

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

**ScholarWorks@UARK**

---

General Human Environmental Sciences  
Undergraduate Honors Theses

General Human Environmental Sciences

---

8-2012

## **Female College Students Perception of Self-Image Based on Fashion Magazine Advertising**

Olivia Merritt

*University of Arkansas, Fayetteville*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uark.edu/ghesuht>

---

### **Citation**

Merritt, O. (2012). Female College Students Perception of Self-Image Based on Fashion Magazine Advertising. *General Human Environmental Sciences Undergraduate Honors Theses* Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.uark.edu/ghesuht/5>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the General Human Environmental Sciences at ScholarWorks@UARK. It has been accepted for inclusion in General Human Environmental Sciences Undergraduate Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UARK. For more information, please contact [scholar@uark.edu](mailto:scholar@uark.edu).

Female college students' perception of self-image based on fashion magazine advertising

An Undergraduate Honors Thesis

in the

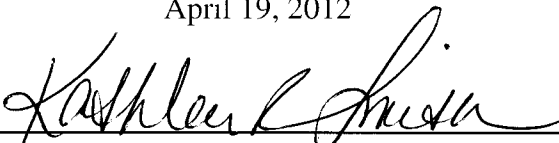
School of Human Environmental Sciences

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
University of Arkansas  
Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences  
Honors Program

by

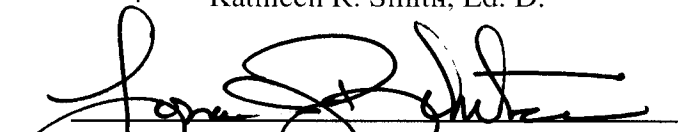
Olivia Merritt

April 19, 2012



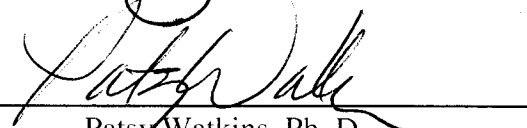
---

Kathleen R. Smith, Ed. D.



---

Lona J. Robertson, Ed. D.



---

Patsy Watkins, Ph. D.

# Female college students' perception of self-image based on fashion magazine advertising

## Abstract

Magazine images are more technologically enhanced and fashion magazine advertisements are influencing young female students by giving the impression of a “picture perfect” body. Therefore, their perception of beauty tends to be skewed based upon the public's view of social acceptance.

The goal of this study was to examine how fashion magazine advertisements effect female college students' perception of self-image. More specifically, do they have high or low self-image perception based upon the fashion magazine's model images? Although not statistically significant, results of the study revealed female college students' had positive perceptions of confidence with their physical body and body image. Participants liked their own body and would not change their body before viewing the magazine advertising. The percentage of participants who would change their body increased slightly after viewing the magazine advertising, indicating that there was enough impact of the models on the participant that more would consider changing. In addition, participants felt they would attract more people if they were more like the models. More than half of the participants felt they would do better in society. Fashion magazine advertising does appear to have an impact on female college students. Further research should include teenagers in secondary schools to find any differences that may exist between the two groups. The study could also be expanded to include other females from other universities as well as including males to determine if the same body image issues relate to advertisements in fashion related magazines.

## Table of Contents

I.	Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
	a. Research Questions.....	2
	b. Definition of Terms.....	2
	c. Assumptions.....	3
	d. Study Limitations.....	4
II.	Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	5
	a. Self-Image.....	5
	b. Defining Beauty.....	6
	c. Fashion Magazines and Today's Media.....	6
	d. Young Females and Adolescence.....	7
III.	Chapter 3: Methods/Materials.....	9
IV.	Chapter 4: Data Analysis.....	11
V.	Chapter 5: Results and Discussion .....	19
	a. Confidence.....	19
	b. Liking.....	19
	c. Perceptions.....	20
	d. Conclusions.....	20
VI.	Appendix	
	a. Survey	
	b. IRB Protocol	

List of Tables

Table 1: Participants Characteristics.....12

Table 2: Frequencies for Confidence Level.....13

Table 3: Paired Sample T-Test.....14

Table 4: Frequencies for Liking Own Body and Changing Own Body.....15

Table 5: Paired Sample T-Test.....15

Table 6: Perceptions of Participants.....16

Table 7: Perceptions of Participants “If like the models”.....17

Table 8: Agree/Disagree Questions.....18

# Female college students' perception of self-image based on fashion magazine advertising

## Chapter1

### Introduction

Media plays a large role in people's everyday lives. People rely on social and print media to see what is popular to wear, who is hot and how to "enhance ourselves". Who determines what is popular? Who determines who is beautiful? Who determines who needs to be enhanced? The media seems to have drawn females into a never ending cycle of unsatisfied self-image which could lead to changing the physical body. Media and advertisements will always have methods to improve the female body and physical attractiveness. Why do they have this authority and do they really affect the perception of females' own self-image? (Hendriks & Burgoon, 2003)

There is limited data focusing on college females, ages 18 and older, and their perception of self-image based on the effect of fashion magazine advertising. The purpose of this study was to test the female college students' perception of self-image based on fashion magazine advertising. The study identified whether fashion magazine advertising had an effect on females' perception of their own self-image. Participants were college females aged 18 and older studying at a large, mid-south tier one research institution. This study examined demographics within this particular age group including grade level and major. Data were collected to show how often the participants read fashion magazines and which magazines they preferred to read. The goal of this study was to identify whether fashion magazine advertising had an effect on female college student perception of self-image and if the individuals would physically change their bodies after viewing selected advertisements.

### Research Questions

- Do young college women have more confidence in physical body and body image before and after viewing fashion magazine advertisements?
- Do young college women like their body less or want to change their body after viewing fashion magazine advertisements?
- After viewing fashion magazine models, do young college women consider the models to be beautiful, want to look like models, like themselves less, feel more beautiful, or would undergo surgery?
- If young college women were more like models would they be more liked, have more friends, attract more people, or do better in society?
- Do young college women desire to look like model and consider themselves more beautiful if thinner?

### Definition of Terms

1. *Adolescence*: The transitional period between puberty and adulthood in human development (Dictionary.com, 2011).
2. *Advertising*: The act or practice of calling public attention to one's product, service, need, etc. (Dictionary.com, 2011).
3. *Beauty*: The quality present in a thing or person that gives intense pleasure or deep satisfaction to the mind, (Dictionary.com, 2011).
4. *Body image*: A subjective picture of one's own physical appearance established both by self-observation and by noting the reactions of others (Merriam Webster, 2012).

5. *Confidence*: Full trust; belief in the powers, trustworthiness, or reliability of a person or thing (Dictionary.com, 2011).
6. *Fashion Magazine*: A periodical containing a collection of articles, stories, pictures, or other features pertaining to beauty, style, apparel items, etc. (The Free Dictionary, 2012).
7. *Perception*: The act or faculty of apprehending by means of the senses or of the mind; cognition; understanding (Dictionary.com, 2011).
8. *Self-confidence*: Confidence in oneself and in one's powers and abilities (Merriam Webster, 2012).
9. *Self-image*: Self-image is the way an individual views themselves physically and emotionally, whether it is by the way they view their body or the way they compare their body to others (Hendriks & Burgoon, 2003).

#### Assumptions

The underlying assumption of this study was that female college students' perceptions of self-image can be measured. Additional assumptions include:

1. College students read fashion magazines.
2. Young females had a tendency to be influenced by their surroundings and the media.
3. Students surveyed were representative of the sample being studied.
4. Perceived self-image can be measured.
5. Self-reporting of self-image perception was a reliable indication of self-image perception.
6. Reliable results can be obtained using a survey measurement tool.
7. Female college students' perceptions of self-image can influence their physical well-being.



### Study Limitations

1. This study represented a convenience sample of female college students and the effect of self-image based on fashion magazine advertisements.
2. The range of distribution was limited to a large, mid-south tier one research institution.
3. The study was limited to undergraduates according to age, gender, class level and academic major.
4. The study did not take into account socio-economic differences.
5. The study was limited to perceptions of self-image based on fashion magazine advertisements.
6. The study was limited to young female college students.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### *Self-Image*

A person's self-image is the mental picture, that depicts not only physical details such as gender, height, weight and hair color, but also items that have been learned by the individual, either from personal experiences and encounters or by internalizing judgments made by others. A simple definition of a person's self-image is their answer to this question "What do you believe people think about you?" (Self Image, 2012). Self-image consists of three different types. The first self-image type results from how the individual sees himself or herself. The second self-image type is self-image that results from how others see the individual, and the last type is self-image that results from how the individual perceives others sees him or her. These three types of self-image may or may not be an accurate representation of the person. Some, all or none may actually be true. (Self Image, 2012)

Self-image is the way an individual views themselves physically and emotionally, whether it is by the way they view their body or the way they compare their body to others. A person's self-concept or self-image is both physical and emotional. Self-image can only be measured by self-reporting (Frost & McKelvie, 2012). This view of one's self, according to Hendriks and Burgoon (2003), emerges out of the need for individuals to differentiate themselves from others. Self-image is said to grow and develop over time through social experiences and activities. One's self-image also develops through comparisons with others, whether it is through daily associations or through media. (Hendriks & Burgoon, 2003).

### *Defining Beauty*

Media is not only used for obtaining information about society and entertainment, but also for social comparisons, mainly regarding physical appearance, beauty or attractiveness. Beauty is an assemblage of graces or properties pleasing to the eye, ear, intellect, aesthetic faculty, or the moral sense (Dictionary.com, 2011). Beauty may also be defined as pleasing and impressive qualities of something, for example personal appearance (Dictionary.com, 2011). Young women tend to use media as their primary influence and “sources of information and influences” on their attitudes, behaviors and personal appearance (Hendriks & Burgoon, 2003). This research has reported that an increase in exposure to fashion magazines leads to a greater desire to obtain physical attractiveness and thinness, which could result in body dissatisfaction and low self-image (Hendriks & Burgoon, 2003). Young females learn long before puberty that beauty is a basic dimension for the feminine gender role, which leads to the search for attractive appearance and acceptance (Freedman, 1984).

### *Fashion Magazines and Today's Media*

The primary purpose of advertising is to persuade consumers to buy, whether it is a product or service. Advertising also plays a critical role in the perception of beauty ideals. Advertising has been a traditional form of media, such as magazines and television, and past research has exposed the truth about the technological enhancements of media today (Slater, Tiggemann, Hawkins, & Werchon, 2012). Magazines have been considered a powerful and persuasive medium for shaping ideals about appearance and body-image (Jones, Vigfusdottir, & Lee, 2004).

Perhaps the most disturbing thing about media today is the fact that media images of female beauty are unattainable for all but a very small number of women (Media Sterotyping:

Beauty and Body Image in the Media, 2010). Media images and fashion magazine advertisements repeatedly show images of thin females making these idealized body shapes seemingly the standard or norm, even though they do not reflect the true populations' norms (Jones, Vigfusdottir, & Lee, 2004). For women, the current ideal body depicted in the media is tall and extremely thin (Slater, Tiggemann, Hawkins, & Werchon, 2012). Thinness as an ideal of feminine beauty has become a cultural standard for women in the United States (Owen & Laurel-Seller, 2000). Despite increases in the average size of women in the United States, the representation of women in fashion magazine advertisements has grown increasingly thinner (Bissell & Rask, 2010). More magazine advertisements are being technologically enhanced like air brushing and this is occurring on a regular basis before advertisements are published. For example, the Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty was about showing off the "real" women of our society (Campaign for Real Beauty Mission, 2008). However, the campaign was technologically enhanced by the same employee who does the enhancing for *Vogue Magazine* (Helm, 2008). Two-thirds of women strongly agree that media and advertising set an unrealistic standard of beauty that most women can never achieve (Campaign for Real Beauty Mission, 2008).

### *Young Females and Adolescence*

The relevance of fashion magazines to body-image is evident in a previous study of adolescent girls. The results showed that magazine images influenced adolescent girls' perception of the perfect body type, and also influenced them to want to change their physical body (Jones, Vigfusdottir, & Lee, 2004). Body dissatisfaction is particularly common during adolescence, a time when self-awareness, self-consciousness, and perception of self-image all dramatically increase (Tiggemann & Miller, 2010). During a time of practical social, physiological, and cognitive change, many adolescents become more aware and insecure about

their weight and physical body (Ata, Ludden, & Lally, 2006). Body dissatisfaction is a significant contributor to the lower levels of self-image and greater body dissatisfaction observed among adolescent girls (Tiggemann & Miller, 2010).

The goal of this study was to examine how fashion magazine advertisements affect female college student's perception of self-image. More specifically, do they have high or low self-image perception influenced by viewing fashion magazine advertisements? This could impact young girls as they develop their own self-image based upon a skewed definition of beauty as portrayed by fashion magazines.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methods/ Materials**

The study used a convenience method to obtain a sample from which data were collected. The participants for the study were female college undergraduates, ages 18 and older, attending a large, mid-south tier one research institution. There were a total of 298 participants responding to the survey. The research model selected for use in this study was the survey design method. The responses were collected in a questionnaire format from undergraduates of all majors throughout the institution making up a representative sample of the population. The college female participants were asked to complete the survey which was administered manually by hand in classes on the University's campus.

Development and piloting of the survey instrument was completed prior to administering the survey. The data collected pertained to the participant's perception of self-image before and after viewing various fashion magazine advertisements. Fashion magazines were selected based upon regional preferences of college students. Advertisements from each magazine were selected based upon the models' body appearance and dress.

The instrument used was developed by the researcher and was made up of four main parts. The first part of the survey was designed to collect basic demographic information from the respondents. The second part of the survey was designed to collect confidence levels of the participants before and after viewing the fashion magazine advertisements. The third part of the survey was designed to collect data to see how much the participants like their own body and if they would change their body after viewing the fashion magazine advertising. The final part of the survey was designed to collect data from the participants about their perceptions of the fashion magazine advertisements and the models in the advertising. The survey consisted of a

combination of Likert-type statements including rankings of 1-5 and yes/no questions. A 5 point Likert-type scale (5=very confident/a lot, 4=somewhat confident/somewhat a lot, 3=neither confident/neither a lot or not confident, 2=somewhat not confident/ somewhat not at all, 1=not confident/not at all). Respondents were asked to view four advertisements taken from selected current fashion magazines and then respond to all questions.

IRB approval was obtained prior to data collection. Data was collected by manual distribution of the survey. Classes were randomly selected with permission granted by the instructors of each class. A brief explanation of the survey was given to each class prior to the survey being administered. Participants were asked to respond to questions regarding their perception of self-image before and after viewing the fashion magazine advertisements. Demographics, including age, class level and major were collected. Descriptive statistics were used. Using simple statistics to analyze the data to determine means and paired sample t-tests were used to compare and determine significance levels.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Data Analysis**

Results of the demographics of age, class level and major indicated that over 75% of the respondents were 18-21 year olds. There were a few more sophomores (27.5%), however the class levels were fairly evenly distributed. Nearly half of the majors were Human Sciences majors (25%); and Apparel Studies majors (23%). Results indicating the frequency of fashion magazine reading and the most read fashion magazines were measured. Seventy-six percent of the participants reported reading fashion magazines less than one hour per week. Forty-three percent of those surveyed indicated that Cosmopolitan was the most read fashion magazine. Vogue magazine, at 13%, was the second most read magazine; however, 12% of the participants indicated no preference. (Table 1)



**Table 1. Participant Characteristics**

<b>Demographic Variable</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Age</b>		
18-19	105	35.4
20-21	126	42.4
22-23	48	16.2
24+	18	6.1
No Response	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Class Level</b>		
Freshman	70	23.7
Sophomore	81	27.5
Junior	69	23.4
Senior	73	24.7
No Response	3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Major/College</b>		
Arts and Sciences	35	11.8
Apparel Studies	67	22.6
Business	33	11.1
Education	10	3.4
Other Human Environmental Sciences Majors	75	25.3
Other University of Arkansas Majors	69	23.2
No Response	9	
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>How often fashion magazines were read by participants</b>		
Less than 1 hour per week	227	76.4
1-2 hours per week	52	17.5
2-3 hours per week	13	4.4
More than 3 hours per week	5	1.7
No Response	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Magazines most read by participants</b>		
Cosmopolitan	126	42.9
Vogue	38	12.9
Seventeen	23	7.8
InStyle	27	9.2
Other	35	11.9
No Response	49	
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>

**Research Question 1:** Do young college women have more confidence in physical body and body image before and after viewing fashion magazine advertisements?

Frequencies and paired samples t-tests were conducted to compare participant's confidence in their physical body to confidence in their perceived body image before and after viewing the fashion magazine advertisements. Over 44% of participants indicated they were somewhat confident in their physical body before viewing the fashion magazine advertisements. Forty-six percent were confident about their body image before viewing fashion magazine advertisements. After viewing the fashion magazine advertisements, the percentages in both categories dropped to 39% confidence in physical body and 38% confidence in body-image (Table 2). Both are statistically significant for before or after viewing the magazine advertising ( $p=.001$  and  $p=.005$ ) (Table 3).

**Table 2. Frequencies for confidence levels.**

	<b>Before Viewing</b>		<b>After Viewing</b>	
<b>Physical Body</b>	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Very Confident	21	7.1	23	7.8
Somewhat Confident	132	44.4	116	39.3
Neither Very Confident or Unconfident	111	37.4	104	35.3
Somewhat Unconfident	27	9.1	44	14.9
Not Confident	6	2	8	2.7
Non Response	1		3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Body-Image</b>				
Very Confident	21	7	29	9.8
Somewhat Confident	136	45.6	113	38.3
Neither Very Confident or Unconfident	112	37.7	108	36.6
Somewhat Unconfident	22	7.4	36	12.2
Not Confident	6	2	9	3.1
Non Response	1		3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3. Paired Sample T-Test.**

	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
			Lower	Upper			
How confident are you about your physical body?	-0.108	0.561	-0.173	-0.044	-3.32	294	0.001
How confident are you about your body image?	-0.085	0.518	-0.144	-0.025	-2.81	294	0.005

**Research Question 2:** Do young college women like their body less or want to change their body after viewing fashion magazine advertisements?

When asked if participants liked their own body before and after viewing the fashion magazine advertisements, nearly 42% indicated “somewhat a lot” and only 29% indicated they would change their body before viewing the fashion magazine advertising, which was statistically significant ( $p=.043$ ). After viewing the magazine advertisements, 41% of the participants still liked their own body by indicating “somewhat a lot” and 32% were neutral, indicating “neither a lot or not at all” when asked if they would change their body (Table 4). Even though there was an increase in the percentage of those who would change their bodies after viewing the fashion magazine advertisements, the results of the paired t-test were not statistically significant ( $p=.130$ ) (Table 5).

**Table 4. Frequencies for Liking Own Body and Changing Own Body.**

	Before Viewing		After Viewing	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Liking Own Body</b>				
A Lot	27	9.1	24	8.1
Somewhat a lot	127	42.8	121	41
Neither a lot or not a lot	110	37	113	38.3
Somewhat not at all	27	9.1	28	9.5
Not at all	6	2	9	3.1
Non Response	1		3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Changing Own Body</b>				
A Lot	47	15.8	45	15.3
Somewhat a lot	86	29	78	26.4
Neither a lot or not a lot	82	27.6	95	32.2
Somewhat not at all	62	20.9	47	15.9
Not at all	20	6.7	30	10.2
Non Response	1		3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 5. Paired Sample T-Test**

	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
			Lower	Upper			
How much do you like your own body?	-0.058	0.488	-0.114	-0.002	-2.03	294	0.043
Do you want to change your body?	-0.064	0.728	-0.148	0.019	-1.52	294	0.13

**Research Question 3:** After viewing fashion magazine models, do young college women consider the models to be beautiful, want to look like models, like themselves less, feel more beautiful, or would undergo surgery?

When asked if the participants perceived the models in the fashion magazine advertisements to be beautiful, 92% answered yes. Fifty-nine percent indicated that they would like to look like the models. For the question if they liked themselves less after looking at the models, 73% said they did not like themselves less. When asked if they would feel more beautiful if they looked like the models, 57% indicated they would feel more beautiful, however 86% would not undergo surgery to look like the models (Table 6).

**Table 6. Perceptions of Participants.**

<b>Question</b>		<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Do you perceive the model to be beautiful?	Yes	272	91.9
	No	23	7.8
	No Response	2	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
Do you want to look like the models?	Yes	173	58.6
	No	121	41
	No Response	3	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
Do you like yourself less after looking at the models?	Yes	79	26.7
	No	216	73
	No Response	2	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
If you were to look like the models would that make you feel more beautiful?	Yes	170	57.4
	No	1125	42.2
	No Response	2	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
Would you consider undergoing surgery to look like the models?	Yes	37	12.5
	No	257	87.1
	No Response	3	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>

**Research Question 4:** If young college women were more like models would they be more liked, have more friends, attract more people, or do better in society?

When asked, “If you were more like the models”, 63% felt they would not be more liked; 78% indicated they would not have more friends; 85% felt they would attract more people; and 58% felt they would not do better in society (Table 7).

**Table 7. Perceptions of Participants “If like the models”.**

<b>Question</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
If you were like the models:			
Would you be more liked?	Yes	109	36.9
	No	185	62.7
	No Response	3	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
Would you have more friends?	Yes	64	21.7
	No	230	78
	No Response	3	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
Would you attract more people?	Yes	250	84.7
	No	44	14.9
	No Response	3	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
Would you do better in society?	Yes	124	42
	No	170	57.6
	No Response	3	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>

**Research Question 5:** Do young college women desire to look like model and consider themselves more beautiful if thinner?

After viewing the fashion magazine advertisements respondents were asked if they desired to look like the models in the magazines. Fifty-seven percent agreed that they did desire to look like the models in the fashion magazine advertisements. Fifty-five percent agreed that they would consider themselves more beautiful if they were thinner like the models (Table 8).

**Table 8. Agree/Disagree Questions.**

<b>Questions</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Do you desire to look like the models in the fashion magazines?	Agree	166	56.5
	Disagree	127	43.2
	No Response	4	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>
If you were thinner would you consider yourself to be more beautiful?	Agree	163	55.4
	Disagree	130	44.2
	No Response	4	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>

## Chapter 5

### Results and Discussion

The goal of this study was to identify whether fashion magazine advertising had an effect on female college students' perception of self-image and if the participants would physically change their bodies as a result. The majority of the respondents were 18-21 years old, with a fairly even distribution of freshman, sophomores, juniors and seniors. The majority of majors were apparel studies majors and other Human Environmental Science majors. Fashion magazines were read less than one hour per week by this group of female college students. If there was a preference, Cosmopolitan was the most read magazine followed by Vogue magazine.

#### *Confidence*

This group of female college students had confidence in their physical body and body-image before viewing the fashion magazine advertisements. However, after viewing the fashion magazine advertisements the confidence level dropped in both physical body and body-image. This supports the research that claims magazines are shaping ideals about appearance and body-image, which tends to indicate that fashion magazine advertisements do have an effect on female college students' perception of self-image (Jones, Vigfusdottir, & Lee, 2004).

#### *Liking*

This group of female college students like their physical bodies and would not change their bodies before viewing the fashion magazine advertisements. However, after viewing the fashion magazine advertisements some female college students would change their bodies, which is supported by literature stating magazine images influence enough that they want to change their body (Jones, Vigfusdottir, & Lee, 2004). This would seem to indicate that some female



college students would change their body based on fashion models in the fashion magazine advertisements.

### *Perceptions*

The majority of these female college students perceived the models to be beautiful and confident in their own self-image after looking at the models in the fashion magazine advertisements. More than half of the students wanted to look like the models and felt they would be more beautiful if they looked like the models in the fashion magazine advertisements. However, the majority of the students would not undergo surgery to look like the models in the fashion magazine advertisements. This reiterates the previous statement that female college students are less confident in their self-image, but unwilling to undergo surgery to change their physical body to look like the models in the fashion magazine advertisements. Research has shown women strongly agree that media and advertising set an unrealistic standard of beauty unachievable by most (Campaign for Real Beauty Mission, 2008).

The majority of the participants felt they would not be more liked, have more friends, or do better in society if they were to look like the models in the fashion magazine advertisements. However, they believe that they would attract more people.

### *Conclusions*

This research study seems to indicate that fashion magazine advertisements do have an impact on female college students' perception of self-image based on self-confidence, liking and perceptions of models in the fashion magazine advertisements. Overall, the results of the study provide insights into the female college students' perception and liking of their physical body and body-image, which does have an effect on self-image.

Further research should include teenagers in secondary schools to find if any differences exist between the two groups. The study could also be expanded to include other females from other universities as well as including males to determine if the same body image issues relate to advertisements in fashion related magazines.

## Works Cited

- (2012). Retrieved April 3, 2012, from The Free Dictionary:  
<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Fashion+magazine>
- (2012). Retrieved April 3, 2012, from Merriam Webster: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/self-confidence>
- Ata, R. N., Ludden, A. B., & Lally, M. M. (2006). The Effects of Gender and Family, Friend, and Media Influences on Eating Behaviors and Body Image During Adolescence. *J Youth Adolescence*, 1024-1037.
- Bissell, K., & Rask, A. (2010). Real women on real beauty: Self-discrepancy, internalisation of the thin ideal, and perceptions of attractiveness and thinness in Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty. *International Journal of Advertising*, p643-668.
- Campaign for Real Beauty Mission*. (2008, September 3). Retrieved May 3, 2011, from Dove:  
[http://www.dove.ca/en/#/cfrb/mission\\_statement.aspx](http://www.dove.ca/en/#/cfrb/mission_statement.aspx)
- Dictionary.com*. (2011). Retrieved May 2, 2011, from Dictionary.com:  
<http://dictionary.reference.com>
- Freedman, R. J. (1984). Reflections on Beauty as It Relates to Health in Adolescent Females. *Women & Health*, 29-45.
- Frost, J., & McKelvie, S. (2012). Self-esteem and Body Satisfaction in Male and Female Elementary School, High School, and University Students. *Sex Roles*, 1-2.
- Helm, B. (2008, May 7). *Surprise! Dove's "Campaign for Real Beauty" ads actually kind of fake*. Retrieved April 18, 2011, from Bloomberg Businessweek:  
[http://www.businessweek.com/the\\_thread/brandnewday/archives/2008/05/surprise\\_doves.html](http://www.businessweek.com/the_thread/brandnewday/archives/2008/05/surprise_doves.html)
- Hendriks, A., & Burgoon, M. (2003). The Relationship between Fashion Magazine Consumption and Body Satisfaction in Women: Who is most at risk of influence? *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association*. San Diego, CA.
- Jones, D. C., Vigfusdottir, T. H., & Lee, Y. (2004). Body Image and the Appearance Culture Among Adolescent Girls and Boys: An Examination of Friend Conversations, Peer Criticism, Appearance Magazines, and the Internalization of Appearance Ideals. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 1-18.
- Media Sterotyping: Beauty and Body Image in the Media*. (2010). Retrieved April 18, 2011, from Media Awareness Network: [http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/issues/stereotyping/women\\_and\\_girls/women\\_beauty.cfm](http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/issues/stereotyping/women_and_girls/women_beauty.cfm)

Moeran, B. (2010). The Portrayal of Beauty in Women's Fashion Magazines. *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture*, p491-510.

Owen, P. R., & Laurel-Seller, E. (2000). Weight and Shape Ideals: Thin is Dangerously In. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, Vol. 30 Issue 5, p979-990.

*Self Image*. (2012). Retrieved March 28, 2012, from Wikipedia:  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-image>

Slater, A., Tiggemann, M., Hawkins, K., & Werchon, D. (2012). Just One Click: A Content Analysis of Advertisements on Teen Web Sites. *Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine*, 339-345.

Tiggemann, M., & Miller, J. (2010). The Internet and Adolescent Girls' Weight Satisfaction and Drive for Thinness. *Sex Roles*, 79-90.

**Female college students' perception of self-image based on fashion magazine advertising**

Principal Researcher: Olivia Merritt

Faculty Advisor: Kathleen R. Smith

**Please check one or the following:**

1. My Age is:    \_\_\_ 18-19    \_\_\_ 20-21    \_\_\_ 22-23    \_\_\_ 24 and older
2. My level in school: \_\_\_ Freshman    \_\_\_ Sophomore    \_\_\_ Junior    \_\_\_ Senior    \_\_\_ Graduate
3. My Major is:    \_\_\_ Arts & Sciences  
                      \_\_\_ Apparel Studies  
                      \_\_\_ Business  
                      \_\_\_ Education  
                      \_\_\_ Other Human Environmental Sciences Major: \_\_\_\_\_  
                      \_\_\_ Other University of Arkansas Major: \_\_\_\_\_
4. How often do you read fashion magazines?  
      \_\_\_ Less than 1 hour per week  
      \_\_\_ One – Two hours per week  
      \_\_\_ Two- Three hours per week  
      \_\_\_ More than 3 hours per week
5. Which fashion magazine do you read the most?  
      \_\_\_ Cosmopolitan  
      \_\_\_ Vogue  
      \_\_\_ Seventeen  
      \_\_\_ InStyle  
      \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**On a scale of 1-5 rate the following questions (5 being the most and 1 being the least):**

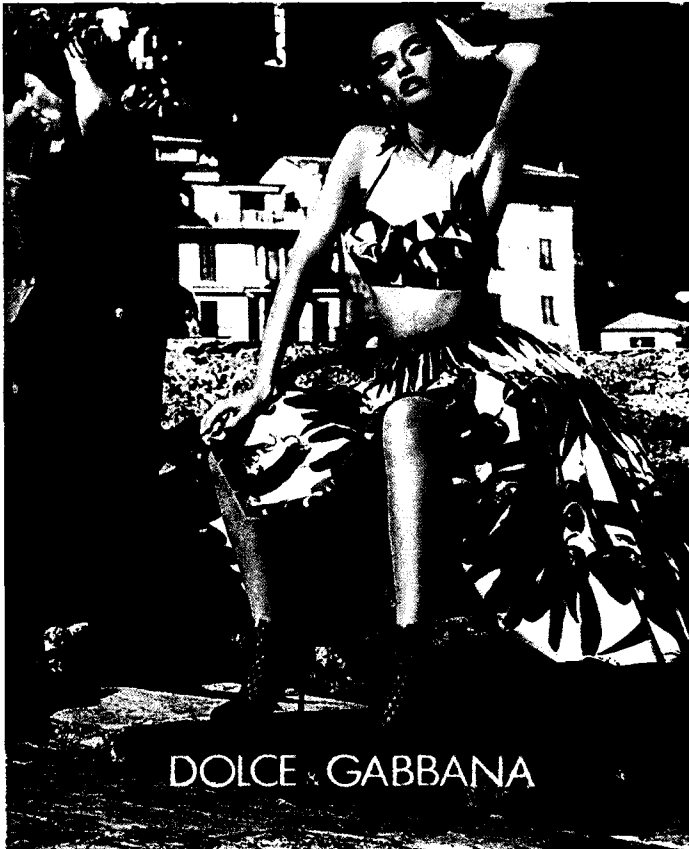
- |   | <u>Very Confident</u>     | <u>Not Confident</u> |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 6. How confident are you about your physical body?                            | 5-----4-----3-----2-----1 |                      |
| 7. How confident are you about your body image?                               | 5-----4-----3-----2-----1 |                      |
|   | <u>A Lot</u>              | <u>Not At All</u>    |
| 8. How much do you like your own body?  | 5-----4-----3-----2-----1 |                      |
| 9. Do you want to change your body?   | 5-----4-----3-----2-----1 |                      |
| 10. Would you describe your current emotion as:                               |                           |                      |
| ___ Happy    ___ Self-confident    ___ Indifferent    ___ Sad    ___ Insecure |                           |                      |

Please answer the following questions about these fashion magazine advertisements:

Editorial. InStyle Feb. 2012. Print.



Salvatore Ferragamo



DOLCE & GABBANA



INTRODUCING **Dial** Lotions  
Your daily dose of  
healthy skin nutrition

Dial® Lotion now comes in a new Sensitive Skin formula that is hypo-allergenic and clinically proven effective for sensitive skin. Enriched with vitamins and minerals, it gives you healthier skin in just 2 days.

- 48 Hour Moisture
- Non-Greasy
- Fast Absorbing



11. Do you perceive the models to be beautiful? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No
12. Do you want to look like them? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No
13. Do you like yourself less after looking at them? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No
14. If you were to look like the models would that make you feel more beautiful? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No
15. Would you consider undergoing surgery to look like the models? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No
16. If you were like the models:
- Would you be more liked? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No
  - Would you have more friends? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No
  - Would you attract more people? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No
  - Would you do better in society? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No

**Agree/Disagree:**

17. Do you desire to look like the models in the fashion magazines? \_\_\_Agree \_\_\_Disagree
18. If you were thinner would you consider yourself to be more beautiful? \_\_\_Agree \_\_\_Disagree

**After viewing these images rank the following questions on a scale of 1-5 (5 being the most and 1 being the least):**

- |   | <u>Very Confident</u>     | <u>Not Confident</u> |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 19. How confident are you about your physical body? | 5-----4-----3-----2-----1 |                      |
| 20. How confident are you about your body image?    | 5-----4-----3-----2-----1 |                      |
|   | <u>A Lot</u>              | <u>Not At All</u>    |
| 21. How much do you like your own body?             | 5-----4-----3-----2-----1 |                      |
| 22. Do you want to change your body?                | 5-----4-----3-----2-----1 |                      |
| 23. Would you describe your current emotion as:     |                           |                      |
| ___Happy  |                           |                      |
| ___Confident  |                           |                      |
| ___Unconcerned                                      |                           |                      |
| ___Sad  |                           |                      |
| ___Insecure   |                           |                      |



# UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

Office of Research Compliance  
Institutional Review Board

February 20, 2012

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Olivia Merritt  
Kathleen Smith

FROM: Ro Windwalker  
IRB Coordinator

RE: New Protocol Approval

IRB Protocol #: 12-02-485

Protocol Title: *Female College Students' Perception of Self-Image Based on Fashion Magazine Advertising*

Review Type: ☒ EXEMPT ☐ EXPEDITED ☐ FULL IRB

Approved Project Period: Start Date: 02/20/2012 Expiration Date: 02/19/2013

Your protocol has been approved by the IRB. Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. If you wish to continue the project past the approved project period (see above), you must submit a request, using the form *Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects*, prior to the expiration date. This form is available from the IRB Coordinator or on the Research Compliance website (<http://vpred.uark.edu/210.php>). As a courtesy, you will be sent a reminder two months in advance of that date. However, failure to receive a reminder does not negate your obligation to make the request in sufficient time for review and approval. Federal regulations prohibit retroactive approval of continuation. Failure to receive approval to continue the project prior to the expiration date will result in Termination of the protocol approval. The IRB Coordinator can give you guidance on submission times.

**This protocol has been approved for 300 participants.** If you wish to make *any* modifications in the approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval *prior to* implementing those changes. All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 210 Administration Building, 5-2208, or [irb@uark.edu](mailto:irb@uark.edu).