise in images of women working is the decline of portrayals of subordination of women to men. Many images of subordination existed in portrayals of women working as assistants or servants to men through the secretarial and flight attendant jobs. Not surprisingly, when women began to be included in job variety and opportunity, they became less subordinate to men in advertisements. This is because many job opportunities for women prior to 1990 were based on performing tasks that benefitted the male managerial type or servitude to the male flight passenger. This trend also represents the rise in images of gender equality over-time, reflecting attitudes in society. The change in attitudes pertaining to gender equality can mostly be attributed to consciousness-raising movements like second and third wave feminism and it is expected that these would be reflected in media.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study examined trends in portrayals of gender in advertisements with the goal of identifying types of images of women, systematic oppression, and the support of patriarchy. The main research question was: in what ways can we identify gender oppression and the support of hegemonic masculinity and systems of patriarchy in the media? My study explored the types of women and men portrayed in advertisements, power relations between genders, and contrasting views of sexual meanings. This research was designed to fill the gap of information about gender portrayals in advertisements and representations of patriarchy, specifically identifying the occurrence in portrayals of dominance in advertisements as a representation of societal structures. This chapter discusses the findings, limitations, implications, and directions for future research. First discussed are, themes that were constructed based on the data: portrayals of power in the media, subordinate women at work and home, and sexualized women and the "Free the Nipple" (2013) movement.

Portrayals of Power and Media

Among the most significant findings in this research were portrayals of power and subordination. Power is one of many forms of gender inequality (Connell, 2009). Gendered advertisements portraying power relations have a significant impact on media audiences, because media is a social institution. A social institution is an extension of governing societal structures that reflect culture and cultural demands.

> Media content is both a manifestation and a source of culture. That is, media content takes elements of culture, magnifies them, frames them, and feeds them back to an audience. Media impose their own logic in creating a symbolic environment. If we assume that culture must change, adapt, and improve, then media content may serve as either a catalyst for or a brake on this change. (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p. 60)

The significance of finding dominating portrayals of men in advertisements, like that of the hegemonic male image, is that this image is an extension of cultural attitudes and societal structure.

The hegemonic male steadily remained the most dominant image in the seven decade data collection period. The hegemonic male image is itself powerful because it is the physical representation of male dominance in societal structures. Hegemonic masculinity is "a particular variety of masculinity to which women and others (young, effeminate, or homosexual men) are subordinated" (Craig, 1992, p. 190) and "a dominant form of masculinity that embodies, organizes, and legitimates men's domination in the world of gender as a whole" (Connell, 1995, p. 261). Furthermore, "hegemonic masculinity is not a fixed character type, always and everywhere the same. It is, rather, the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations, a position always contestable" (Connell, 1995, p. 76). The analysis of the data revealed that the hegemonic male image averaged about 50% of all images in every data collection year. This is a staggering representation of one particular gender type, especially a type that is directly tied to power and dominance. The hegemonic male image changed over time: the Marlboro man and business-man portrayal remained a dominant categories of male images until 2010 when the FDA made it illegal for magazines to contain tobacco advertisements. Advertisements also portrayed the hegemonic male type as fatherly; this occurred less frequently than other male types and occurred similarly across the data years.

Subordinate Women at Work and at Home

Images of women subordinate to men were closely associated with images of working women. This is because many images of working women, until around 1990 and beyond, were images of secretaries and flight attendants, both of whom who served the male. Additionally,

most images depicting the working woman also represented the hegemonic male. The hegemonic male was depicted in positions of power, like that of a boss, manager, or patron. The working woman was largely represented until 1990 as the servant or lower-prestige worker. Starting in 1990, advertisements portrayed women in more varieties of jobs; this continued throughout the rest of the data. Images began to emerge that portrayed women as nurses, mechanics, scientists, and professionals. With the emerging variety of work positions for women, the data reflected a sharp decline in images portraying subordination of women to men.

The domestic woman image was also represented significantly in the data. Domestic-centered portrayals of women remained the biggest representation of female types, usually averaging about one-third of images of women until 2010, when it only represented 8% of the women's portrayals. The reason that images of domestic-women signify a power relation is because of the pervasiveness and over-representation of the image and the diminution of other female types.

> By portraying women as homemakers, (media) content may be magnifying a kernel of truth (women used to be found primarily in those roles), but the strength and pervasiveness of those symbols may make it more difficult for women to be accepted in non-stereotypical roles. Media content may take the worst features of society and blow them up so large that they are reinforced and made difficult to change. Although media portrayals may reflect power relations as they exist, they may also ensure that no other types of relations are conceivable. (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p. 60)

The over-representation of one gender type and the marginalization of another in the media, like that of equal or dominant women types, have enduring effects (Cuneen & Sidwell, 1998). These include support and legitimation of systems of patriarchy by lack of participation and marginalization of women and minority groups (Kroma, 2002). Furthermore, the domestic-woman images displayed women largely in the kitchen and at home until 1990. The presence of the women's bodies in specific household settings further reinforces stereotypical characteristics

of women. The women whose bodies were displayed in the kitchen and at home parallel 1950 societal construction of a female gender ideal. The pervasiveness of this image resonated throughout the data collection period until it started to decline in 2000-2010.

Sexualized Women and "Free the Nipple"

Images of sexualized women in the advertisements increased over-time until 1990 when a steep increase in frequency of portrayals occurred. In 2000 and 2010, however, the percentage of sexualized images returned to the same frequencies as 1950 and 1960. There is a significance to the 1990 data about sexualized images that is tied to cultural events. Around 1990 a new wave of feminism was beginning to seep into public discourse and consciousness, called third-wave feminism. Third-wave feminism was marked by freedom of sexual expression (Hewitt, 2002), assertive attitudes, independence, and multiculturalism (Evans, 2003). An increase in images of sexualized women is expected as a reflection of societal events. It would be expected that the frequencies in occurrence of the images of sexual women would remain similar to those from 1990. However, this is not the case based on the data, which suggest that the images of sexual in women decreased to match the 1950-1960 data.

Based on third-wave feminist ideologies, sexual images are empowering, as the movement encourages sexual freedom of expression. However, there are also the questions of "who is this image for" and "who created this image?" Overall, the images are produced in a patriarchal society that dictates the processes of social institutions. Marxist feminism would suggest that patriarchy systematically oppresses women through societal structures, including the institution of media (Chaftez, 1997; Gimenez & Vogel, 2005; Spitulnik, 1993). In using Marxist feminist theories it may be impossible to conclude whether or not the images of sexual women are empowering to women, as the theory states that the patriarchy controls the social systems and

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oppresses the women within it. However, it is imperative to discuss a new movement focused on the body and expression.

Started in 2013 "Free the Nipple" is "an equality movement addressing equal rights for men and women, a more balanced system of censorship, and legal rights for all women to breastfeed in public" ("What is free," 2016). The scripted film-based movement follows a group of women protesting censorship laws topless in New York City. "The film explores the contradictions in our media-dominated society, where acts of violence and killings are glorified, while images of a woman's body are censored by the FCC and the MPAA" ("What is free," 2016). What is most significant about this movement is that it is calling for equal body rights for women and men. The movement is not promoting sexual expression through the baring of one's chest, rather it is calling for neutrality. I propose that this movement is actually heading toward discussions about de-sexualizing women's bodies and equal consideration for bare chests. This relates to my study because it starts an argument about the sexualization of women's bodies and whether the sexual woman is oppressive or empowering.

Conclusions

Advertising is a pervasive form of media directed by societal structures. The use of advertising is significant based on its ability to reach and influence wide audiences cross-culturally. The advertisement is also an institutional vehicle for many things, including products, lifestyles, and oppression. Images and portrayals of gender in advertisements have far-reaching effects on media audiences. In this research I found that the messages contained in advertising images are largely based on stagnant hegemonic male representations of dominance, which suppress other gender types including women and non-hegemonic males. The suppression of non-hegemonic males and women is examined through portrayals of subordinate roles, lack of

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representation, stereotypical depictions, and marginalization of minority groups and women in advertisements. The legitimation of systems of patriarchy is sustained through this direct representation of gender dominance and systematic oppression of other gender types in advertising media. While these gender portrayals and types change slightly overtime, the issues with representation and reinforcing of stereotypes remain.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. First, as I was the sole independent researcher, inter-coder reliability is an issue, as another researcher may have coded data differently. Since this was a qualitative study, the characteristics of each image were based on personal discretion. I did, however, base characteristics of gender portrayals on pre-established scholarly research. The way that I observed and coded a sexual woman for example, was based on another content analysis of advertisements. Additionally, the advertisements were randomly selected, so the sample selection was unbiased.

Second, I only used *Life* and *Time* magazines in specific years. I chose to use exemplary years at the start of each decade to represent that decade, e.g. 1950, 1960, etc. *Life* and *Time* magazines were chosen because they were the most easily accessible for the research and are considered magazines directed towards a wide range of audiences. The magazines do not specialize in a specific category, like fashion or sports. The use of a sample year for each decade was based on time constraints on data collection. Additionally, I could not locate information regarding magazine audience demographics. Third, I only focused on the images and did not account for linguistic information. Many advertisements had information about the image that could help identify characteristics of gender portrayal; but I did not have the resources to include this information.

Implications

  This study contributes to existing theory on feminism, gender, and embodiment. There is a significant gap in research about the "Free the Nipple" movement and this study begins to discuss its implications for women in society and the media. Additionally, the inclusion of the movement is significant as it contributes to its social and scholarly legitimation. I think it is important to begin discussions about contemporary movements that seek to re-purpose the avenues of social consciousness. The results of this study also provide more information about power relations and gender portrayals, as they outline the presence of male dominance in advertisement images and its reflection and representation of societal structures. Representation of dominance, as reflected in the staggering percentages of hegemonic male portrayals, is significant data. Throughout the observed decades, the hegemonic male image is the most represented gender portrayal. This portrayal accounts for half of all *Life* and *Time* advertisement images on average. This finding contributes to sociological understanding of power relations in the media by understanding the magnitude of over-representation of male dominance and under-representation of equal female types and male minorities.

Directions for Future Research

  My research focused largely on characterizing gender portrayals and power relations in advertisements. Future research on the subject could include linguistic information inscribed in the advertisements, as this information could give a clearer representation of the gender portrayals. A complete study of every *Life* and *Time* issue from 1950-2010 would also benefit research about gender portrayals, as the years that I researched were merely exemplary of each decade. Further research into sexual images could provide more insight into whether they are oppressive or empowering to women.

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APPENDIX A

IRB EXEMPTION LETTER

MARSHALL UNIVERSITY.
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Office of Research Integrity

December 10, 2015

Autumn O'Toole
415 5th Ave.
Huntington, WV 25701

Dear Ms. O'Toole:

This letter is in response to the submitted thesis abstract entitled *"Portrayals of Gender in the Media: A Content Analysis Approach to Identifying Gender Oppression and Legitimation of Systems of Patriarchy in Magazine Advertisements."* After assessing the abstract it has been deemed not to be human subject research and therefore exempt from oversight of the Marshall University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The Code of Federal Regulations (45CFR46) has set forth the criteria utilized in making this determination. Since the information in this study does not involve human subjects as defined in the above referenced instruction it is not considered human subject research. If there are any changes to the abstract you provided then you would need to resubmit that information to the Office of Research Integrity for review and a determination.

I appreciate your willingness to submit the abstract for determination. Please feel free to contact the Office of Research Integrity if you have any questions regarding future protocols that may require IRB review.

Sincerely,

Bruce F. Day, ThD, CIP
Director

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APPENDIX B

VARIABLE DESCRIPTIONS

HM	Hegemonic Male
NonHM	Non-hegemonic Male
DomesW	Domestic Woman
SubW	Subordinate Woman
EqualW	Equal Woman
SexyW	Sexy Woman
WorkW	Work Woman
BeautyW	Beauty/Fashion Woman
DominW	Dominant Woman
InfantW	Infant Woman
Womoth	Woman Other
Bdhome	Body Home
Bdbed	Body Bed
Bdkitchn	Body Kitchen
Bdwork	Body Work