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# Ladies on the Label: A Meta-Analysis of Stereotypes in Advertising

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Ladies on the Label: A Meta-Analysis of Stereotypes in Advertising

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In partial fulfillment of  
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by

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Marshall University

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## ABSTRACT

Ladies on the Label: A Meta-Analysis of Stereotypes in Advertising

Valerie Spears

This thesis explores the origins of modern-day racism and sexism by combining a meta-analysis with an in-depth historical examination of the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns. The ten studies used in the meta-analysis were selected and analyzed based on criteria developed from the research question and literature review. The researcher made three major conclusions based on the meta-analysis results: 1) It is not only important that minorities are *shown* in media images, but *how* they are shown; 2) stereotypes can sometimes mold viewpoints about the stereotyped member(s) of society; and 3) the consumer psyche provides further evidence that viewing stereotypes affects viewpoints. When comparing the meta-analysis results to the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns, the researcher found that the icons and their histories parallel America's historic perpetuation of racist and sexist issues.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker rest on the fine line between advertisements that sell products and those that reflect stereotypical images which affect the subconscious. These icons symbolize a trend of gender-, race-, and class-based stereotypes reinforced in American advertisements over the past century. Their images are born from social situations such as the institution of slavery, the emancipation of slaves, and American-involved wars. The emotions associated with these social events are sometimes too extreme to handle and have manifested in other forms such as stereotypes in the mass media. They have become an unspoken language between classes of people. Stereotypes repeatedly portrayed in advertising images imply expectations for gender and racial roles, particularly women's, and cultivate common viewpoints regarding required behaviors.

Racist and sexist stereotypes are perpetuated in advertising today and seem to signify a need to examine the affects of such images on the individual, and, in turn, society. Recent events imply that stereotypical viewpoints cultivated in earlier decades still exist in American culture. From the behaviors of entertainers and politicians to the work of advertisers and media practitioners, stereotypes still seem to influence many facets of society.

In November, 2006, comedian Michael Richards shouted racist comments at two Black male audience members who criticized his performance. "Shut up! Fifty years ago we'd have you upside down with a [expletive] fork up you're a--," Richards said. "Throw his a---out. He's a n-----!" (MSNBC, 2006) The incident was caught on video and was viewed by millions on the internet. In a public apology, Richards said he was "not a racist" (MSNBC, 2006, 1).

Less than five months later, April 2007, radio talk-show host Don Imus was fired from his syndicated radio show for making racist and sexist comments about the Rutgers University

women's basketball team. After referring to the women as "nappy-headed hos" on the air, Imus was fired from both MSNBC and CBS (Egan & Wulfhorst, 2007, 1). The incident triggered a national debate about racism and sexism. Hip-hop artists were indicted for their role in the perpetuation of racial slang and the disrespect of women in their music. The debate continues.

In August, 2006, Virginia Senator George Allen (R) called S.R. Sidarth, a 20-year-old volunteer of Indian descent, "macaca" (Craig, 2006, 1). Sidarth, who supported Allen's Democratic opponent, was videotaping a campaign rally when the Senator got his attention by saying, "Let's give a welcome to macaca, here. Welcome to America and the real world of Virginia" (Craig, 2006, 1). According to a Washington Post article following the incident, macaca could mean "either a monkey that inhabits the Eastern Hemisphere or a town in South Africa. In some European cultures, macaca is also considered a racial slur against African immigrants" (Craig, 2006, 1).

Virginia Delegate Frank D. Hargrove caused controversy with a remark he made in January, 2007. Hargrove was responding to a "measure that would apologize on the state's behalf to the descendents of slaves" when he said, "slavery ended nearly 140 years ago with the Civil War...our Black citizens should get over it" (FOX News, 2007, 1). Hargrove added, "Are we going to force the Jews to apologize for killing Christ?" (FOX News, 2007, 1)

On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 15, 2007, students from across the nation threw "gangsta" theme parties. "White students at Tarleton University in Texas held a party where they dressed in gang gear and drank malt liquor from paper bags, a White Clemson University student attended a bash in Blackface and a fraternity at Johns Hopkins University invited partygoers to wear 'bling bling' grills, or shiny metal caps on their teeth" (MSNBC, 2007, 1). In addition to racism, sexism is also rampant in modern American society.

Women in advertising images are frequently portrayed as superhero housewives – cooking, cleaning, doing laundry, childrearing, smiling, serving a man, and all the while managing to look neat and tidy while doing it. According to a recent column by Michael Noer, editor of *Forbes* magazine, this is the ideal woman. In “Point: Don’t Marry Career Women,” Noer tells readers that career women cause unstable marriages:

“To be clear, we are not talking about a high school dropout minding a cash register. For our purposes, a ‘career girl’ has a university-level (or higher) education, works more than 35 hours a week outside the home and makes more than \$30,000 a year. If a host of studies are to be believed, marrying these women is asking for trouble” (Noer, 2006, 1).

Black women in advertising images are portrayed doing the same domestic rituals mentioned above, but they also deal with racial implications. Collins (1991) said four images dominate representations of Black women: mammy, matriarch, welfare queen, and jezebel. Here, the mammy figure will be the focus. The mammy is an overweight, motherly, happy-go-lucky maid whose roots go back to the Civil War (White, 1999). Recently, several companies have been accused of reinforcing the mammy image, most with the exaggerated characteristics of being loud and overbearing.

In 2006, a *New York Times* article spotlighted Dairy Queen, Pine Sol, Twix, and Captain Morgan as companies who reinforced the stereotypical mammy image in ads. “There is an image out there of Black women being boisterous, overbearing, controlling and extremely aggressive in their behavior,” said interview subject Carol H. Williams. ‘I really do not know why that stereotype is laughed at’ (Peters, 2006, 2). In a Dairy Queen commercial, a man boarding a plane “sets his ice cream shake down so he can load his bag into an overhead

compartment.” While reaching up, another passenger starts eating his ice cream, causing the man to let go of the bag and turn around while the bag falls onto another passenger’s head.

“That unlucky passenger happens to be an overweight Black woman who lets out an irritated gasp that reminds all the passengers around her who not to mess with” (Peters, 2006, 2).

The problem is that some people in society deem these behaviors acceptable. While there are many who oppose images like Dairy Queen’s mammy figure and “career girl” statements like Noer’s, it is simply not a majority. One reason the perpetuation of such stereotypes is so successful is the creators of advertisements. A recent debate about the lack of diversity in media ownership has raised questions about the intentions of the White men who lead the industry.

“Out of the Picture: Minority and Female TV Station Ownership in the United States” was a 2006 study conducted by *Free Press*, a nonpartisan media watchdog organization. The report criticized the FCC for “abandoning its responsibility to monitor and foster the diversity of media owners” (Aaron, 2006, 1). “Out of the Picture” authors labeled the lack of minority and female representation a “national disgrace” (Turner, 2006, 1). The study measured ownership of “full-power commercial broadcast television stations. Several statistics from the document reveal the issue: “Women comprise 51 percent of the entire U.S. population, but own a total of only 4.97 percent of all stations. Minorities comprise 33 percent of the entire U.S. population, but own a total of only 3.26 percent of all stations” (Turner, 2006, 2). In this report, minorities include Hispanics, Blacks, and Asians, making it important to note that “Blacks comprise 13 percent of the population but only own 1.3 percent of all stations” (Turner, 2006, 2). “Non-Hispanic White owners control 76.6 percent of all stations” (Turner, 2006, 2). The ownership issue also extends to another part of the media industry, advertising agencies.

In 1968 officials in New York City demanded more Black representation in advertising agencies (Texeira, 2006). Thirty-seven years later, little has changed. At Advertising Week 2006, the topic became a heated debate, and multiple New York City advertising practitioners signed an agreement promising to create a more diverse atmosphere in their agencies (Texeira, 2006). Sanford Moore, a “veteran Black advertising guru, 65, for decades wrote letters, staged protests and pushed public officials to highlight the lack of diversity in advertising” (Texeira, 2006, 1). Moore said, “I call advertising the last bastion of Jim Crow” (Texeira, 2006, 1).

In *The Wages of Whiteness*, author David Roediger explores the role of race in the formation of the working class in 19<sup>th</sup> century America. He argues that the “creation of identity through otherness” caused a redefinition of roles and expectations for American citizens (Roediger, 1991). Most importantly, “Whiteness” was defined by labeling Blacks as “others.” Minstrel shows were popular events during the 19<sup>th</sup> century in where Whites dressed in Blackface and stereotypically imitated Blacks by dancing and singing. Roediger (1991) suggests that the Blackface performances gave Whites an outlet to express their frustrations with the plight of Blacks. Inside, he argued, Whites longed for pre-industrial America, a time that was less physically demanding and not quite as capitalistic. It was assumed Blacks lived less stressful lives similar to those led by Whites prior to industrialization (Roediger, 1991).

### **The Modern “Other”**

By identifying characteristics of the other race or sex, one can identify what he or she is *not*. If male perspectives dominate the mass media industry because they own and operate all major outlets, opposing or differing points of view become the “other.” For example, if men *always* portray women as unpaid domestic workers, establishing the fact that men work outside the home and are the breadwinners, women’s work loses value and is viewed as less important

than the male's. Industrialization and capitalism fueled a great need for money. Housework was unpaid and, therefore, unimportant to many career men (Kessler-Harris, 2003). Therefore, Roediger's "other" theory is still applicable today. By examining something as basic as salary, one can begin to comprehend the vast differences in the way men and women are treated in American society.

A 2005 study compared salaries based on gender and profession. Employed college graduates of the Class of 2000 were compared based on their salaries one year later (2001). Overall, the men averaged over \$7,000 more per year than women (Freeman, 2005). Of eleven different categories of professions, men made more than women in all. Another recent study said that while college women perform better "in every field of academics, including math and science, they make only 80 percent of what their male peers earn one year out of school" (Oliver, 2007, 1). The researcher also concluded:

This figure falls dramatically to 69 percent of men's salaries ten years after graduation. The disturbing thing is that women's average earnings are 77 cents to a man's dollar and are actually less than they were ten years ago. They drop even further for women of color. (Oliver, 2007, 1)

According to Debra Baker Beck (2001) the male-dominated media are responsible for creating a gap between men and women.

### **Patriarchal influence**

Beck (2001) considers issues like equal pay "feminist," but says the media "perpetuates dichotomies and dualisms and makes outcasts out of those who do not fit the bill" (139). She feels women shy away from "feminist" issues because of negative portrayals in the media. "I am not a feminist, but..." is a common refrain among women who reject the label. The 'but' is

usually followed by “expressions of support/concern for the issues championed by the movement, such as equal pay (94%), day care (90%), job discrimination (82%), and abortion rights (74%)” (Beck, 2001, 140). Beck (2001) worries that negative images of “feminism” will discourage young females from joining the Women’s Movement. She feels, however, an unconcerned media are “inevitable since [feminists] challenge the very basis of a patriarchal society” (Beck, 2001, 141). Covert (2003) said the media “perpetuates images that support the ideals of dominant members of society. Those messages are, therefore, often patriarchal and capitalistic and encourage audience members to accept gender stereotypes [without question]” (6).

Feminist scholar Gloria Steinem (1990) also blames patriarchy for influencing female portrayals in the media, particularly magazines. “This habit of controlling the content of women’s magazines comes from tradition. Ever since *Ladies Magazine* debuted in Boston in 1828, editorial copy has been informed by something other than its readers’ wishes...husbands” (Steinem, 1990, 171). She said, “Most women’s magazines continued to have men as top editors until the feminist 1970s” (Steinem, 1990, 171).

Collins (1991) said “Women’s studies has offered one major challenge to the allegedly hegemonic ideas of elite White men, but ironically, feminist theory has also suppressed Black women’s ideas” (42). She said all-Black communities provided a place for the Afrocentric view to develop and “though it often relies on biological notions of the ‘race,’ Afrocentric scholarship suggests that ‘Blackness’ and Afrocentricity reflect longstanding belief systems among African peoples” (Collins, 1991, 34). However, Collins (1991) also noted the longstanding issue of patriarchy among Black women, specifically mentioning how the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) treated Ella Baker during the Civil Rights Movement: “Ms. Baker virtually

ran the entire organization, yet had to defer to the decision-making authority of the exclusively male leadership group” (50).

The domestic superhero, crazy feminist, jolly mammy and struggling matriarch become more than images when they are reflected repeatedly in advertising. They become stereotypes. More than that, they become stereotypes which profoundly affect the way women view themselves and how they are judged by others. Gist (1993) said, “to the frequent extent that media neglect women, portray them as marginally powerful, or objectify them sexually, these signals become internalized by many women as low self-esteem or an obsession with physical attractiveness” (105).

### **Stereotypes**

Merriam-Webster (2006) defines stereotype as a “standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or critical judgment.”

Carby (1987) suggests:

The objective of stereotypes is not to reflect or represent a reality but to function as a disguise, or mystification, of objective social relations. These controlling images are designed to make racism, sexism, and poverty appear to be natural, normal and an inevitable part of everyday life (52).

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, advertising practitioners were moving toward a new style of development by examining consumers. Mass production created a demand for products from around the country and world. “Urbanization furthered the national brand industry in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Growth of railroads transported more people and products city to city. The

packaging of food changed and assisted in ease of transportation” (Manring, 1998, 62).

Knowing the consumer was becoming an important part of ad development:

After the turn of the century the most venturesome agencies followed N.W. Ayer’s lead in developing the practice on market research. To know consumers, one had to do more than speculate about their psyches or observe them in hardware stores: one had to count them, categorize them by income, neighborhood, ethnicity, and religion, correlate these data with their brand preferences, and test their reactions to specific ads. This last was first done systematically by the J. Walter Thompson Company in 1903 (Lears, 1994, 62).

Competition between ever-growing numbers of businesses made it crucial for a product to stand out to catch consumers’ attention. Attractive packaging became an important factor when persuading consumers to choose from one product or the other. A new strategy consisted of connecting a face and personality with a product. Logos, colors and eventually, live trademarks were used to attract consumer attention. Live trademarks are “figures designed to project specific, carefully researched characteristics to [consumers, mainly women] shopping for their households.” (Avakian, 2005, 30). The use of common and identifiable images allowed practitioners to convey their message to multiple consumers. Also known as stereotypes, these “common” images can mold perspectives and dangerously encourage the oversimplification of various cultures.

Lafky (1996) said:

Through the use of simplistic images that ignore the complexities of modern lives, stereotypes thus become an essential shorthand through which advertisers can

readily communicate a product category and indicate for whom the product is intended. The convenience of using visual shorthand is one reason advertisers use images that fit gender stereotypes (380).

Social psychologists suggest that when making judgments about uncertain events, individuals use information that is readily available in the mind. “These information-processing shortcuts...simplify judgmental operations and enable individuals to make inferences and predictions from what scanty and unreliable data are available” (Lafky, 1996, 381).

Patricia Devine (1989) suggests a dual process involved in stereotyping. She contends that automatic and controlled processes guide the development of stereotypes. “Automatic processes involve the unintentional or spontaneous activation of some well-learned set of associations or responses that have been developed through repeated activation in memory. In contrast, controlled processes are intentional and require the attention of the individual” (Devine, 1989, 6). Devine (1989) argues that the processes can occur separately, allowing the individual to condition stereotypical responses.

They are so engrained in our psyches that simply the presence of a stereotyped member of society *automatically* activates memorized stereotypical characteristics (i.e., the criminal Black male, the lazy Mexican, the happy housewife, etc.) (Devine, 1989). “The implications of this automatic stereotype activation may be serious, particularly when the content of the stereotype is predominantly negative, as is the case with racial stereotypes” (Devine, 1989, 7). Harris (2003) said stereotypes “clearly affected the self-perceptions of African Americans in complicated and persistent ways, posing threats to their dignity (96). Devine (1989) proposes that during the *controlled* process, the individual must consciously challenge the stereotype and replace the automatic thought with a different one. She likens the process to “breaking a habit”

(Devine, 1989, 6), and suggests that it is easier for low-prejudice persons to condition stereotypical thoughts.

### **Related Theory**

Symbolic interaction is a theory that developed during the 1920s and 1930s (Baran & Davis, 2003). It is a theory that “people give meaning to symbols and those meanings come to control those people” (Baran & Davis, 2003, 238). George Herbert Mead, the scholar most closely associated with symbolic interaction, believed that we base our actions and decisions on our communication with others. He argued that the use of symbols make humans particularly unique from other animals. “Using symbols, we can create vivid representations of the past and we can anticipate the future” (Baran & Davis, 2003, 240). Stereotypes and symbols are very similar; both convey a message quickly and clearly. A major difference is that stereotypes are symbols that tend to convey prejudice and oversimplified messages.

Sociologist Erving Goffman examined the psychological side of stereotypes. Similar to Mead, he suggests that images in the media, particularly advertising, contain subtle messages, or cues, about the way we should act in certain situations (Goffman, 1979). Goffman identifies “rituals” as instances where individuals are assessing their role in the situation, in other words, taking cues from others involved. In *Gender Advertisements*, Goffman (1979) questions the presentation of commercial pictures and said that whether they are actual snapshots or modified versions does not matter because the mind sees them as “reality.” Therefore, advertisements which display certain gender rituals are perceived as “truth” by the mind; when confronted with a similar situation in real-life, the mind may conjure up the memory of a previously viewed image, cueing the individual to behave as the photographed model had.

### **Classification of stereotypes**

Pingree, Hawkins, Butler and Paisley (1976) developed an ordinal scale which describes the various levels women are depicted on in media images. The Consciousness Scale has five levels:

Level I can be characterized as “put her down.” Level II is found in all forms of media. It can be characterized as “keep her in her place.” Level III represents the consciousness level of many “progressive” media images of women: “give her two places.” In entertainment, the woman can be a lawyer or architect as long as she has dinner on the table for her husband at six. It is the career that is often viewed as “something extra.” Housework and mothering comes first. Level IV, “acknowledge that she is fully equal,” is rare among media images of women.

Level V is nonstereotypic. Level V is mentioned because the consciousness scale logically requires it, not because Level V images can be found easily in the media (Pingree, et al., 1976, 3).

Covert (2003) discussed various characteristics portrayed in gender stereotypes in the media: “Men are presented as leaderlike, aggressive, strong, risk-taking, independent, competitive, ambitious, assertive, dominant, and active. Women are presented as affectionate, gentle, sympathetic, dependent, emotional, nurturing, submissive, passive, illogical, and preoccupied with physical appearance.” With female stereotypes, the issue can be broken down further. White women are mostly associated with the characteristics: “affectionate, gentle, dependent, and a preoccupation with physical appearance.” Black women are most often portrayed as: “sympathetic, emotional, nurturing, submissive, and illogical” and must also deal with racial implications. A racial hierarchy embedded deep in the history of America and the

world contributes to this issue and its discussion would require an entirely different volume of work. For the purposes of this study, “racial implications” imply those involved with media and will be further discussed in Chapter 2.

### **Media Usage**

George Gerbner’s theory of “cultivation analysis” suggests that consistent consumption of media influences viewers’ worldview, and cultivates a false reality based on media perspective (Baran & Davis, 2003). Lafky (1996) said there is “empirical support for finding a relationship between exposure to gender stereotypes in advertising and the cultivation among viewers of more traditional attitudes toward gender roles ” (462). The U.S. Census Bureau predicts Americans will spend about 3,518 hours indulged with the media in 2007; 1,555 of those hours will be spent in front of the television; and 122 hours will be used viewing magazines (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). Cultivation effects not only mold adults’ opinions about the world around them, but can also determine the early opinions of children.

According to Johnson (2002), children see an average of “24 ads per hour on weekdays and 21 per hour on weekends. If a child watched just one hour of commercial television per day, that child would likely be exposed to at least 160 ads each week” (465). Statistics also show evidence that Black children view more television than White children. “In a recent national survey of children and adolescents aged 8-18, White students reported watching an average of 2 hours and 47 minutes of television a day; the mean for Black students approached 5 hours” (Ward, 2005, 146). It is apparent that children are affected by symbols. For example, the corporate symbols Ronald McDonald and Mickey Mouse are familiar to many children prior to the development of speaking skills. A 2005 study assessed children’s recognition of various logos. Sixty-one children ages three to five were examined. Ninety percent of girls and 98

percent of boys recognized the Mickey Mouse logo; 95 percent of girls and 82 percent of boys recognized the McDonald's logo (Horner, 2005). From a symbolic interaction perspective, the meaning that many youth obtain from these characters could have long-term effects on their perceptions of life.

Children are future consumers and persuade parents to spend money. Toys, breakfast foods, and snacks are the three products most advertised to children (Johnson, 2003). "These three categories have not changed much over the years, but what has changed are increases in quantity and product differentiation, along with a more rapid pace in the presentation of new products" (Johnson, 2003, 468). Devine (1989) said stereotypes are "established in children's memories before they develop the cognitive ability and flexibility to question or critically evaluate the stereotype's validity or acceptability" (6). Therefore, stereotypes can be more accessible than personal beliefs (Devine, 1989).

Roediger (1991) said that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, creating identity by labeling the "other," was an act of nostalgia. Today, nostalgia continues to be an important part of advertising motivation.

### **An "Old" and "New" America Collide**

In *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America*, author Jackson Lears compares the "old" way of American living with the "new." He argues that prior to industrialization *abundance* was something obtained through the earth and was often viewed as feminine (i.e. Mother Earth); in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, *abundance* was produced by machines and the former harvester became a consumer. Lears (1994) examines this phenomenon through modern advertising to see if and how the ad industry reflects society. The

concept of transitioning from an old to a new type of society was also studied thoroughly by German sociologist, Ferdinand Tönnies.

Tönnies labeled the concept *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. *Gemeinschaft*, or folk community, represents the time of small communities “bound together by strong ties of family, by tradition, and by rigid social roles” (Baran, 2003, 58). In *Gesellschaft*, or industrial society, “people are bound together by relatively weak social institutions based on rational choices rather than tradition” (Baran, 2003, 59). Lears noted a struggle between the two concepts reflected in advertising:

[They] surfaced most dramatically in the emergent “media culture” of chromolithography, which turned increasingly toward advertising after the Civil War. Like academic theorists, urban chromolithographers re-created a vision of preindustrial life that may have resonated with their own nostalgic memories; the etymological root of *nostalgia* is “homesickness” (Lears, 1994, 79).

The progression of mass industry changed women’s traditional positions as ardent producers to their modern roles as active consumers, but their portrayals in advertisements often seemed to be stuck somewhere in between the two roles (Lears, 1994). These portrayals exemplify *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*.

### **Finding the past in the present**

Two major advertising icons exemplify both gender- and race-based stereotypes and the nostalgic transition from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft*: Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker. For many, they are simply brand representations; to others, stereotypes. Most people probably do not consider these two women in their day-to-day lives, or so they think. Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker represent deep-seated psychological emotions and ideals that many citizens hold in their

minds (Manring, 1998; Horner, 2000). Based on the longevity of their campaigns, consumers definitely draw some sort of meaning from these icons: Aunt Jemima, over 100 years and Betty Crocker, over 80. Each logo can be traced to post-war situations in America and both women have affected the way society views gender-roles (Horner, 2000; Kern-Foxworth, 1994; Manring, 1998; Marks, 2005).

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In 1954, a “doll test” was performed in light of the *Brown vs. Board of Education* case. Social psychologists, Kenneth and Mamie Clark, organized the experiment to examine the effects of segregation by measuring children’s reactions and feelings toward a Black and a White doll. Participants were asked to choose the “bad” doll and the “good” doll, resulting with a majority of Black children preferring the White doll. The results were “revealing” to the Clarks and provided evidence “of personality dysfunction among Black children under Jim Crow [law]” (Martin Jr., 1998). In 2005 the “doll test” was replicated by Kiri Davis, a 16-year-old New York City high school student. Armed with a video camera and an interest in the topic, Davis asked four to five-year-old kids at a Harlem school which doll was “better.” It’s been over fifty years since the original test and the results have not changed much. Fifteen of the 21 children interviewed by Davis said “that the White doll was good and pretty and that the Black doll [was] bad” (ABC News, 2006, 1). While many factors could contribute to results such as these (i.e., family, education, etc), it is important to examine the media’s role in perpetuating viewpoints, particularly stereotypes. Media effects are regularly cited as factors in the development of perspectives about ourselves and the world around us (Goffman, 1979; Baran & Davis, 2003).

**Separate but UNEQUAL**

In 1896, the *Plessy vs. Ferguson* case upheld a “separate but equal” ruling for Whites and Blacks. In the post-Civil War and Reconstruction atmosphere, Jim Crow laws were enacted to keep Whites and Blacks separate. The laws, named after a popular Blackface character (Kern-Foxworth, 1994), demanded that Blacks use separate bathrooms, water fountains and entrances. Jim Crow permeated every facet of Southern society, resulting in meticulous rules for Blacks to follow. “These structures included severe job discrimination; political exclusion including

disfranchisement; social ostracism and residential segregation; exclusion from the public domain of schools, churches, hotels, restaurants, pubs, and halls” (Martin Jr., 1998, 30). There was also a form of Jim Crow “etiquette:” Blacks and Whites had to eat separately unless an emergency occurred, domestic workers were expected to address White children as “Mr.” or Miss,” and interracial relationships were unacceptable (Kennedy, 1959). However, a White man *could* have a sexual relationship with a Black woman as long as it was kept private, but a White woman absolutely could not interact romantically with a Black man (Kennedy, 1959). Those who initiated and practiced Jim Crow law intended to let Black people know their place in White society (Martin Jr., 1998). Even though the Emancipation Proclamation “freed” enslaved Blacks, many Whites, through laws like Jim Crow, managed to keep them in slave-like roles.

### **Brown vs. Board of Education**

Supporters of *Brown vs. Board of Education (1954)*, a landmark case that was actually comprised of several smaller cases, hoped to change the way American education functioned. The abolishment of segregation, they believed, would lead the way towards equality for future generations. The doll test provided significant evidence of the effects segregation potentially had on children (ABC News, 2006; Martin Jr., 1998). The Clarks said the “damage done to the self-esteem of [the] children reinforced notions of Black inferiority and White superiority: Racial segregation did indeed damage the Black psyche” (Martin Jr., 1998). Although the Clarks’ research was met with both criticism and support, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of desegregation.

The *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision fueled the fire of the Civil Rights Movement, an ongoing struggle for racial equality and respect, which made great strides in the following decades. The highest level of opposition came from the South, where prominent White

politicians vowed to disobey the Supreme Court's orders. In 1956, 19 Senators and 82 members of the House of Representatives signed the Southern Manifesto, a document stating their opposition to the integration of public places, including schools (Time, 1956). They were attempting to keep the most vital piece of Jim Crow law alive: segregation.

### **Defining Roles**

Advertisements were one of the many ways that Whites attempted to keep Blacks in subservient roles (Kern-Foxworth, 1994; Manring, 1998). Depicting them mostly as domestic workers, multiple advertisements said more than a simple slogan; they implied that Whites were the superior race. Kern-Foxworth (1994) said ads featuring Blacks in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had several common themes including: exaggerated physical features, cannibalism and Black self-hatred. Common features portrayed on African Americans in early ads are big mouths, large red lips, big White teeth and bulging eyes. Some advertisements showed them as savage cannibals, preparing to eat a White person for their next meal. Self-hatred was personified in ads through the theme that "Blacks were so disgusted with their plight that they really wanted to be White" (Kern-Foxworth, 1994, 25). Soap advertisements claimed to have the power to wash Black skin White. "Typical of the period between the turn of the century and the 1930s, this African connection was a not-so-subliminal threat to Whites, a connection that stirred up subconscious anxieties of Black retaliation" (Kern-Foxworth, 1994, 27). Black children were also the target of racist advertisements. These images contributed to stereotypical representations of Blacks that still exist today (Kern-Foxworth, 1994; Manring, 1998). "The use of Blacks in pejorative and stereotypical advertising kept them emotionally bound to the idiosyncratic whims of their former masters" (Kern-Foxworth, 1994, 41).

Advertisements featuring Blacks with compromising characteristics and in fantastical situations were rarely refuted; mostly because Blacks were not considered consumers. “It was a known axiom in the advertising industry that Southern Whites would not tolerate positive images of Blacks on television...Television executives and advertisers feared alienating consumers and...avoided programming and commercials that were too flattering...toward Blacks” (Kern-Foxworth, 1994, 48).

Mainstream America was mistaken in their assumption that Blacks should not be considered consumers. From the end of the Civil War to 1930, the Black population had doubled to almost 12,000,000 (Edwards, 1932). Many Blacks migrated to cities, which allowed ease of mobility (Hunter, 1997). In *The Southern Urban Negro as Consumer*, author Paul Edwards attempted to discover the purchasing power of Blacks in the South’s seventeen largest cities in the 1930s (Norfolk, Richmond, Atlanta, Jacksonville, Miami, Tampa, New Orleans, San Antonio, Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, Memphis, Birmingham, Chattanooga, Nashville, Knoxville, Louisville) (38). Edwards (1932) estimated that during 1929, Blacks had a purchasing power of \$308,000,000 (39).

### **The Black Psyche**

Blacks were well-aware of the discrimination that existed toward their race. W.E.B. Dubois, author, civil-rights leader and originator of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), discussed the mistreatment of American Blacks in his 1903 book, *The Souls of Black Folk*. His introductory statement to the work states that “the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color line” (1). DuBois presents both the realizations and hopes of freedmen:

He would not Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He would not bleach his Negro soul in a flood of White Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American, without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of Opportunity closed roughly in his face. (4)

He discusses the hope that came with Emancipation – a hope that quickly disintegrated in the following four decades: “Whatever of good may have come in these years of change, the shadow of deep disappointment rests upon the Negro people, - a disappointment all the more bitter because the unattained ideal was unbounded save by the simple ignorance of a lowly people” (DuBois, 1903, 8). DuBois spoke of the struggle to develop a Black identity in a White American world:

After the Egyptian and Indian, the Greek and Roman, the Teuton and Mongolian, the Negro is sort of a seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world, - a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity (DuBois, 1903, 3).

Throughout the twentieth century the contradiction between his aspirations and his reality would be shaped by the White American media. “From the turn of the century to the mid-1960s negative advertising images of Blacks were pervasive throughout America. Some became American icons and permanent staples in most homes” (Kern-Foxworth, 1994, 40).

### **Misrepresentation Continued**

Stereotypical representations of Blacks still exist in the media today and have effects both on viewers' perceptions of Blacks and Blacks opinion of themselves (Fuller, 2001). Givens and Brown (2005) conducted a two-part experimental study to examine how social perceptions are affected by stereotypes. Their results evidenced that viewing a Black woman triggers negative words and a White woman triggers positive words (Givens & Brown, 2005).

While Jim Crow laws designated the expected behaviors for different races, a further separation occurred between White and Black women. It was a struggle that dated back to the age of slavery, and included many levels of self definition. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, advertisements were also a vehicle for White men to keep Black and White women in their respective places.

### **The Roots of the Black/White Female Relationship**

Although White and Black women have both been influenced by patriarchy, the effects are considerably different. During slavery, a hierarchy existed between the two races of women: "while slave masters controlled both Black and White women, the latter wielded power over the former" (White, 1999). Sex caused many problems between White mistresses and enslaved Black women. Throughout the history of slavery and into antebellum America, Black women have been the victims of rape by slave owners and White men, with little to no means of defense or proof. Biracial children born onto plantations were considered slaves and were rarely discussed, leaving White mistresses with resentment for Black women (White, 1999). Many biracial children received higher status in the hierarchy of the slave plantation. This elevated status further complicated Blacks' self-esteem, identity and race relations. Yet, few slaveholding

women would have viewed themselves as victims of patriarchy: [White women] “might deplore their men’s excessive drinking, sexual philandering, and abuse of power, but they rarely rejected the system that established their sense of personal identity within a solid community” (White, 1999, 25).

Differences between White and Black women played off one another:

The White woman’s sense of herself as a woman – her self-esteem and perceived superiority – depended on the racism that debased Black women. White women were mistresses *because* Black women were slaves. White women had real power over enslaved women because Black women were really powerless. Black and White women had so little in common because the sexism they both experienced kept them apart.” (White, 1999)

According to White (1999), although much of the race and sex ideology that abounds in America has its roots in history that is older than the nation, it was during the slavery era that the ideas were molded into a peculiar American mythology. The “cult of true womanhood” was a set of expectations that developed during the mid-1800s and its four cardinal virtues were: piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity (Collins, 1991); the expectations were applied to White women only. The virtues provided a further separation between the identities of Black and White women. However, to further establish Black women as an “other” to Whites, several images helped imply their place in society, particularly the mammy figure.

### **Common Portrayals**

Enslaved women who worked in the household were often referred to as “mammy” by their head masters. Much of the information known about mammy comes from Civil War memoirs and diaries. “Because of her expertise in all domestic matters, she was the premiere

house servant and all others were her subordinates” (White, 1999, 26). Her relationship with the household’s children is often discussed. In some cases, a mammy might have breast-fed White children. Her deep involvement in all household issues gave the mammy a more esteemed position in slaveholders’ eyes.

In post-Civil War America, she took on a whole new persona. The mammy figure developed in antebellum America was based on ideals that slaveholders held about domestic servants (Manring, 1998; White, 1999). Some scholars and historians claim the portrayal of the mammy is a mythical projection of Whites because she is pictured as a happy-go-lucky, always available slave. “She was depicted as genuinely loving her masters and mistresses, thus providing a justification for slavery” (Manring, 1998, 18). White (1999) contends that no single woman could have performed all the tasks the mythical mammy is reported to have done; she said White mistresses often assisted.

Aunt Jemima is perhaps the most well-known mammy in America (Kern-Foxworth, 1994; Manring, 1998). She exemplifies the most common features of a mammy character: Black woman, overweight, maid clothes (apron, simple dress), bandana on head, usually cooking, smiling, big teeth, desexualized, unattractive by common social standards (the opposite of White female purity) and dually serving as nursemaid, physician and counselor (Manring, 1998).

Chris Rutt, a young businessman who helped develop the Pearl Milling Company, which would later become Quaker Oats, developed Aunt Jemima in the late 1800s (Kern-Foxworth, 1994). Rutt needed a representation for his new pancake mix that required users to only add water. He discovered her at a minstrel show in St Joseph, Missouri, 1889. While the Blackface team performed onstage, one act in particular interested Rutt. “Old Aunt Jemima” featured one of the White men, in Blackface, dancing around with a handkerchief and apron on (Kern-

Foxworth, 1994). The reaction from the crowd told Rutt that Aunt Jemima would be the perfect woman to represent his pancake mix. “This would be the first time a living person would be used to personify a company’s trademark.” (Kern-Foxworth, p. 65, 1994) Manring (1998) noted the irony of the Blackface discovery: “The white men were not only cross-dressing but blacking up as well...Aunt Jemima, for much of her early career, was a white man” (70).

In 1890, Chris Rutt sold the Aunt Jemima brand to the R.T. Davis Milling Company in St. Joseph (Harris, 2003). Soon after, Davis initiated a search for a woman who could personify the trademark. He desired a “Black woman to fulfill his perception of Aunt Jemima as ‘a Negro woman who might exemplify Southern hospitality’” (Harris, 2003, 88). He found that woman in Nancy Green, who was born into slavery in 1834. At the time she was discovered, she worked as a cook for a Chicago judge. Green, who was often mistaken as the “real” Aunt Jemima, traveled around the region visiting festivals, markets and trade shows to cook her famous pancake recipe for consumers (Harris, 2003). “I se in town honey” became Aunt Jemima’s slogan as she moved around the country promoting R.T. Davis’s pancake mix.

Later, in the beginning of the twentieth century, James Webb Young, manager of the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency, Chicago branch, took charge of the Aunt Jemima campaign. “Young used his memorable experiences of growing up in Covington, Kentucky, as the son of a Mississippi riverboat captain to structure a scenario in the minds of customers and position the Aunt Jemima product as the front runner in its class of breakfast foods” (Kern-Foxworth, 1994, 57). His perspective was based in nostalgia and was due, in large part, to the influence of his parents. He advertised multiple women’s products throughout the years, and encouraged young advertisers (men) to “marry early” and use their wives as models of the “typical consumer” (Manring, 1998). He claimed he “knew all there was to know about women”

by the time he was 30 (Manring, 1998). “His mother, he said, ‘was a Southern belle. You could tell it by the way she hated niggers’” (Manring, 1998).

In 1894 Aunt Jemima’s face was first turned into a logo. In 1919, N.C. Wyeth was hired to paint a portrait of Aunt Jemima based on Nancy Green. Her face remained virtually the same until 1968. Years of protest from supporters of the Civil Rights Movement led to this change: Quaker Oats replaced the bandana with a headband, slimmed her down and made her look somewhat younger (Kern-Foxworth, 1994). In 1989, her headband was removed, her hairstyle updated and she received a pair of pearl earrings (Kern-Foxworth, 1994). Today, this version of Aunt Jemima’s face continues to be displayed on her products.

Many scholars believe the mammy image is directly related to Civil War sentiments (Manring, 1998; Patton, 1993; White, 1999). Dealing with the aftermath of the Civil War was strenuous for people in both the North and South. Family and friends had perished in the battles and many Whites blamed freed Blacks for causing the war. Those affected dealt with and remembered the tragedy of civil war differently. David W. Blight (2001), author of *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* recognizes three “overall visions of Civil War memory: (1) The Reconciliationist Vision – dealing with the dead, (2) White Supremacist Vision – led to Jim Crow law and racial violence, and (3) The Emancipationist Vision – African Americans’ complex remembrance of their own freedom.”

Blight said that many tried to eliminate the Emancipationist Vision from the collective memory of the Civil War to no avail.

How people of both sections and races would come to define and commemorate that tragedy, where they would find heroism and villainy, and how they would decide what was lost and what was won, would have a great deal to do with

determining the character of the new society that they were to build (Blight, 2001, 5).

Grounded in the memories of former slaveholders, mistresses and children, the mammy myth was a subconscious attempt to keep the “good old days” alive while moving towards the uncertain future. To appeal to a national audience, Young used nostalgia in his Aunt Jemima advertisements. His most well-known campaign centered on “the legend of Aunt Jemima” and aimed to introduce the world to the Southern lifestyle. Manring (1998) said the copy used in the advertisements was “written in proper English and from a White perspective” except when a plantation character spoke. In addition to elaborate tales of the Old South, the “legend of Aunt Jemima ads portrayed Blacks as happy, simpleminded servants” (Manring, 1998, 45). The mammy in Aunt Jemima ads served as a “guide to that lost paradise where White men were gallant, women were unburdened by the kitchen, and children played happily around cheerful Black servants who would never leave” (Manring, 1998, 47). Manring (1998) notes an important point about the ads: the plantation mistress is rarely seen. She credits this to the fact that Young wanted the women to put *themselves* in that role:

The ads seemed to be saying to White women, you can approximate the lifestyle once created for plantation mistresses by the efforts of female slaves through purchasing the creation of a former female slave. The ads urged White housewives to have Aunt Jemima, not to be Aunt Jemima. [They were] selling the idea of a slave, in a box (Manring, 1998, 140).

Advertising for the product between the early decades of the twentieth century to the late 1960s focused on nostalgic images of the Old South mammy in print advertising and personal appearances by Black women hired to impersonate her. In this way, “mammy/Aunt Jemima has

almost always been associated with the bodies of real Black women, even if only in the world of commercial advertising, entrenching her familiarity as a brand name product” (Duncan, 2001,

12). While historians debate the true characteristic of the mammy and the role of slaveholders:

none of them takes the female slave out of the kitchen, and her place in the kitchen is the key to understanding her place in White southern ideology, both male and female, antebellum and postbellum. Black women in the kitchen kept White women out of it, defining not only the proper place of Black women but of White women as well (Manring, 1998, 41).

While it was difficult for most Blacks to find work in the years following Emancipation, the task was particularly daunting for Black women, who were usually confined to household labor (Hunter, 1997). Although the jobs were similar, some roles had changed. For example, if their position was undesirable, Black women now had the choice to quit and find other work. “[They] decided to quit work over such grievances as low wages, long hours, ill treatment, and unpleasant tasks” (Hunter, 1997, 28). However, in several Southern regions, quitting work was eventually deemed as “idleness” and “vagrancy,” which were considered “prosecutable offenses (Hunter, 1997). These laws started in the late 1860s and early 1870s and were undoubtedly the foreshadowing of Jim Crow law. Another new aspect to Black female domestic work was that most workers no longer lived with their employers. This allowed a new sense of independence and increased socialization after work (Hunter, 1997). These factors, along with many others, also led to change for White employers. “From the 1890s on, the participation of White women in the workforce outside the home began its long rate of increase” (Manring, 1998, 81).

According to Manring (1998), “the ratio of servants to families steadily declined in America from the turn of the century through the World War and the Great Depression, decreasing a third by 1940” (84). The author credits this fact to two interlocking factors: (1) the “reluctance of an increasingly changing Black servant population to take and hold domestic positions,” and (2) “the rise and promotion of labor saving devices for the American household” (Manring, 1998, 84). Yet, the devices mostly saved labor time for men (i.e., ovens meant no more chopping wood) and caused confusion for women. The new household inventions created more work for women: “Homes had to be cleaner and had to be cleaned more often because they could be” (Manring, 1998, 85). Most men probably did not notice the added burden that new technology placed on women.

Because modern appliances offered the promise – if not the reality – of removing the need for female labor rather than transferring it from domestics to housewives, the search for perfection was not perceived as putting middle-class women to work” (Manring, 1998, 86).

### **The Return of Domesticity**

Suffragists fought domestic ideals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in their quest for women’s equality and the right to vote; but in post-World War II America, the ideals of domesticity became prominent expectations for women once again. During World War II, the image of Rosie the Riveter (“You Can Do It”) encouraged women to do their part to help the men overseas while still retaining femininity (beauty, fashion, etc.). Women traded in their aprons for jeans and headed to factories, filling the positions left open from drafted soldiers. However, female workers faced the ideology of gender roles even in factories. “At the

suggestion of the War Department, female training included frequent analogies to household work. [Women were told that] “any woman who could use a needle could handle a welding rod” (Kessler-Harris, 2003, 60). The “do-it-all female consumer was born during this decade” (Swenson, 2006) and new ideals about the female role were considered.

Combining notions of domesticity with newfound career opportunities was a different realm for many women. “To help fulfill expanded and more exacting notions of wife, patriot and mother, American women *were* offered more assistance in the kitchen – but not by their families. An increasing number of “experts” set standards and guidelines for everything from cake baking to child-rearing” (Swenson, 2006, 6).

Female workers struggled for equal pay since they proved capable of fulfilling men’s positions. However, most employers and politicians focused on sustaining *men’s* wages instead of addressing the more important issue: equal pay for men and women. Lawmakers attempted to make a ruling requiring equal pay, but it did not pass through Congress (Kessler-Harris, 2003). After the war, husbands, brothers, and sons returned to America expecting their jobs to be waiting. “A desperate wish for stability and safety, combined with the sudden return of the nation’s men, forced women to give up careers and return to the home. In this somnolent time, men and women acted blindly, without thinking about the consequences of their choices” (Horner, 2000, 335).

Rosie the Riveter checked out and Betty Crocker checked in. The daughter of Washburn Crosby Company of Minneapolis, Minnesota, Betty was invented in 1921 by Sam Gale, manager of the in-house advertising department. (Marks, 2005) Susan Marks, author of *Finding Betty Crocker: The Secret Life of America’s First Lady of Food*, has done thorough work about the

Betty Crocker campaign. In regards to Betty's creation she said: "The surname, 'Crocker,' was in honor of William G. Crocker, a recently retired and well-loved director of the Washburn Crosby Company. And "Betty" sounded cheery, wholesome and folksy" (10). Betty encouraged consumers to purchase Gold Medal Flour, a Washburn Crosby product. She was introduced through a promotional campaign that required fans to complete a puzzle and mail it in to receive a pin cushion (Marks, 2005). The incredible response led Washburn executives to believe Betty Crocker was bigger than they had imagined. Although she had been around since the 1920s, Betty Crocker's fame soared during WWII. During the war, she told women how to ration and do their part for the war effort (Marks, 2005). After the war, she taught them to be pious housewives again.

A patriotic obligation to work the factories and maintain the household changed: now, reintegrating soldiers into society *while* maintaining the home became the expected role for women. Literature presenting guidance for females to integrate soldiers back into society included "books, articles, novels, short stories and movies; found expression in various kinds of media – government pamphlets, newspapers, professional journals, popular magazines and women's magazines; and was produced by psychiatrists, military doctors, sociologists, fiction writers, and ex-servicemen themselves" (Hartmann, 1978).

Soldiers, having been overseas for months and for some, years, experienced tragedy on a regular basis during WWII. Integrating them back into society could prove difficult because of their militaristic frame of mind. It became the role of women to nurture their men back into normalcy. Hartmann (1978) said that the mass media tended to focus "on the responsibility of women to domesticate veterans by embracing womanly behavior"... A feat "best accomplished through childbearing and housekeeping." In the late 1940s, a "substantial body of literature

appeared which awakened readers to the social problems of demobilization, described the specific adjustments facing servicemen, and prescribed appropriate behavior and attitudes for civilians” (Hartmann, 1978).

Betty Crocker spoke to women through the pages of her cookbook and in magazine articles. However, her biggest influence came from radio. “The radio made Betty,” *Fortune* magazine declared in 1945. “It is fair to say that it did for her career in commerce what it did for Franklin D. Roosevelt’s in politics” (Marks, 2005).

By the early 1950s, General Mills surveys showed that 99 percent of American housewives were familiar with Betty Crocker’s name, more than two-thirds correctly identified her with General Mills and its products, and some 20 percent spontaneously said “Betty Crocker” when asked to name the home economist they found “most helpful” (Avakian, 2005, 33).

Several women person personified Betty Crocker. Marjorie Husted, a college graduate who came to Washburn Crosby in 1924, worked diligently at spreading the Betty Crocker name and organized cooking schools around the country (Marks, 2005). Thousands of women attended the cooking schools and learned to make cakes and pastries...with Gold Medal Flour of course.

Although Husted was married and said she enjoyed cooking for her husband, what she loved was her career (Shapiro, 2004). However, even though she established every piece of the Betty Crocker enterprise and although company executives told her she had done more for sales than any other single person, the company paid its star salesman four times what it paid Husted (Marks, 2005). At the same time she advocated equal pay, Husted also believed that what women in the home needed was respect and appreciation.

It was her goal to make Betty Crocker fulfill those needs (Marks, 2005). Husted was often mistaken for the “real” Betty Crocker and even traveled to Hollywood to represent the icon. According to Marks (2005), Husted, representing Betty Crocker, traveled to Hollywood “to visit with the stars...she enjoyed cocktail parties, sightseeing trips, luncheons, yachting excursions, and movie debuts” (73). While Husted provided a persona for the icon, Blanche Ingersoll provided the voice.

Betty Crocker made her greatest impact through radio (Marks, 2005). In 1924, the company purchased a troubled station and began to broadcast the “Betty Crocker Cooking School of the Air” (Marks, 2005). Not only did she provide recipes and cooking classes by mail, Betty Crocker also provided listeners with marital advice, games, quizzes, and celebrity interviews.

In 1950, Betty Crocker appeared on television and was played by Adelaide Hawley. Chosen because of her looks, Hawley was a divorced mother of one who hated to cook (Shapiro, 2004). It was the first time an actual person officially represented Betty Crocker. The television show was a flop and ended soon after it began. However, fans continued to listen to the radio show and bought Betty Crocker cookbooks in record numbers (Marks, 2005).

From 1936 to 1996 there were eight versions of Betty Crocker’s face. Her first portrait was painted in 1936 by Neysa McMein. Most of the portraits have similar characteristics: red jacket, white blouse, stiff nose, brown hair, blue eyes, and tight lips. In 1996, General Mills conducted the “Spirit of Betty Crocker essay contest” in which organizers called for seventy-five women – ages 18-118 and living in North America – to be the inspiration for the new Betty Crocker portrait (Marks, 2005). The nominee was

required to submit “a personal photograph, the name of a favorite Betty Crocker recipe or product, and an essay describing her Betty-like skills and qualities: cooking and baking, resourcefulness and creativity in everyday tasks, commitment to family and friends, and community involvement (Marks, 2005). In the final portrait, seventy-five winners were digitally blended, each with one percent representation. General Mills said the project was done “because there’s a little Betty in everyone” (Marks, 2005, 89).

Horner (2000) examined *Betty Crocker’s Picture Cookbook (1950)* to find out whether the “text reflects the cultural preoccupation with women’s roles after the end of World War II.” She found that the cookbook consistently used language that referenced wartime. For example, “Soldiers’ love of doughnuts from the Revolutionary War to WWI and WWII is mentioned and Civil War women’s provision of salted potatoes to prisoners (Horner, 2000, 339).” The cookbook also presents ethnic dishes and explanations. “In general, *Betty Crocker’s* historical notes trace the civilized process as it moves from primitive man through Europe and England to finally land in the Colonies. The book also includes mention of contributions to the American cuisine by immigrants” (Horner, 2000). However, one major ethnic group is missing from the picture cookbook: African Americans. Horner (2000) notes one exception: an “illustration of a stereotyped mammy baking biscuits supports the romanticized, “old South” feeling of the quick bread section.” The author concludes that “the absence of this group as current members of society reflects the one ugly fact of American colonial history that General Mills and the nation as a whole wanted to deny: slavery” (Horner, 2000).

On a similar note, Shapiro (2004) discussed Betty Crocker’s relationship to other live trademarks noting that on several occasions, certain icons would “work,” or appear together in

advertising promotions. However, “there was one whose name was never mentioned by the others; despite her fame and longevity...That was Aunt Jemima (Shapiro, 2004).

“In their ever-pleasant universe, none of the real or fictional home economists who visited cheerily back and forth acknowledged their Black colleague. They were proud to spend time with Chiquita Banana, but it seemed that as far as they were concerned, Aunt Jemima could eat in the kitchen” (Shapiro, 2004, 2).

## CHAPTER 3: TEXT OF INVESTIGATION

RQ<sub>1</sub>: Do the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns symbolize a trend of stereotypical images reinforced in American advertising over the past century that affect viewer perceptions?

- What are the major similarities and differences between the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns?
- Does history play a significant role in the development and evolution of Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker?

To assess whether support exists for the research question, a meta-analysis was conducted. Meta-analysis involves the examination of existing data from a different perspective. While meta-analysis is most often used to determine trends on a quantitative basis, it is also relevant for this study, which is qualitative and exploratory. It is particularly useful because it allowed the researcher to utilize several previously employed methods while attempting to interpret research.

Chapter two provides evidence that the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns do, indeed, perpetuate female stereotypes. Aunt Jemima exemplifies the mammy stereotype; one of the four most common portrayals of Black women according to Collins (1991). Betty Crocker exemplifies the do-it-all housewife; a role that White women are frequently portrayed in. While these stereotypes may be prevalent in media from multiple countries, for this study, American advertisements are the focus.

For the meta-analysis, ten studies were chosen based upon criteria related to the research question. Six studies are quantitative and four are qualitative; most rely on nominal and ordinal data. Studies were gathered through the use of online databases, particularly Ebscohost and J-

Stor, and were collected between August 2006 and February 2007. The researcher used multiple search terms to locate possible studies, and focused on scholarly journals. Keywords include Aunt Jemima, mammy, Betty Crocker, housewife, stereotypes, advertising, sexism, feminism, female portrayals, and gender stereotypes. The search engine allows the user to combine terms to find specific information. For example, Aunt Jemima *and* Betty Crocker was a search term that yielded no results. However, the combination of stereotypes *and* advertising resulted in hundreds of studies.

Several criteria helped determine acceptable studies. The criteria were developed from information in the literature review, and were also derived by breaking the research question down into four variables. Those variables are the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns, White and Black women, a trend of stereotypical images, and affects on viewer perception. The final criteria used for choosing acceptable studies for the meta-analysis are: 1) *the study directly addresses the Aunt Jemima or Betty Crocker campaigns and their affects*. Since the relation of the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns is an original aspect to this field of research, no studies directly addressed both icons together. However, Aunt Jemima is addressed independently in one study and Betty Crocker in two; 2) *the study addresses the stereotypical portrayal of women*. While all female stereotypes were considered acceptable study material, the mammy and housewife stereotypes were preferred because they embody the portrayal of the target icons (Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker); 3) *the study addresses female stereotypes in advertisements/visual media*. Clearly, Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker are stereotypical images, and these icons have the potential to affect the perceptions of Black women and of White women; 4) *the study addresses the mental/subconscious effects that viewing stereotypes in*

*advertisements may have on audience members.* This criterion is important because it could provide evidence that viewing stereotypes may affect perception of the stereotyped groups.

It is important to note that each study will not address all criteria. If a study related to at least one criterion, it was considered useful for the meta-analysis because of the contribution it could make to the overall picture. Several studies in the meta-analysis were conducted many years ago and were used to evidence the long-term existence of stereotypical female portrayals.

Several studies that addressed criteria-related topics were eliminated due to other factors. One was eliminated because male stereotypes (and female) were the focus of the study. Another was considered ineligible because while it addressed stereotypical images in magazine, it also discussed the article content, which is not relevant here. If a study dealt with stereotypes unrelated to the media or visual matter, it was also not chosen.

Study results were closely examined and the researcher decided which ones most closely matched the research question. While analyzing the studies, the researcher sought patterns, cues, and directions of thought not readily apparent in individual results or single studies. The same criteria that helped decide which studies to use were also useful in analyzing results: the most informative results will be presented in Chapter 4. Numerical data in table form were recreated by the researcher in a word processing program. However, some of the data were abbreviated, not altered, for ease of read, relevance, and argument. Readers interested in complete results and researcher analysis may refer to the bibliography section of this thesis.

## **Theory**

As all research inquiry should be grounded in theory, it is necessary to revisit and clarify the theories which form the basis of the current study. Critical theory provides the main perspective of this thesis. Critical theory, sometimes called emancipation theory, strives to

change prevailing social order. Influenced by Marxism, critical theory analyzes a present social situation and attempts to suggest alternative choices and perspectives. “Some critical theorists argue that the media in general sustain the status quo – even, perhaps especially, when that status quo is under stress or breaking down” (Baran & Davis, 2003, 225). Race and gender issues in America are definitely under stress and have been for some time. The purpose of this study is to critically observe these pressing social issues in an attempt to suggest constructive changes for American mass media. While critical theory provides a broad and overarching argument for this composition, several specific theories also allow a deeper understanding of the material.

Symbolic interaction refers to the meaning that people give to symbols and the belief that the meanings come to control those people. George Herbert Mead believed that social interaction provided an arena in which we all gauge our opinions and behaviors in comparison to one another. Symbols are significant because they allow messages and ideas to be relayed quickly. According to Mead, “the use of symbols transforms the socialization process – freeing it from the bonds of both space and time” (Baran & Davis, 2003, 240). In *Mind, Self and Society*, Mead “argues that we use symbols to create our experience of consciousness (Mind), our understanding of ourselves (Self), and our knowledge of the larger social order (Society)” (Baran & Davis, 2003, 240). Mead’s belief that interaction influences behavior and worldview relates to the beliefs of two other theorists: Goffman and Gerbner.

Erving Goffman (1979) suggested images in the media, particularly advertising, contain subtle messages, or cues, about the way we should act in certain situations. He believed that people behaved how they were *supposed* to, based on cues received through various rituals. Goffman (1979) thought that many people behave how others expect them to. He was especially interested in gender roles and their portrayal in advertising. Suggesting there is “no gender

identity,” Goffman (1979) said “what the human nature of males and females really consists of is a capacity to learn to provide and to read depictions of masculinity and femininity and a willingness to adhere to a schedule for presenting these pictures” (8). In other words, Goffman believed that gender is simply an accepted role we are all playing, and that the roles are implied through images such as those in advertisements.

Similarly, George Gerbner’s theory of cultivation addresses media effects on users. In contrast to Mead’s perspective of symbolic interaction, Gerbner’s cultivation theory is more macroscopic, meaning that he examined the long-term media effects on society and Mead focused more on the individual level. Gerbner theorized that “television ‘cultivates’ or creates a worldview that, although possibly inaccurate, becomes the reality because people believe it to be so” (Baran & Davis, 2003, 322). Instead of gender-role portrayal, Gerbner was concerned with violence in the media. He and his team created the “Violence Index” (Baran & Davis, 2003) which is an annual content analysis of a sample week of programming. They consistently found that the amount and type of violence portrayed in the media was exaggerated compared to real life. Gerbner theorized a “mean world syndrome” (Baran & Davis, 2003) in which people who watched more television misjudged their potential to be the victim of violent crime, which in reality was rather low.

Mead focused on symbolic interaction through both verbal and nonverbal communication, Goffman studied subtle cues in images that relay behavioral expectations, and Gerbner examined television’s potential to cultivate false worldviews. While each theorist focused on different aspects of media effects, all had one thought in common: some media may influence viewer perceptions. While they may not be blamed as the sole cause for a number of influences, media play an integral role in the development of ideas and assumed roles. In fact,

according to Mead, Goffman and Gerbner, much of the influence may be subconscious, long-term, and difficult to change.

A major part of this study consists of a comparison of the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns. These two icons are both symbols and stereotypes. There is strong evidence that stereotypes are sometimes manifestations of both conscious and subconscious emotions that are difficult to articulate. Consequently, a wide range of information is oversimplified and prejudiced. Symbols quickly provide information that can be understood by most members of a culture. In examining the campaigns of Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker, several aspects were addressed. First, an in-depth examination of their histories, who created them, how and why? Next, it was necessary to find information about the people they represented: White and Black women. It was also imperative to compare them graphically because both icons reached consumers through visual media.

An examination of these two icons allowed the researcher to combine the broader issue of influential stereotypes in advertising with the specific examples, Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker. These specific and well-known icons allow a more personal view of the potential that a seemingly simple logo may have on both the individual and society. From a critical theory standpoint, understanding the potential effects of stereotypes in advertising will allow scholars, scientists and researchers to develop new ideas to eliminate possibly harmful portrayals in the future.

## CHAPTER 4: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Meta-analysis allows researchers to analyze multiple studies and methods with the goal of observing new trends and patterns. This meta-analysis addresses the research questions and provides crucial support for the thesis thus far. The most significant numerical data has been re-tabled.

### **Qualitative Studies**

Fuller (2001) measured the existence of Black female stereotypes in modern advertising, particularly the mammy character. She examined the spokeswoman associated with Pinesol, a cleaning product, and compared her to Aunt Jemima to assess whether the “ole mammy” symbol was gone (Fuller, 2001, 123). She also wanted to know what “African Americans see when they view the Pinesol commercial” (Fuller, 2001, 124).

The first part of the evaluation involved “a comparison of the text of the commercial and the text of an actual advertisement for Aunt Jemima pancakes, and a comparison of “the features of the Pinesol model with the descriptives of Aunt Jemima and mammy” (Fuller, 2001, 124). The second part utilized triangulation through in-depth interviews and open-ended surveys. The sample consisted of 34 “male and female African American college students (19 females, 14 males) who were members of an Introduction to Mass Media class” (Fuller, 2001, 125).

Fuller (2001) found:

(1) Participants stated that the model in the commercial [Pinesol] reminded them of someone in a position of serving others. The descriptives were Aunt Jemima, a nanny, a maid and a mammy; (2) Participants found it negative or stereotypical that Black women were presented as wanting to clean and that Black women and cleaning were synonymous; (3) Participants thought the model’s appearance sent

a message that Black women of size basically do not care what they look like because they are only good for cleaning; and (4) Participant's believed the model's size contributed to the stereotypical image, and that a thinner woman would project a different message, even if she were Black" (127-128).

The researcher said that while there is an obvious increase in the amount of Blacks pictured in advertisements, it is more a matter of how they are portrayed. "These portrayals are of concern because they can have an impact on others' social construction of reality about Blacks and they can affect Black Americans' self concept" (Fuller, 2001, 121). Fuller (2001) concluded that the Pinesol commercial is an attempt to resurrect the Aunt Jemima/mammy image.

Applying Goffman's theory of frame analysis, Swenson (2006) studied Betty Crocker radio scripts and fan letters (received from General Mills employees) to see "how advertisers like General Mills construct the role of brand icons in mediating self-identities, and, in turn, how consumers construct notions of self identity in relation to a product brand" (Swenson, 2006, 6). The researcher chose 16 out of 30 radio scripts to "reflect a diverse mix of seasons and type of program from the 1940-1945 period," and 30 letters (Swenson, 2006, 6). Swenson (2006) examined the radio scripts to see "how General Mills framed American homemakers and Betty Crocker in commercial messages" and the fan letters were studied to see "how 1940s homemakers positioned themselves in relation to a product brand" (Swenson, 2006, 6). Using Goffman's frame analysis, the researcher examined the "characteristics, emotions, and benefits" associated with a product that "structure the consumption experience and allow the brand to hold a distinct and valued place in a consumer's mind" (Swenson, 2006, 7).

Swenson (2006) discovered two dominant frames in the radio scripts: The consumer as altruistic and the consumer as courageous. She also discovered two dominant frames in

consumer letters: The consumer as devoted and the consumer as proud and patriotic (Swenson, 2006). In addition, two dominant frames emerged during Swenson's (2006) examination of the product, Gold Medal Flour: The product as producing pride and the product as assuring peace or patriotic fulfillment. In radio scripts, Betty Crocker was framed: As a counselor and as a champion for homemakers (Swenson, 2006). In the letters, Betty Crocker was framed as: A friend and hero of American homemakers.

Swenson (2006) concluded the research "supports the argument that advertising draws upon popular attitudes and values to construct reality, and thus, also influences meaning in peoples lives" (11). "Ultimately, frames of community and identity in advertisers' and consumers' messages showed that American homemakers and Betty Crocker constructed an imagined space in which Gold Medal Flour meant fellowship, personal value, and affirmation" (Swenson, 2006, 11).

Pingree, Hawkins, Butler, and Paisley (1976) performed a content analysis of female portrayals in advertisements in *Ms.*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Playboy* magazines. They used an ordinal level of measurement instead of the traditional nominal level on the basis that knowing, how *much* sexism is in any given presentation would permit more meaningful, refined research in the future...Increasing the representation of women in the media (a quantitative approach) will probably not reduce media sexism unless the manner in which women are presented also changes (a qualitative approach)" (Pingree, et al., 1976, 1).

Coders applied the Consciousness Scale, developed by two of the researchers, Pingree and Butler, to 447 randomly selected advertisements:

- Level I: the woman is so limited and/or incompetent that she is not a complete person,

- Level II: the woman is competent, but only within a circumscribed sphere of activity,
- Level III: the woman is allowed a broader sphere, but only if traditional activities remain primary,
- Level IV: allows still more freedom by saying that woman is and must be equal to a man,
- Level V: asserts that each individual should be treated non-stereotypically and that women and men can and sometimes do excel each other. Level V is mentioned because the scale logically requires it, not because Level V images can be found easily in the media (Pingree, et al., 195).

Results showed: “(1) *Playboy* had significantly more Level I ads than any other magazine; (2) *Ms.* had more Level IV and V ads; (3) *Time* and *Newsweek* were similar to each other and had more Level II ads than *Ms.* and *Playboy*; and (4) the most frequent kind of ad was a Level II status quo ad, comprising 48 percent of all ads, with Level I ads pulling in second place with 27 percent” (Pingree et.al, 1976) (See table 4.1). Researchers concluded, “Certainly it is not sexist to show a woman as a competent housewife and mother. It is sexist to always show women this way” (Pingree, et al., 1976, 197).

Level of consciousness	Playboy %	Time %	Newsweek %	Ms. %	% of total
I	54	18	18	16	27
II	34	55	60	40	48
III	1	7	5	3	4
IV	10	20	16	37	19
V	1	1	2	3	2
(N)	(120)	(120)	(120)	(87)	(447)

(Table 4.1)

Poran (2006) conducted a focus group with 15 Black female college students to discuss their impressions of body image. The researcher sought to challenge the common belief that “Black women are protected by a ‘Black Culture’ that buffers them from negative effects of body representations thereby leaving them with higher body esteem” (Poran, 2006, 739). Poran

(2006) noted several themes that emerged from the focus group which contradict this belief and said “Black women are indeed feeling (1) pressures to be thin, (2) pressures from the preferences of men of diverse ethnicities, (3) competition with other Black women in the realms of beauty, and (4) a strong sense of being misrepresented by media images of thin Black women” (739). Three focus groups were convened (each with three to eight participants) and lasted approximately 60-90 min. (Poran, 2006).

For the purpose of this discussion, it is most relevant to examine the participants’ feelings regarding the representation of Black women in media images. One focus group discussed the “perception of Black women in regards to standards of media beauty” (Poran, 2006, 748). One participant said, “...images are supposed to be put out so we can identify with it so we could buy the product, but it’s not really, you know, that’s not what’s happening...it’s still stereotypical to a certain point...” (Poran, 2006, 748). Participants also discussed the segmentation of consumers: “...that’s still not a good thing...it[‘s] still putting people in categories, it’s still stereotyping people” (Poran, 2006, 748). Another subject said: “It’s funny because they are giving us these pictures for us to identify with and buy the product but really it’s that’s not really happening we’re trying to live up to what they put out there (“yeahs” from the rest of the group) you know, so it’s kinda like you’re being tricked” (Poran, 2006, 748).

According to Poran (2006), “all three groups discussed the inclusion of Women of Color in advertising...sexism, stereotyping, and essentialism are key themes that emerged in the discussions, and participants expressed concern that inclusion often meant being portrayed in a too-specific way” (749). The researcher also said some participants felt they were being “sold” through advertising images. Poran (2006), concluded that “Not only is there no evidence of a buffer to protect Black women from negative experiences of the body, but there is instead

evidence that young Black women feel rather targeted by media standards, men's preferences, and comparisons with other women" (752).

**Quantitative studies:**

Lafky, Duffy, Steinmaus, and Berkowitz (1996) explored the mental affects of stereotypes in advertisements. One hundred twenty five Midwestern high school students participated in the study and were divided into five classes. Each class viewed ten slides of magazine advertisements: "Three classes saw advertisements featuring women in stereotypical roles and the other two classes were exposed to advertisements featuring women in nonstereotypical roles" (Lafky, et al., 1996, 382). Researchers based images on the Pingree-Hawkins Consciousness Scale. All stereotypical images were Level II (the woman is competent, but only within a circumscribed sphere of activity) and all nonstereotypical images were Level IV (woman is and must be equal to man).

After viewing the images, participants were asked to respond to a neutral image of a woman. While viewing the neutral photograph, participants responded to statements in a questionnaire designed to "elicit responses about the qualities of the woman in the photograph" (Lafky et al, 1996, 383). Six statements regarded women in stereotypical roles and six regarded women in nonstereotypical roles. Respondents used a five-point scale (5; strongly disagree, 1; strongly agree).

Using a 2x2 ANOVA model, researchers found that "analysis of the six stereotypical statements about the woman in the neutral photograph found five statistically significant differences" (Lafky et al, 1996, 383) (See table 4.2). For items 1,2, and 4, students shown the stereotypical images "tended to agree somewhat more with the stereotypical statements in reference to the woman in the 'neutral' photograph" (Lafky et al, 1996, 383). For item 10,

“males shown stereotypical images agreed somewhat with this statement, while males shown nonstereotypical images disagreed somewhat” (Lafky et al, 1996, 384). For Item 11, “females tended to agree that the woman was a regular soap opera viewer, while the males tended to disagree” (Lafky et al, 1996, 384). Researchers concluded that “two of the statistically significant findings were based on treatment group, three were based on gender alone, and one was based on an interaction effect between gender and treatment” (Lafky et al, 1996, 385).

While the effects documented in this experiment were not dramatic, the results offered further evidence that:

- (1) Even brief exposure to an image affects audience perceptions of social reality immediately after exposure,
- (2) brief exposure to advertisements that rely upon gender stereotypes reinforces stereotypes about gender roles, and
- (3) there are differences in the ways males and females cognitively process visual images (Lafky, et al, 1996, 385).

	Stereotypical Slides	Nonstereotypical Slides	<i>p</i> -level
1. Always getting permission from her husband before getting involved in volunteer work.	2.47	2.92	.02 <sup>a</sup>
2. Prefers to let someone else volunteer to be the chairperson of a committee.	2.52	2.94	.03 <sup>a</sup>
4. Has two children and is a housewife	2.52	3.22	.001 <sup>a</sup>
5. Likes to read romance novels	--	--	n.s.
10. Performs most of the household chores such as cooking all the meals and cleaning for her family.	Boys 2.68 Girls 3.70	3.75 3.77	.01 <sup>b</sup>
11. Spends a part of every afternoon watching soap operas on television.	Boys 3.20	Girls 2.71	.03 <sup>c</sup>

**(Table 4.2)**

<sup>a</sup> Statistically significant for treatment groups but not gender.

<sup>b</sup> Statistically significant interaction effect.

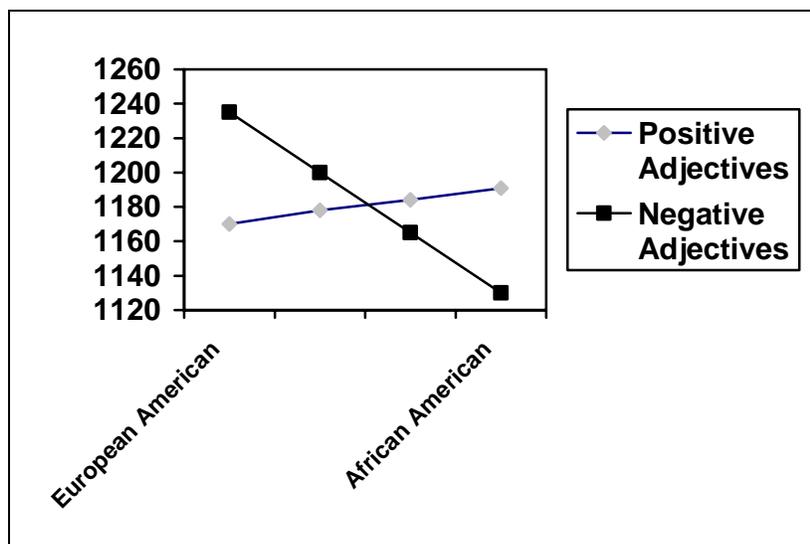
<sup>c</sup> Statistically significant for gender but not treatment groups.

Givens and Monahan (2005) studied the affects of stereotypical Black female images on African American women in social situations. Seventy percent of one hundred eighty two participants used in the 3x2 experiment were undergraduate students aged 18 to 21. Participants were divided into three groups and viewed videos of a mammy, jezebel, or nonstereotypical character. Then, they viewed a staged job interview involving a male interviewer and Black or White female interviewee. In both videos, the interviewer asked the same questions, and the women provided the same answers. Next, participants were asked to choose adjectives (a list was provided by researchers) that described their perception of the interviewees. “Forty adjectives were used (see Table 4.3): 8 were stereotypically positive, 9 were stereotypically negative, 8 related to the mammy stereotype, and 9 related to the jezebel stereotype” (Givens & Monahan, 2005, 93). Other adjectives were fillers and were not considered in the final analysis. Participants were asked to decide whether the “character traits ‘fit’ the person they observed on the video tape or not” (Givens & Monahan, 2005, 93). Researchers recorded the speed (in milliseconds) at which participants associated the adjectives to the female interviewees.

Using an ANOVA test, researchers found (see Table 4.4) that “the mean response times between those who saw the African American interviewee and those who saw the White interviewee were significantly different for the negative terms, but not for the positive” (Givens & Monahan, 2005, 98). In addition (see Table 4.5), “participants who viewed the jezebel prime responded significantly faster to jezebel-related terms than to mammy terms”, and “participants who viewed the mammy prime responded significantly faster to mammy-related adjectives than did those who viewed the jezebel prime” (Givens & Monahan, 2005, 99-100).

<b>Mammy</b>	<b>Jezebel</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Filler</b>
Maternal	Sexual	Sincere	Aggressive	Shy
Loyal	Alluring	Friendly	Hostile	Fun
Devoted	Erotic	Intelligent	Lazy	Organized
Nurturing	Calculating	Honest	Passive	Hyper
Tender	Exotic	Gentle	Pushy	Boring
Protective	Vain	Kind	Mean	Independent
Patient	Seductive	Trustworthy	Dim-witted	Interesting
Caring	Forward	Energetic	Rude	Stable
--	Sensual	Dangerous	Flexible	--

(Table 4.3)



(Table 4.4) Higher numbers indicate slower response times.

	<i>Adjectives</i>					
	<i>Control</i>		<i>Mammy</i>		<i>Jezebel</i>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
African American Interviewee						
Control Prime	1,254.85	233.96	1,303.67	290.25	1,170.99	251.25
Mammy Prime	1,235.97	337.23	1,185.39 <sup>a</sup>	310.84	1,294.36	248.02
Jezebel Prime	1,296.41	274.07	1,460.13 <sup>a,b</sup>	377.42	1,136.34 <sup>a</sup>	256.26
European American Interviewee						
Control Prime	1,369.57	552.80	1,333.02	438.38	1,249.71	405.99
Mammy Prime	1,366.67	412.96	1,398.03	477.18	1,304.97	413.02
Jezebel Prime	1,317.05	470.50	1,323.04	341.66	1,258.22	308.11

(Table 4.5)

<sup>a</sup> Denote significant difference in the rows of data using paired samples *t* tests. <sup>b</sup> Denote significant difference in columns of data using between-subjects *t* tests.

Lindner (2004) performed a longitudinal content analysis to examine the portrayal of women in advertisements “in a general interest magazine (i.e., *Time*) and a women’s fashion magazine (i.e., *Vogue*)” (409) over 50 years (1955-2002). The researcher used Goffman’s subtle cues coding scheme to analyze 1,374 advertisements. “Only advertisements that showed one or more women, either in the presence or absence of one or more men, were coded in the study” (Lindner, 2004, 413).

Coding categories, based on Goffman’s subtle cues theory, included: (1) relative size, (2) function ranking, (3) feminine touch, (4) ritualization of subordination, (5) licensed withdrawal, (6) body display, (7) movement, (8) location, (9) objectification (see detailed description in Table 4.6) (Lindner, 2004, 414). Table 4.7 displays the number of advertisements that met the criteria of the coding categories. “Overall, 78% of all advertisements contained stereotypical images of women in at least one of the categories” (Lindner, 2004, 415).

The researcher conducted a two-way ANOVA “to test for main effects of the two independent variables (*Vogue* v. *Time*, and publication year), and for interaction between the two for the different coding categories” (Lindner, 2004, 416) (See Table 4.8). This test resulted in main effects for magazine type: “advertisements in *Time* were more stereotypical than in *Vogue* for ‘relative size’ and ‘function ranking.’ In all other categories (except “movement”) advertisements in *Vogue* portrayed women more stereotypically than did those in *Time*” (Lindner, 2004, 418). The categories, “Feminine touch,” “ritualization of subordination,” and “movement” showed main effects for publication year as “stereotyping occurred more frequently in earlier years than in later years for all three categories” (Lindner, 2004, 418).

Relative Size	When both men and women are present, the man is taller and/or bigger than the woman and takes up more space in the picture.
Function Ranking	When both men and women are present, the man serves as the instructor or performs an executive role.
Feminine Touch	The woman touches herself (hair, face, lips, etc.) or her clothes in an unnatural way or uses her fingers and hands to trace and outline of an object, cradle it, or caress its surface. This type of touching is to be distinguished from the utilitarian kind, which involves grasping, manipulating or holding objects.
Ritualization or subordination	The woman lowers herself physically in some form or other of prostration; canting postures are associated with acceptance of subordination. This includes lying or sitting on the ground, bed or sofa – whether in the presence of another person or not, canting of the head or entire body. Also included in this category is a woman being embraced by a man, who inhibits her movement, or a woman leaning against a man’s shoulder or holding on to his arm for support, dependent on, and subordinate to the man present.
Licensed Withdrawal	The woman removes herself psychologically from the situation at large or is shown mentally drifting from the physical scene, leaving her disoriented and dependent on the protectiveness of others. This is indicated by an expansive smile or laughter, covering the face or mouth, or withdrawing her gaze from the scene at large. Being involved in a phone conversation also falls into this category.
Body Display	The woman is shown wearing revealing, hardly any, or no clothes at all, which is often associated with sexualized images of women.
Movement	The woman is inhibited in her movement, by being wrapped in a blanket for example, which limits the amount of control she can exert on the environment.
Location	The woman is shown in a domestic environment, such as the kitchen, bedroom, or bathroom. This also includes depicting the woman in a decontextualized, that is, unidentifiable, environment that does not allow for any purposeful activities.
Objectification	The woman is portrayed in such a way as to suggest that being looked at is her major purpose or function in the advertisement.

(Table 4.6)

	% of advertisements falling into the category
Relative Size	11.1
Function Ranking	7.3
Feminine Touch	21.1
Ritualization of Subordination	33.0
Licensed withdrawal	31.9
Body display	11.0
Movement	2.5
Location	24.2
Objectification	40.0

(Table 4.7)

	Magazine type			Publication year		
	<i>Vogue</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>F</i> (1, 20)	1955-75	1985-2002	<i>F</i> (1, 20)
Relative Size	3.5	22.8	41.8***	14.5	11.8	0.79
Function Ranking	2.7	22.6	12.18**	10.8	14.5	0.42
Feminine Touch	29.9	7.5	76.96***	22.7	14.7	9.87
Subordination	38.2	25.0	19.33***	35.1	28.1	5.30*
Withdrawal	41.48	16.66	26.90***	29.8	28.4	0.09
Body Display	14.4	6.8	10.29**	11.5	9.7	0.60
Movement	1.7	2.2	0.20	3.8	0.2	9.93**
Location	30.0	14.5	9.06**	24.5	20.0	0.76
Objectification	59.2	8.2	248.72**	32.5	34.9	0.59

**(Table 4.8)**

(Publication years were combined into two groups to increase the number of data points in each group.)

Lindner (2004) concluded that: (1) “the lack of an interaction between publication year and magazine type suggests that, between 1955 and 2002, the images of women in *Vogue* were consistently more stereotypical than those in *Time*,” (2) exposure to gender stereotypes in advertisements effects the way women are viewed by society and by themselves, and (3) “few significant changes over time were found in the images of women in magazine advertisements...which is rather surprising considering the changes in the actual roles women occupy in real life that have occurred since the Women’s Movement,” and (4) advertisements in *Time* reinforce stereotypical gender roles that showed women as smaller, weaker, inferior, or as dependent on a man (Lindner, 2007, 417-419).

Culley and Bennet (1976) replicated three earlier studies to examine the way women and Blacks are portrayed in the media. In the first study (a replication of Dominick and Rauch, 1972) coders analyzed 359 prime-time television commercials chosen for containing one of the following units of analysis: a male and female character who (a) appeared on screen for at least three seconds, or (b) had at least one line of dialogue (Culley & Bennet, 1976, 2). From those commercials the following variables were noted:

- (a) product advertised, (b) male or female voice-over, (c) whether the prime purchaser of the product was male, female, or purchased equally by both, (d) sex

of characters, (e) the setting in which the character appeared; (f) the apparent occupation of the characters, and (g) the primary role of the character (Culley & Bennet, 1976, 2).

Researchers found that “in 1971, women were over-represented in commercials for female cosmetics and personal hygiene products (deodorant, toothpaste, soap, etc.) and underrepresented in commercials for male cosmetics and cars and car-related products” (Culley & Bennet, 1976, 161) (See Table 4.9). Researchers also examined occupations portrayed by women (See Table 4.10). They found that in both 1971 and 1974 “the largest single occupation portrayed for women was that of housewife/mother” (Culley & Bennet, 1976, 163).

The second study replicated a “1970 Courtney and Lockeretz examination of female stereotypes in magazine advertisements” (Culley & Bennet, 1976, 167). Researchers focused on the occupational roles of adults in the ads. They found (See Table 4.11) significant differences “between the occupations of male and female characters” (Culley & Bennet, 1976, 168). Results showed that: (1) “in both 1970 and 1974 magazine advertisers were more likely to portray women in roles such as that of a housewife or mother than as a person employed outside the home, (2) most female characters shown employed outside the home in 1970 were entertainers or professional athletes, and (3) female characters seem to be predominately used for personal products or products related to the home” (Culley & Bennet, 1976, 169).

The third and final study replicated Shuey, King, and Griffith’s 1953 work which “analyzed the occupational status of Blacks in ads from 292 issues of *Life*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Time*, *New Yorker*, *Ladies’ Home Journal* and *Collier’s* from the 1949-1950 period” (Culley & Bennet, 1976, 171). Shuey, King and Griffith (1953) found that Blacks were severely underrepresented in ads and that when they were shown, they were serving Whites.

	1971		1974	
	Commercials with females (N=381)	Commercials without females (N=605)	Commercials with females (N=186)	Commercials without females (N=173)
<b>Product Category</b>	%	%	%	%
Male cosmetics	1	7**	0	1
Female cosmetics	11	1**	8	0**
Cars and related products	6	21**	7	15*
Personal hygiene products	15	2**	11	6
Health products			15	18
Food and restaurants	67	69	23	29
Household products	These items were not tabulated separately in the 1971 study. Dominick and Rauch reported no significant differences in these categories.		18	3**
Clothing			4	1
Pet foods			3	9*
Home appliances			0	3*
Insurance & Banks			1	5*
Other			10	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	100	100	100	100

(Table 4.9)

	1971		1974	
	Females (N=230)	Males (N=155)	Females (N=242)	Males (N=236)
<b>Occupation</b>	%	%	%	%
Homemaker/parent	56	14**	45	15**
Celebrity	5	8	5	9
White Collar businessperson	2	12**	5	9
<b>Female Occupations:</b>	23		6 2 1 1 0	10
Model 7				
Stewardess 8				
Secretary, Clerical 3				
Teacher 2				
Cook, maid, servant 3				
<b>Male Occupations:</b>		39		1 2 1 2 0 0 0
Athlete 12				
Mechanic 3				
Radio-TV interviewer 3				
Construction worker 7				
Criminal 5				
Pilot 6				
Lawyer 3				
Other	14	27	35	61
<b>TOTAL</b>	100	100	100	100

(Table 4.10)

\* the difference within that category for that year is significant at the .05 level using a two-tail test of significance.  
 \*\* the difference within that category for that year is significant at the .01 level using a two-tail test of significance.

	1971		1974	
	% of females	% of males	% of females	% of males
<b>Proportion shown as workers</b>	24 (N=35)	48** (N=119)	33 (N=36)	54** (N=87)
<b>Occupational categories (as a % of workers)</b>				
High-level business	0	13*	8	30*
Professional, professional entertainer, professional athlete	61	26**	42	16**
Mid-level business, semi-professional	11	13	8	10
Other White collar	11	8	28	3**
Blue collar	17	31	14	25
Soldiers, police	0	9*	0	16*
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

(Table 4.11)

\* indicates a difference within that category for that year, significant at the .05 level using a two-tail test of significance.

\*\* indicates a difference within that category for that year, significant at the .01 level using a two-tail test of significance.

	<i>Esquire</i> (October 1974 issue)		
	Ads without people	Ads with people	
		Without Blacks	With Blacks
3 or more pages			
2 pages	5	11	2
1 page	41	61	3
2/3 page	2	9	
1/3 page	15	6	
	63 (41%)	87 (56%)	5 (3%)
	<i>Playboy</i> (October 1974 issue)		
3 or more pages	1		
2 pages		4	
1 page	31	24	
2/3 page	3	2	
1/3 page	10	15	
	45 (50%)	45 (50%)	0 (0%)
	<i>Reader's Digest</i> (October 1974 issue)		
3 or more pages	1	3	
2 pages	5	11	1
1 page	40	30	2
1/2 page	6	4	
	52 (50%)	48 (47%)	3 (3%)

(Table 4.12)

Culley & Bennet (1976) found that “few, if any significant changes have taken place in the past few years in the roles portrayed by Blacks in consumer magazine advertising” (172). They analyzed 1536 advertisements for two specific factors: (1) the frequency of appearance in Blacks in magazines and (2) the roles portrayed by Blacks in magazines (Culley & Bennet, 1976) (See Table 4.12). They concluded with two significant points. First, “Blacks appear in relatively few mass circulation ads,” and second, “when Blacks did appear it was usually in a crowd scene or an institutional ad” (Culley & Bennet, 1976, 174).

Mastin, Coe, Hamilton, and Tarr (2004) scrutinized advertising images in *Essence* and *Ladies Home Journal*. “The goal was to determine if the magazines’ readers are being exposed to images that send a message that specific product purchase decision making behavior is gender based” (Mastin, et al., 2004, 229). A total of 14,316 advertisements were analyzed and coded with fifteen product categories based on frequent appearance and previous studies. The categories were: (1) beauty, (2) children-related, (3) cleaning, (4) fashion/accessories, (5) financial services, (6) food/drink, non-alcoholic, (7) healthcare, (8) leisure, (9) major home appliances and furniture, (10) pet-related, (11) PSAs government/education/memberships, (12) retail stores, (13) technology, (14) tobacco/alcohol, and (15) transportation (Mastin, et al., 2004, 235). Results are displayed in Table 4.13.

Researchers found that fashion/accessories were most often advertised in *Essence*, and *Ladies Home Journal* advertised beauty products most frequently (Mastin, et al., 2004, 235). They also compared male and female representation (see Tables 4.14 and 4.15) Mastin et al. (2004) concluded that the advertisements examined in the study “directed toward both Black and White female audiences, presented images that suggest women are primarily solely responsible

for product purchase decisions for low-cost items that pertain to the appearance of themselves, their children, and their homes” (239).

<i>Category</i>	No. of <i>Essence</i> Ads (%)	No. of <i>Ladies' Home Journal</i> (%)
Beauty	1,664 (21.1)	1,581 (24.7)
Children-related	134 (1.7)	161 (2.5)
Cleaning	96 (1.2)	289 (4.5)
Fashion accessories	2,249 (28.5)	889 (13.9)
<i>Financial services</i>	<i>119 (1.5)</i>	<i>33 (0.5)</i>
Food/drink, non-alcoholic	500 (6.3)	860 (13.4)
Healthcare	275 (3.5)	866 (13.5)
Leisure	811 (10.3)	691 (10.8)
<i>Major home appliances &amp; furniture</i>	<i>23 (0.3)</i>	<i>274 (4.3)</i>
Pet-related	5 (0.1)	74 (1.2)
PSAs govt/edu/memberships	296 (3.7)	109 (1.7)
Retail stores	618 (7.8)	175 (2.7)
<i>Technology</i>	<i>94 (1.2)</i>	<i>21 (0.3)</i>
Tobacco/alcohol	485 (6.1)	277 (4.3)
<i>Transportation</i>	<i>535 (6.8)</i>	<i>112 (1.7)</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,904 (100.0)</b>	<b>6,412 (100.0)</b>

(Table 4.13)

Italicized categories are those for which product purchase decisions are traditionally believed to be made by men.

#### ***Essence* Product Categories as a Function of Gender**

<i>Category</i>	Female model(s)	Male model(s)	Male and female models	N
Beauty products	1,381 (83.0)	58 (3.5)	225 (13.5)	1,664 (21.1)
Children-related	70 (52.2)	20 (14.9)	44 (32.8)	134 (1.7)
Cleaning products (home/clothing)	58 (60.4)	8 (8.3)	30 (31.3)	96 (1.2)
Fashion accessories	1,872 (83.2)	50 (2.2)	327 (14.5)	2,249 (28.5)
<i>Financial services</i>	<i>47 (39.5)</i>	<i>24 (20.2)</i>	<i>48 (40.3)</i>	<i>119 (1.5)</i>
Food/drink, non-alcoholic	178 (35.6)	139 (27.8)	183 (36.6)	500 (6.3)
Healthcare	227 (82.5)	10 (3.6)	38 (13.8)	275 (3.5)
Leisure	211 (26.0)	149 (18.4)	451 (55.6)	811 (10.3)
<i>Major home appliances &amp; furniture</i>	<i>17 (73.9)</i>	<i>2 (8.7)</i>	<i>4 (17.4)</i>	<i>23 (0.3)</i>
Pet-related	1 (20.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (80.0)	5 (0.1)
PSAs govt/edu/memberships	143 (48.3)	55 (18.6)	98 (33.1)	296 (3.7)
Retail stores	366 (59.2)	34 (5.5)	218 (35.3)	618 (7.8)
<i>Technology</i>	<i>32 (34.0)</i>	<i>33 (35.1)</i>	<i>29 (30.9)</i>	<i>94 (1.2)</i>
Tobacco/alcohol	234 (48.2)	38 (7.8)	213 (43.9)	485 (6.1)
<i>Transportation</i>	<i>156 (29.2)</i>	<i>131 (24.5)</i>	<i>248 (46.4)</i>	<i>535 (6.8)</i>
<b>Gender Totals</b>	<b>4,993 (63.2)</b>	<b>751 (9.5)</b>	<b>2,160 (27.3)</b>	<b>7,904 (100.0)</b>

(Table 4.14)

**Ladies' Home Journal Product Categories as a Function of Gender**

<i>Category</i>	Female model(s)	Male model(s)	Male and female models	N
Beauty products	1411 (89.2)	30 (1.9)	140 (8.9)	1581 (24.7)
Children-related	77 (47.8)	37 (23.0)	47 (29.2)	161 (2.5)
Cleaning products (home/clothing)	192 (66.4)	62 (21.5)	35 (12.1)	289 (4.5)
Fashion accessories	769 (86.5)	30 (3.4)	90 (10.1)	889 (13.9)
<i>Financial services</i>	11 (33.3)	9 (27.3)	13 (39.4)	33 (0.5)
Food/drink, non-alcoholic	372 (43.3)	265 (30.8)	223 (25.9)	860 (13.4)
Healthcare	531 (61.3)	122 (14.1)	213 (24.6)	866 (13.5)
Leisure	349 (50.5)	88 (12.7)	254 (36.8)	691 (10.8)
<i>Major home appliances &amp; furniture</i>	121 (44.2)	43 (15.7)	110 (40.1)	274 (4.3)
Pet-related	46 (62.2)	6 (8.1)	22 (29.7)	74 (12)
PSAs govt/edu/memberships	50 (45.9)	18 (16.5)	41 (37.6)	109 (1.7)
Retail stores	129 (73.7)	13 (7.4)	33 (18.9)	175 (2.7)
<i>Technology</i>	13 (61.9)	5 (23.8)	3 (14.3)	21 (0.3)
Tobacco/alcohol	203 (73.3)	23 (8.3)	51 (18.4)	277 (4.3)
<i>Transportation</i>	36 (32.1)	24 (21.4)	52 (46.4)	112 (1.7)
<b>Gender Totals</b>	4,310 (67.2)	775 (12.1)	1,327 (20.7)	6,412 (100.0)

**(Table 4.15)**

Devine (1989) conducted three studies in her examination of the automatic and controlled components of stereotypes. Study 1 tested the assumption that “high- and low-prejudice subjects are equally knowledgeable of the cultural stereotype of Blacks” (Devine, 1989, 7). Forty White students participated in the study and were required to respond to a questionnaire which “provided several blank lines on which to list the components of the stereotype” (Devine, 1989, 7). Then, they completed the Modern Racism Scale (Table 4.16) which is “designed to measure subjects’ anti-Black attitudes in a nonreactive fashion” (Devine, 1989, 7). While the results were not statistically significant, Devine (1989) noted two important points. First, “the most striking aspect of [the] data is that the most common theme in subjects’ protocols was that Blacks are aggressive, hostile, or criminal-like” (Devine, 1989, 8). Second, “there appeared to be few differences in the content reported by high- and low-prejudiced subjects” (Devine, 1989, 8).

Devine (1989) concluded that “high- and low-prejudice persons are indeed equally knowledgeable of the cultural stereotype” (8).

Category	High Prejudice	Low Prejudice
Poor	.80	.75
Aggressive/tough	.60	.60
Criminal	.65	.80
Low intelligence	.50	.65
Uneducated	.50	.50
Lazy	.55	.75
Sexually perverse	.50	.70
Athletic	.75	.50
Rhythmic	.50	.40
Ostentatious	.50	.40
Inferior	.20	.30
Food preferences	.25	.35
Family characteristic	.25	.30
Dirty/Smelly	.20	.30
Descriptive terms	.55	.50

**(Table 4.16)**

None of these differences are statistically significant.

Study 2 examined automatic stereotype priming effects for both high- and low-prejudice subjects. Devine (1989) focused particularly on the evaluation of hostile behaviors because the “assumption that Blacks are hostile is part of the racial stereotype” (9). The researcher, once again, utilized the Modern Racism Scale to determine whether participants were high- or low-prejudice. A total of 129 subjects participated in the final phase of the study. The 129 subjects had agreed to participate and had good vision. Using a tachistoscope, they responded to stimuli (words) which were labels for the social category *Blacks* (Devine, 1989, 10). Finally, subjects were presented with “the ‘Donald’ paragraph developed by Srull and Wyer” (Devine, 1989, 10). After reading the paragraph, subjects rated Donald on 12 traits (six related to hostility, three negative, and three positive). Devine (1989) concluded that “when subjects’ ability to consciously monitor stereotype activation is precluded, both high-and low-prejudice subjects produce stereotype-congruent or prejudice-like responses” (12). She stated that knowledge of a stereotype does not necessarily mean acceptance, however. “Even for subjects who honestly

report having no negative prejudices against Blacks, activation of stereotypes can have automatic effects that if not consciously monitored produce effects that resemble prejudice responses” (Devine, 1989, 12).

Study 3 sought to examine the controlled component of stereotyping. Devine (1989) said, “when their nonprejudiced identity is threatened, low prejudice persons are likely to resolve the conflict by denouncing the stereotype and expressing their nonprejudiced beliefs” (12). Sixty-seven White students participated in the study. First, they were asked to “list as many alternate labels as they were aware for the social group *Black Americans*. They were told that the experimenter was interested in how people think about and talk informally about social groups” (Devine 1989, 13). Then, subjects were asked to list “all of their thoughts in response to the social group *Black Americans* and to the alternate labels they generated...they were told both flattering and unflattering labels were acceptable” (Devine, 1989, 13). The researcher found that high-prejudice subjects listed more negative than positive thoughts, and low-prejudice subjects listed more positive than negative (Devine, 1989). Also, high-prejudice subjects were more likely to list traits than beliefs and low-prejudice subjects were the opposite. “These interactions are important because the Black stereotype traditionally has been largely negative and composed of traits” (Devine, 1989, 14). Devine (1989) concluded that “the protocols of high-prejudice subjects seemed much more consistent with the cultural stereotype of Blacks” (15). She said that low-prejudice subjects seemed censored and uncomfortable referring to an entire group. In her discussion of all three studies as a whole, Devine (1989) said:

At minimum, the attitude and belief change process requires intention, attention and time. During the change process an individual must not only inhibit automatically activated information but also intentionally replace such activation

with nonprejudiced ideas and responses. It is likely that these variables contribute to the difficulty of changing one's responses to members of stereotyped groups (16).

## CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS

*This discussion examines information from the meta-analysis (Chapters 3 & 4), and combines it with an examination of information about Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker (Chapters 1 & 2) in an effort to draw conclusions about the relationship between these factors.*

Everyone should be aware that something as simple as a logo can and does affect perceptions. Many consumers would deny that advertising has direct effects on their viewpoints and purchasing decisions – an attitude that makes advertising a particularly successful industry (Kilbourne, 1999). Consumers should be taught more about the media in which they so willingly and regularly partake, and should fully understand that the purpose of advertising is to sell a product – not to educate users about members of society. However, what advertisements can do is tell us about our past. For example, Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker seem, on the surface, to be simple logos, representing nothing more than pastry mix or breakfast foods. However, buried beneath those permanent smiles is a microcosm of American struggle and change. Their histories parallel the nation's past and their very existence represents deep psychological emotions that have endured since slavery. Simple logos? Think again...

**Consistent Representation**

A significant conclusion that can be drawn from the meta-analysis is that it is dangerous to portray certain groups of society in a consistently demeaning way. For example, Fuller (2001), who examined Pinesol advertisements, concluded that while there is an obvious increase in the *number* of Blacks pictured in advertisements, it is more a matter of *how* they are portrayed. Similarly, Pingree et al. (1976) concluded that, "Certainly it is not sexist to show a woman as a competent housewife and mother. It is sexist to always show women this way." In

advertisements, women are often associated with products that are related to the home (cleaning, decorating, children, etc.) and items related to beauty (makeup, hairstyling). For example, Mastin et al. (2004) found that *Essence* advertised fashion/accessories, and *Ladies Home Journal* advertised beauty products most frequently. It is certainly possible that a consumer who constantly sees advertisements such as these could develop stereotypical perceptions of women. When few images counterbalance these types of roles, many people in society may expect women to be solely concerned with issues of the home and beauty. This instance can certainly be identified in the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns, particularly in the development of the logos.

The evolution of Aunt Jemima's and Betty Crocker's faces exemplifies this phenomenon of consistent portrayal. From 1919 to 1989, Aunt Jemima's face underwent three modifications (see page 73); two were the result of public protest. Despite the changes, the faces look remarkably similar. Considering that the 1919 face, based on Nancy Green, lasted for 70 years, one might conclude that the image of the smiling Black mammy was burned into many consumers' memories of the icon. While Quaker Oats claims that the change was made "because they became aware of people's lack of acceptance," the fact remains her face is still on the box, her name is still *Aunt Jemima*, and she still reminds consumers of slavery (Kern-Foxworth, 1994, 99). During the era of slavery, slave owners (and other Whites) referred to enslaved Blacks as "Aunt" and "Uncle" because they refused to respect them with the titles, "Mrs." and "Mr." Kern-Foxworth (1994) made a more-than-accurate judgment when she said the most recent Aunt Jemima resembled a Black Betty Crocker.

In comparison, between 1936 and 1996, Betty Crocker had eight different faces (see page 73). However, most of Betty Crocker's faces had similar characteristics: Red jacket, White

blouse, stiff nose, brown hair, blue eyes, and tight lips. General Mills claimed the final face, a digitally blended portrait of seventy-five women, was made because “there is a little Betty in everyone” (Marks, 2005, 89). Although the logo supposedly represents multiple ethnicities, she looks White. Perhaps more “ethnic” than the previous faces, but nonetheless, White. Today, Betty Crocker’s face is not seen very often. She is represented by a simple red spoon bearing her signature.

It is interesting how much effort General Mills put into making Betty represent the “average” woman, yet it took Quaker Oats seventy years to recognize that Aunt Jemima’s face was less acceptable to some. The “History of Aunt Jemima” on the Quaker Oats website does not dare list her nineteenth century birth – at a Blackface show. Nor does Quaker Oats apologize for perpetuating a potentially offensive stereotype for more than one hundred years. While it is an unfortunate truth that racism was commonplace for many Whites during the first six decades of the twentieth century, the Civil Rights Movement introduced a new perspective on Blacks. Quaker Oats did not change Aunt Jemima’s face until 1989, and those changes were minimal. Apparently, a new hairdo and some pearl earrings should be enough. After all, based on many advertising images, women only care about appearance and cleanliness.

Another striking difference between Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker is the way they have been presented outside advertisements. Chapter 2 described Betty Crocker’s “Cooking School of the Air,” the radio show that helped the icon peak in consumer ratings. However, her 1950s television show flopped. In comparison, Aunt Jemima had a short-lived 1930s radio show that failed but was most popular when she traveled to fairs, festivals, and trade-shows to make her famous pancakes. It seems Aunt Jemima is most famous when her face is clearly showing, and Betty Crocker is preferred as a voice. Perhaps it could be related to Young’s early



Sources: (1894: <http://www.iath.virginia.edu/utc/onstage/performin/tomjemimahp.html>; 1919: <http://gawker.com/news/lies-well-disguised/lies-well-disguised-advertising-week-2006-202928.php>; 1968 & 1989: Kern-Foxworth, Marilyn (1994). *Aunt Jemima, Uncle Ben, and Rastus: Blacks in advertising yesterday, today, and tomorrow*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.)



(Source: [http://www.racialcompact.com/Betty\\_Crocker.jpg](http://www.racialcompact.com/Betty_Crocker.jpg); spoon, <http://www.almostvegan.com/archives/images/bc-spoonlogo.gif>)



Aunt Jemima plantation advertisements, where the mistress is always absent so White female consumers can place themselves in the role. Or maybe Manning (1998) was right in the observation that after women were forced into the kitchen following the decline of domestic help, Aunt Jemima provided a “slave in the box.”

These factors are related to another aspect of these campaigns: Aunt Jemima serves and Betty Crocker teaches. According to Shapiro (2004) Betty Crocker was always giving directions to other cooks in the kitchen, never actually doing it herself. She also gave cooking schools across the country over the radio and in “person.” Aunt Jemima, on the other hand, was always cooking her pancakes for someone else.

Pingree et al.’s (1976) Consciousness Scale delineates the various levels of female portrayals. In their 1976 study, they coded nearly half the ads Level II, in which “the woman is competent, but only within a circumscribed sphere of activity” (Pingree et al., 1976). The second highest number ads were Level I, where “the woman is so limited and/or incompetent that she is not a complete person.” Although the study was conducted nearly thirty years ago, when considering Lindner’s (2004) results (not much change from 1955-2002), one could hypothesize a limited difference today. Sadly, Level V, where “each individual should be treated non-stereotypically and women and men can and sometimes do excel each other,” was added out of necessity, not because images like them were readily available (Pingree et al., 1976, 195).

Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker could be considered both Level I and Level II images. In the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Aunt Jemima campaign, advertisements would contain two-levels of narration: Aunt Jemima’s information (usually a one-liner, “I’se in town honey” and a recipe) and a White explanation of the product. This could be considered Level I because Aunt Jemima was not considered a “complete person” or one who is able to explain herself. Aunt

Jemima could also be considered a Level II image because she is competent only “within a circumscribed sphere of activity” – making pancakes in the kitchen. While Betty Crocker is portrayed as more of a “complete person” than Aunt Jemima, her existence depends upon the happiness of her husband, or whatever man she is providing food for (Level I). Comparable to Aunt Jemima’s situation, Betty Crocker is competent only in the kitchen, not cooking, but teaching others how to (Level II).

Despite national debate and multiple studies, stereotypical images have dominated female representation for years. Lindner’s (2004) content analysis of *Vogue* and *Time* from 1955-2002 evidenced only a small amount of change in the portrayal of women despite the changes in “real life” due to the Women’s Movement. *Vogue* is a magazine targeted mostly to women; therefore it could be argued that female products are likely to be the most advertised. *Time*, on the other hand, is a general interest magazine and should have a wide range of female portrayals. Culley and Bennet (1976) replicated earlier studies and found that little had changed by way of female representation: (1) Women were mostly portrayed as housewives and (2) Female characters seem to be “predominantly used for personal products or products related to the home” (169). As stated before, the evolution of the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker faces has also produced little change over the years. Aunt Jemima’s campaign has lasted more than 100 years, and Betty Crocker’s more than 80. Even though their faces have changed, that change has been minimal. This lack of change is paralleled in media ownership.

It is important to consider who makes final decisions concerning ad placement. Overwhelmingly, media are owned and controlled by men. It is unfair to label all men sexist, yet when considering Roediger’s argument about the establishment of an “other,” one can see why some men may highlight certain female characteristics. For example, males who want to be

viewed as the “breadwinner” of the family might portray women as nonworking (outside the home), unpaid housewives. Similarly, some speculate that the mammy figure is pictured as a jolly, happy-go-lucky slave to provide a justification for slavery: If she is happy to be enslaved, then there is no reason for guilt. Increasing the diversity of media executives could be a possible solution to the stereotypical image problem since White males own and operate most media outlets (Turner, 2006, 2).

Patriarchy has also controlled the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns since their inceptions. Aunt Jemima was discovered by Chris Rutt (1889) and developed by R.T. Davis (1890) and James Webb Young (1919). Betty Crocker’s persona was created by Sam Gale (1921) and her last name “Crocker” was derived from a retired executive (William G. Crocker). From the perspective of Roediger’s “other” theory, these men were developing their own personal identities through the icons. For example, Rutt found Aunt Jemima at a minstrel show, a place where Whites made fun of and racially impersonated Blacks – making it clear how different the races were. Sam Gale chose a former slave (Nancy Green) to represent Aunt Jemima, and James Webb Young spoke openly about his mother’s racist perspective and his thoughts about the simplicity of understanding women. Sam Gale created Betty Crocker as a persona to respond to consumer fan mail – she was based on *his* ideal of what female consumers wanted.

In addition to affecting viewpoints and perceptions about women, stereotypical images can affect how women are treated in society. Equal pay, an issue most often addressed by supporters of the Women’s Movement, could be affected by stereotypical images of women. Marjorie Husted, one of Betty Crocker’s earliest and most effective directors, was more successful than most men at General Mills, but was paid one-fourth what the top salesmen

received. Beck (2001) said the negative portrayal of feminists in the media has slowed the progression of the Women's Movement. Stereotypical portrayals of Blacks such as Aunt Jemima have also affected the Civil Rights Movement.

### **Mental Effects**

Another important factor which emerged from the meta-analysis is that stereotypes have effects that, though sometimes subtle, can mold viewpoints about the stereotyped member(s) of society. Lafky et al. (1996) found "brief exposure to an image effects audience perceptions of social reality immediately after exposure" (385). Turning a magazine page, flipping through channels, glancing at the shelves of a grocery store, or even fast forwarding through Tivo® recordings gives consumers "brief exposure" to multiple advertisements. Givens and Monahan (2005) found that after viewing stereotypical images of Black women, participants associated a neutral photo of a Black woman more quickly with negative terms than positive.

Devine (1989) provided the most thorough examination of the effects of stereotypes. Her argument that stereotypes have both automatic and controlled components provides another possible solution for controlling the stereotypical images bound to emerge. Female stereotypes, particularly the mammy and housewife, shown repeatedly in advertisements, through decades of American advertising, have allowed an automatic component to manifest. Aunt Jemima's campaign has lasted more than 100 years and Betty Crocker's more than 80 – enough time to create a permanent image of these icons in many consumers' minds. However, the progress lies in the controlled component. Devine (1989) found that "low prejudice" subjects (defined by the Modern Racism Scale) are more likely to challenge the stereotype once it pops into their minds. The development of an across-the-board media literacy curriculum in American schools might help remedy the stereotype problem.

The Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker characters also played mind games with some consumers. A common question from fans of both icons was “Is she real?” Quaker Oats and General Mills did not deny their existences until much later in the campaigns, leaving room for consumers to live up to false beliefs of what a Black or White woman “should” be. The women who portrayed them could not be more different from the characters, particularly Betty Crocker’s personality. Aunt Jemima’s first personality, Nancy Green, *was* a former slave, but was far from happy-go-lucky. Several other Aunt Jemima impersonators were musicians and actresses (Kern-Foxworth, 1994); none stayed home in the kitchen all day. Marjorie Husted (Betty Crocker) was a serious career woman, and Adelaide Hawley, Betty Crocker’s television personality, was “a Manhattan divorcee who was raising a daughter alone and hated to cook” (Shapiro, 2004, 6).

### **Consumer Perspective**

The meta-analysis studies provide a glimpse into the consumer psyche. For example, Swenson’s (2006) examination of the effects Betty Crocker’s radio show had on consumer identity reveals personal opinions from fans. She found evidence that advertising does influence meaning in people’s lives. Horner (2000) argued that Betty Crocker and her cookbooks represented a “cultural preoccupation with women’s roles after the end of WWII” (332). She said media “experts,” like Betty Crocker, persuaded women to head home from the factories and take care of their men. In reality, women were used to reintegrate soldiers; their state of mind after returning from war was considered a possible danger to American society. In a sense, they needed “mothers” to woo them back into the traditional American lifestyle. Swenson’s (2006) examination shows that consumers fell for this strategy and embraced their new roles as housewives.

Poran's (2006) focus group revealed some Black women's identities are affected by misleading images in the media. One participant said she was aware that consumers were supposed to identify with advertising images, but that most of them are stereotypical. Another subject said "we're trying to live up to what they put out there." This comment seems to signify that some consumers see advertising images as ideals, or what they "should" be. The danger in this action is obvious. For example, consider the part of Devine's (1989) study that focused on hostility as a common characteristic attributed to Blacks. If a large number of Blacks see images of themselves as "violent" and "threatening," and members of other races believe and then expect such conduct, they, too, may accept the stereotype and tend to act out these behaviors. Considering that Aunt Jemima is one of only a few Black advertising characters, particularly female, it is possible that some consumers may associate all Black women with Aunt Jemima, especially large Black women. This can be seen in Fuller's (2001) examination of the Pinesol advertisements. Participants used words like "mammy" and "Aunt Jemima" in their descriptions of the lead female character. The Betty Crocker image can also influence perspectives. In her prime, Betty Crocker was a main representative of housewives. Because of her portrayal in ads, families might have expected stay-at-home mothers to produce perfect and delicious food while cleaning, childrearing, and looking neat and tidy at the same time. They might believe that is all women do – or want to do. It is particularly hazardous when children believe they should live up to advertising. Racist and sexist images could lead children to develop prejudicial viewpoints at a young age.

Recall from chapter two that Betty Crocker traveled to Hollywood to have parties and go boating with celebrities while Aunt Jemima traveled various places to serve her pancakes. It is similar to the hierarchy in the plantation household: Black women tended to the household and

kitchen so White women could be free to pursue social concerns. Shapiro (2004) spoke of this hierarchy when she said that as far as icons like Betty Crocker and Sara Lee were concerned, “Aunt Jemima could eat in the kitchen” (2). This point is also made in Betty Crocker’s Picture Cookbook (1950) where there is no mention of Africa or African-influenced food despite multiple sections on “ethnic” dishes and information. According to Horner (2000), “one illustration of a stereotyped mammy baking biscuits supports the romanticized, “old South” feeling of the quick bread section” (343).

Poran (2006) also challenged the common belief that Black women are protected by a “Black Culture” leaving them with higher body esteem than White women. The belief is that Black men prefer larger bodies, therefore Black women do not have the same pressures as other women. While Poran (2006) concluded this belief a myth, the “Black Culture” perspective can be compared to Collins (1991) perception of the “Afrocentric Worldview.” Collins (1991) argued that “Afrocentricity reflects longstanding belief systems among African peoples” (75). However, Collins (1991) also challenged this belief because Black men are often patriarchal, leaving Black women discredited and unappreciated for their work.

### **Theoretical Conclusions**

Critical theory provides a constructively critical evaluation of a social situation or issue. This study is in no way suggesting the abolishment of advertising practice. However, this study attempts to suggest a different approach in the way advertising is executed and viewed publicly. What should be emancipated is the perspective that because of advertising, the product is sold, the company is making money, and, therefore, the well-being of society is supported. A new perception of advertising is needed; one where images portray people realistically and diversely rather than stereotypically.

Mead, Goffman, and Gerbner all theorized that our perceptions are affected by the people and media around us. Mead suggested the strength of symbols, Goffman discussed the subtle effects of advertisements, and Gerbner introduced the concept of cultivation (TV cultivates a false worldview). The sheer longevity of the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns makes them recognizable symbols. Judging from the results of Fuller (2001) and Swenson (2006), it is clear that they mean something to many consumers. Beneath the basic graphic design on their smiling logos lies a deep history that surfaces subtly, through an examination of their creations and extensive campaigns. With a combined existence of nearly 200 years, Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker have had ample time to influence consumers.

### **Revisiting the Research Questions**

The meta-analysis provided the most crucial support for the main research question: *Do the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns symbolize a trend of stereotypical images reinforced in American advertising over the past century that affect viewer perceptions?* The multi-study analysis provided evidence of a trend of stereotypical images perpetuated in American advertising over the past century, shed light upon consumer perception and influence, and offered perspective regarding the stereotypical portrayal of White and Black women. The histories of the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns parallel these findings and provide specific examples of the broader issues approached through the meta-analysis. Two sub-questions were also addressed in this study.

First, *What are the major similarities and differences in the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns?* Gender and race are the two major similarities *and* differences between the icons. While their gender brings them together, their race pushes them apart. Similar to race relations among Black and White women in America, both historically and present, Aunt

Jemima and Betty Crocker's identities are intertwined and dependent upon one another. Next, *Does history play a significant role in the development and evolution of Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker?* The simple answer is, absolutely. History is perhaps the most important factor in the examination of the two icons. As stated in the beginning of this study, these icons developed from emotions too difficult to articulate or deal with socially. The institution of slavery and the Emancipation of the enslaved, in addition to American-involved wars, put great pressure upon most citizens in America. Those who created Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker and those who continued to develop their campaigns all based their decisions on personal ideals and sentiments. With a past as deep and rich as the country they were created in, Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker provide a unique perspective on the history of America.

### **Conclusions**

These icons are more than mere representations of products. They are manifestations of historical situations that were too difficult to handle directly and consciously. They are also stereotypes that have been repeatedly perpetuated throughout the past century. They are only two among millions of other stereotypes in advertising, however. Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker are stereotypes whose intricately interwoven histories provide evidence about why racism and sexism are still rampant in America, and why it is still so difficult to deal with these issues. Yet, they also provide a solution.

By examining the origins, histories and meanings of these two "simple" logos, a new understanding is born – an understanding that can lead to forgiveness – for a country's painful past and a progression to something new and better. Dubois (1903) said "the problem of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is the problem of the color-line." Now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the line seems more clearly drawn than ever. While race relations have made considerable progress since DuBois, there is

still a long way to go. The fight against sexism has moved at a rather slow pace in regards to the female portrayal in media images. The meta-analysis evidenced only a small change in female portrayals over the past fifty years (Lindner, 2004) despite gains in the Women's Movement. Male and female salaries are still strikingly unequal.

Racial and gender discrimination seem to be accepted as a "part of life" for much of America, a perspective that is evidenced by the lack of attention paid to these issues. For example, the Imus controversy promised a rich debate about racism and sexism. During this situation, the Virginia Tech massacre occurred. After the dust settled, media practitioners did not return to the much-needed debate about what *is* and what *is not* acceptable regarding racism and sexism in America today. It is no longer enough to simply recognize the existence of these social issues; it is time to proactively change the way they are dealt with. The mass media is an ideal place to begin because they provide people with information and visual images each day.

It is imperative for industry practitioners, scholars, and consumers to examine advertising images and measure their possible effects. Perhaps seeing one stereotypical image is not dangerous. However, being regularly exposed to stereotypical images can have subtle effects on consumer's perceptions of one another and can lead to false and prejudice viewpoints. It is important to recognize that we can be affected by something as seemingly "simple" as a logo. It is time to use the past, which speaks through icons like Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker, to move to a more progressive future, and to step out from behind the "veil" that DuBois felt outcasts have been forced to hide behind.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

A major limitation of this study was the amount of data available about Aunt Jemima *and* Betty Crocker. While information could be found about each individual icon, works comparing

the two were few and far between. Also, it was difficult to find information that went deeper than simple facts about their products and origins.

Some information about important topics was limited and deserves further examination during future research of this topic. First, more information is needed about the behavior and reaction of the Quaker Oats Company regarding the Aunt Jemima logo. Where did they stand on race relations? How did company executives respond to consumer disapproval (besides the face change)? What are the demographics of consumers who currently buy Aunt Jemima products? Second, a deeper focus on Black agency would provide additional perspective about the topic. How did Blacks react to the Aunt Jemima campaign throughout history? How do they react today? What role did the Aunt Jemima image have in the Civil Rights Movement? Third, more information is needed regarding modern opinions of Betty Crocker. Do homemakers admire her? Do they take her advice and use her cookbooks? Is she regarded as a step back for the modern housewife?

The amount of time provided for this study limited the researcher's ability to conduct primary research. Future research should include an experiment involving White and Black women's emotions, reactions and perceptions of Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker. Using various projective techniques would provide an ideal starting point for research involving both icons. Historically examining other popular and cultural advertising images and comparing them to the Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker campaigns could provide deeper perspective about race, gender, and class relations in America. It would be interesting to see whether people of various ethnicities recognize these icons and how they are portrayed in their respective countries. It would also be useful to analyze media literacy education and how it effects perceptions of advertising and stereotypes.

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