Inquiry: The University of Arkansas Undergraduate Research Journal

Volume 19 Article 6

Fall 2015

# Polly Pocket & Ninja Turtles: A Content Analysis of Gender Stereotypes in Children's Advertisements

Bailey Deloney
*University of Arkansas, Fayetteville*

# Polly Pocket & Ninja Turtles: A Content Analysis of Gender Stereotypes in Children's Advertisements

By: Bailey Deloney
Department of Journalism

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Lucy Brown
Department of Journalism

## Abstract

This content analysis examined the use of gender stereotypes, in the forms of product association and various behaviors traditionally expected of a particular gender, in children's advertisements aired on Nickelodeon network. In spite of the current trend of Fem-vertising and successful campaigns such as Always's #LikeAGirl, results of this study revealed that although children's commercials appear to be breaking away from some long-standing gender stereotypes, many stereotypes remain. These stereotypes can be damaging to a child's self-esteem, self-view and self-realization. We find that commercials on Nickelodeon favor boy characters in overall time on-screen while girls-only commercials made up the lowest percent of advertisements in the sample. Additionally, children's commercials reinforce the social expectation that boys play outdoors with construction and transportation toys, while girls play indoors with dolls and stuffed animals. Enduring behavioral stereotypes include the idea that boys are competitive and aggressive, while girls are nurturing and domestic.

## Introduction

Children represent a vast and increasing consumer market in the United States. They are purchasers, as well as major influencers in the buying of goods and services (Bakir, Blodgett, & Rose, 2008; Marketing Charts, 2014). Small children and pre-teens are estimated to influence more than $1.2 trillion a year in direct purchases (Horovitz, 2011; Robinson, 2012). According to a 2014 Nielsen report, children have a particularly significant influence in the industries of music, books, home entertainment and video games (Nielsen, 2014). In fact, over half of 2014's top-selling DVD/Blu-ray titles were targeted toward child audiences, or were based on young adult fiction or comics (Nielsen, 2014).

In 2014, children ages 2-11 watched nearly 23 hours of television per week; children ages 12-17 watched an average of 19 hours (Nielsen, 2015). Strasburger and Hogan (2013) reported that children today spend more time with media than in school. In light of this, advertisers recognize the crucial role that children play in the consumer market, and as a result, they carefully design a large portion of their marketing communications with this specific target audience in mind. A significant share of this budget is dedicated to television commercials.

By nature, children tend to be vulnerable, naïve, and easily swayed, due to their lack of experience and incomplete cognitive development (Reynolds, 2011). Given that children have limited processing abilities, the Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU) cautions advertisers to take into account kids' "special vulnerabilities" and "susceptibility to being misled or unduly influenced" (2009, p. 3). The extent to which advertisers adhere to the guidelines of CARU is a question researchers have examined for decades (Whipple & Courtney, 1980).

Principle 6 from the CARU guidelines (2009, p. 5) states: "Advertisers should avoid social stereotyping and appeals to prejudice". Although advertisers' primary objective is to sell the product by *reflecting* society in commercials, stereotypes also *shape* society and the way that children perceive themselves and others. Given that children's mental reasoning capabilities are not fully developed, they are often unable to discern the persuasive intent or unintended negative messages that stereotypes may carry in advertisements (Reynolds, 2011). The "absorbing" and "fascinating" nature of television can serve as a powerful depiction of negative stereotypes circulating within society (Mitu, 2011, p. 917). This contrast presents viewers with the real difficulty of discerning fact versus fiction. Though a 30 second commercial may seem of little importance in the course of a person's day, the repeated content and

underlying messages presented in advertising impact society. For example, gender stereotypes can inhibit the development of children and limit the scope of their self-realization, thus impeding the growth of society as a whole.

However, it should also be noted that television programs and commercials can serve as a conduit to present positive typecasts and also reinforce a society's culture and values. For example, "Fem-vertising", pro-female advertising that presents women in roles which challenge traditional gender biases, is a recent and quickly increasing movement within the advertising industry (Mitchell, 2015). The Cannes Lion Festival, an event that USA Today calls the "Academy Awards of Advertising", added an award called 'the Glass Lion: The Lion for Change' to recognize the most outstanding efforts in communications to portray gender equality (Mitchell, 2015; Toure, 2015).

In light of the various gender expectations and representations prevalent in advertising, this study investigates the behavioral patterns and gender stereotypes, as well as the negative messages that may be imbedded in those stereotypes that advertisers present to children today. In this study, researchers examine the implied association between gender and a range of behavioral variables, such as competitiveness, nurturing, aggression, athleticism, dancing, independence, parallel behavior and cooperativeness, many of which fall under the categories of character behavior and character interaction.

## Review of the Literature

Social cognitive theory purports that characters in television commercials offer child-viewers models of behavior (Gilmore & Jordan, 2012). This suggests that television has the potential to impact viewers' beliefs and attitudes about social norms (Mastro & Stern, 2004). By providing models who display socially accepted behavior, television can influence the behavior of viewers themselves. Along the same lines, distinctiveness theory predicts that children will pay closer attention to and become more influenced by advertisements featuring characters that they perceive to be similar to themselves (Gilmore & Jordan, 2012). Social identity theory posits that people "derive much of their identity from association with groups" (Comello, 2011, pp. 313-314). Thus, if children identify themselves to be part of a certain group, such as a particular gender, they may be more likely to try to align their behavior or appearance with that group.

Collectively, these theories suggest that children who see models of their own gender in television advertisements may alter their own attitudes or behavior in accordance to the characters that are presented to them (Comello, 2011; Gilmore & Jordan, 2012). Thus, advertisers, and the media in general, have a powerful influence over social mindset, and particularly children's concepts of themselves. For this reason, it is important that consumers understand exactly what ideas are being conveyed through these advertisements (Hein & Kahlenberg, 2009).

It is imperative that society be made cognizant of the intended and unintended messages presented through television advertisements, in order to help thwart adolescent viewers from accepting advertisers' gender biases. Evidence of persistent use of gender stereotypes supports the necessity for parents and educators to develop children's skills to critically analyze mediated messages. The following review of literature presents an overview of antecedent research pertaining to the use of stereotypical gender roles in commercials. This overview includes: (i) The use of stereotyping as a technique in advertising; (ii) Stereotypical messaging in children's commercials, and (iii) The use of gender-specific behaviors in children-targeted commercials.

***The use of stereotyping as a technique in advertising:*** To understand the reasons that stereotypes are often used in advertising, it is necessary to examine the role that stereotypes can play in communication generally and message development in marketing communication, specifically advertising. The following review of the stereotype literature synthesizes two specific areas: the benefits and detriments of using stereotypes in advertising.

The Oxford English Dictionary (2015) defines a stereotype as "A preconceived and oversimplified idea of the characteristics which typify a person, situation, etc.; an attitude based on such a preconception". In other words, stereotypes are assumptions that ascribe certain characteristics to an overarching group of people, things or situations. Although the use of stereotypes generally has a negative connotation, in order to produce practical advertising, shortcuts are often used to deliver the advertiser's message in thirty seconds. There is a necessity for advertisers to craft commercials using symbolic meanings that align with cultural norms within a given society. For example,

culture frequently perceives symbolic meaning even from an element as arbitrary as color, such as red for love or anger and green for nature or jealousy. By strategically utilizing the predispositions existent within society to develop messages to promote ideas or sell products, advertisers can create more effective and even compelling advertisements that resonate with consumers' cultural values (McCracken, 1986).

Ifezue (2010) suggests that men and women process information in two distinct ways, indicating that these differences can play a significant role in the way that advertisers tailor messages to persuade each gender. For instance, men prefer to focus on the big picture, while women can process multiple pieces of information at once and generally have an eye for detail. With this information, it may be more effective for advertisers to layer a female-targeted advertisement with multiple components and more detail, while narrowing the focus of a male advertisement to one or two focal points.

Research suggests that in instances where women are positively portrayed from the women's perspective, advertising can be effective in selling a product without the use of negative stereotypes. Castillo, for example, found that 52 percent of women reported that they bought a product because they liked the way that advertisers presented women in the commercial (Castillo, 2014). Recent pro-female campaigns by brands such as Unilever and Always have been extremely successful in advertising (Mitchell, 2015). Dove's 'Real Beauty Sketches' campaign provide "a potent reminder to women that they are more beautiful than they think" (Nudd, 2013) and the #LikeAGirl campaign, an effort to reverse the negative connotation of the phrase "like a girl" (Mitchell, 2015), allows advertisers to respond to women's critique of the industry's use of negative stereotypes of women and girls.

Nevertheless, the positive approach is far from the norm. The use of outmoded symbolic meanings or traditional stereotypes in advertising is still prevalent, even though they can be ineffective and offensive, especially to women. While in some instances the use of stereotypical associations can increase the efficacy of advertising, in the case of gender stereotypes, women today respond more favorably to advertisements that portray them in less limited, more progressive roles. For example, Eisend, Plagemann, and Sollwedel (2014) found that women were more often aware of stereotypes in commercials than men. In addition, research shows that women are more aware than men of the negative effects that stereotypes can have on society; thus, women are more likely to view commercials displaying traditional gender stereotypes negatively. For Eisend, Plagemann and Sollwedel (2014), a traditional stereotype denotes a woman in a domestic role, such as a woman cleaning while a man relaxes; in contrast, the nontraditional counterpart to this stereotype would feature a man cleaning while a woman relaxes. The results of the study indicate that female-targeted advertisements portraying women in nontraditional roles were more effective than those portraying traditional stereotypes (Eisend, Plagemann, & Sollwedel, 2014).

***Stereotypical messaging in children's commercials*:** The examination of child-targeted commercials indicates that the use of stereotypical symbols in advertisements, such as traditional patterns in the gender of models, the pairing of certain products with only one particular gender, the gender of voice-overs and the gender association of setting, can all convey messages that may potentially restrict children's aspirations and self-realization.

Kolbe and Muehling (1995) observed that the models within a commercial impact children's perception of gender-appropriateness for the product being advertised. Their study found that 94.6 percent of children ages 5 to 9 could correctly identify the gender of a child playing with the toy in commercials. The gender of the model in the toy advertisement affected children's judgments about gender-appropriateness for that toy. Of the 40 participants in the study, 78 percent of the boys who saw a male actor playing with the toy felt that the toy was meant for "boys-only". However, boys who saw a female actress playing with the toy were twice as likely to feel that the toy was appropriate for girls and boys (67.4 percent). Girls were also less likely to view a toy as appropriate for "boys-only" if the advertisement contained the presence of a female actress.

Similarly, Hein and Kahlenberg (2009) suggest that advertisers teach children to embrace gender stereotypes by targeting a specific gender for different types of toys. Stereotypical "boy toys" were most often modeled by male actors and "girl toys" by female actresses, implying that certain toys are only appropriate for one sex or the other. For example, dolls (58.3 percent) and animals (82.6 percent) were more often featured in girls-only commercials, while

transportation/construction toys (87.1 percent), action figures (72 percent) and sports (63 percent) were all shown most often in boys-only commercials.

Additionally, the gender of voice-overs in commercials also appears to be selected based on the type of toy, which can indicate to children the gender-appropriateness of the toy. Martínez, Nicolás, and Salas (2013) found there was a male voiceover in 79.8 percent of commercials advertising a vehicle and a female voiceover in 66.1 percent of advertisements for dolls and accessories. Anuradha (2012) conducted a similar study researching the commercials aired in India, finding that no commercials targeted at boys utilized female voiceovers, but 39 percent of commercials targeted at girls used male voiceovers. Similarly, Centeno and Prieler (2013) showed that in the Philippine's advertisements, males dominated the area of voiceovers. This may suggest that either the male voice is considered to be more persuasive or fewer women are employed in the creation of commercials (Centeno & Prieler, 2013).

Finally, there appears to be a relationship between gender and the settings used in commercials. Similar to the traditional expectations that place women in domestic roles, children's advertisements tend to portray girls indoors more than outdoors (Anuradha, 2012). In their study, Hein and Kahlenberg (2010) found that about 84 percent of girls-only commercials featured girls playing inside, while 77.8 percent of the characters in commercials with an outdoor setting were boys. Along the same lines, boys are also shown in a work setting more often than girls (Davis, 2011; Hein & Kahlenberg, 2009).

***The use of gender-specific behavior in child-targeted commercials:*** Researchers have also uncovered a multiplicity of findings regarding gender stereotypes pertaining to behavior (Anuradha, 2012; Bakir, Blodgett, & Rose, 2008; Hein & Kahlenberg, 2009; Klinger, Hamilton, & Cantrell, 2001). For example, boys in commercials targeted at child audiences are more likely to be shown in active roles, such as running or playing sports, while girls have the tendency to be given more passive roles, such as sitting and playing with dolls (Davis, 2011). Likewise, while independence is a trait typically more often associated with boy characters, advertisements most often show girls in cooperative roles, such as playing with other children (Anuradha, 2012; Hein & Kahlenberg, 2009). Hein and Kahlenberg (2009) found that while girls were most often portrayed in cooperative roles (71.2 percent), boys were shown in a more diverse range of interactions, one of these being competitiveness. Over half (58.3 percent) of the competition displayed in the commercials was depicted in commercials with only boys, while none of the girls-only commercials featured competitive behavior.

Furthermore, children appear to note differences in behaviors in commercials. An experimental study found that both boys and girls rated male-focused advertisements as more aggressive than female-focused commercials (Klinger, Hamilton, & Cantrell, 2001). However, girls rated imagined play with boys' toys as having a higher degree of aggression than boys rated them. The authors of the experiment concluded that media's repeated exposure of violent behavior may be socializing boys toward aggression, noting as well that this could lead eventually to boys' desensitization toward this behavior.

In this study, the author examines stereotypical messaging in children's commercials and also analyzes the use of gender-specific behaviors in prime-time commercials targeted to children. This work adds to antecedent research by examining the additional behaviors of athleticism and dancing. Athleticism, defined as natural physical skill, agility, strength or talent pertaining to sports, can sometimes be a manifestation of dominance, similar to competitiveness and is, thus, a behavior expected to be associated more with boys. Contrastingly, because girls are often portrayed as more docile, playful and cheerful, perhaps dancing may be an athletic behavior that is more associated with girls in commercials (Bakir, Blodgett, & Rose, 2008; Klinger, Hamilton, & Cantrell, 2001).

## Methodology

This study used content analysis to examine a one-week composite sample of 200 television commercials broadcasted on Nickelodeon network in July, 2014, from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. on weekdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. In order to collect a comprehensive representative sample, the study selected a day-part during weekday after-school hours and a morning day-part on the weekend. These time frames were selected to correspond with the day-parts in which children view the most television (Morgan, 2013; Trefis team, 2014). Nickelodeon was selected as the focus for this study because it was named basic

cable's number-one network for the second quarter of 2014, with 834,000 total day viewers ages 2-11 and 1.6 million total viewers (Viacom, 2014).

The unit of analysis for this study was each commercial shown during the two time frames. Duplicate commercials were included in the content analysis since the literature suggests that the more a child views a commercial, the more likely it is that the child's perception of reality will be influenced by its content (Kahlenberg & Hein, 2009).

In order to analyze the content of current children-targeted commercials and to determine to what extent gender stereotypes are being used, a content analysis was considered the most appropriate methodology for this study. Manifest information observed in the commercials was coded independently by three coders. After the author trained the coders, each coder independently coded 5% of the total commercials to establish appropriate inter-coder reliability. Using Holsti's method (Poindexter & McCombs, 2000), inter-coder reliability was calculated to be 98 percent agreement. However, in order to account for any amount of inter-coder agreement that could have occurred by chance, the Scott's pi method of inter-coder reliability was also calculated separately for variable 18 of a randomly selected commercial. For this variable, Scott's pi was calculated to be 97 percent agreement. This variable (V18) was selected for this additional calculation because it asks the coder to select the *most* dominant behavior displayed by the main character, thus subjecting the coder to a higher degree of personal judgment, in comparison to other variables.

In order to determine what messages commercials are relaying to children about gender roles today, this content analysis tested 6 hypotheses. They are as follows:

H1. Commercials with action figures and construction, building or transportation toys will feature only male actors

H2. Commercials with dolls and stuffed animals will feature only female actresses

H3. More boys-only commercials will feature boys in competition

H4. More girls-only commercials will feature girls in a nurturing role

H5. More boys-only commercials will feature aggression or fighting than girls-only commercials

H6. More girls-only commercials than boys-only commercials will feature girls playing indoors

A coding scheme was developed to facilitate the objective description of manifest content in order to make valid inferences about *(*i) Gender Appropriateness Depicted in Toy Commercials and (ii) Gender Specific Characteristics in Commercials.

*Gender Appropriateness Depicted in Toy Commercials:* To determine the relationship between the toy advertised and the gender of the children being targeted, type of product advertised and the gender composition of the characters or actors were analyzed in the commercial (Hein & Kahlenberg, 2009; Kolbe & Muehling, 1995).

To determine whether there were certain types of products that were associated with girls and another set associated with boys, advertised products in the commercials targeted to children were coded as *type of product* being advertised, grouping the coding categories of products as "toy", "food/beverage", "make-up/beauty product", "clothing", or "arts and crafts".

*Types of toys* were classified as "action figures", "construction/building oriented", "transportation", "dolls", "stuffed animals", "sports/outdoor", "technology related", or "board games" (Hein & Kahlenberg, 2009). With regard to the specific toys mentioned in Hypotheses 1 and 2, this study replicates that of Hein and Kahlenberg (2009) whereby action figures, construction, building or transportation toys were classified as "boy toys", and dolls and stuffed animals were classified as "girl toys".

*Gender Specific Characteristics in Commercials*: In order to capture the overall proportion of gender represented by the characters on screen, *Gender of characters* was coded as "girls-only", "boys-only", "more boys than girls", "more girls than boys", "equal amount of boys and girls" or "ambiguous". Since the gender of the narrator of a commercial is often distinguishable and may impact an audience's perception of a commercial, the *Gender of narrator* was coded as "male adult", "male child", "female adult", "female child", "no narrator", "ambiguous", or "unsure".

The following definitions provide insight into the meaning of the terms used to describe behaviors and interactions analyzed in this study.

***Behavior displayed by characters***

1. **Competitive**: characters showing a strong desire to win a game/competition (i.e. sport, competition with goal to win)
2. **Nurturing**: characters shown coddling, feeding, nursing or taking care of a doll, animal or another character
3. **Aggressive**: characters or toys shown battling, wrestling or using physical force (fighting for sake of fighting)
4. **Athleticism**: characters shown playing or using some form of physical talent/skill, but not competing with main goal to win (i.e. hiking, swimming but not racing, running etc.)
5. **Dancing**: moving along in the rhythm of music

***Interactive behavior***

1. **Cooperative**: two or more characters playing and interacting together
2. **Parallel**: two or more characters shown together, but not playing/interacting directly with one another
3. **Independent**: only one child was shown playing in the commercial

For the purposes of better understanding the behavioral stereotypes currently associated with gender and to draw a comparison of stereotypes that have been most prominently discussed in the literature, *behavior displayed by characters* was coded as "competitive", "nurturing", "aggressive", "athletic", or "dancing". *Interactive behavior of characters* was coded as "cooperative", "parallel", or "independent".

To determine if there was any difference in the environment that was associated with commercials with girls or boys, the environment or location was analyzed. *Location* was coded as "indoors" or "outdoors".

*Race of the characters* was coded to analyze the observed races represented in the commercials. The options for this variable included "Caucasian", "African American", "Asian", "Hispanic" and various combinations of those races.

Data analyses were conducted with the use of SPSS software. Cross tabulations were performed with *Gender of Characters* and one other pertinent variable and Pearson's chi-square tests were used to determine whether there was significance between the expected frequencies and observed in all the coding categories.

## Results

***Description of the Advertised Products***

From the sample of 200 commercials analyzed, two-thirds of the commercials were for food /beverages, movies, toys or clothing. Thirty-seven percent of the commercials advertised food or beverages, 11 percent were movies, 10.5 percent were toys, 6.5 percent were clothing items, 5 percent were insurance companies, 4 percent were arts and crafts, 4 percent were online teaching tools and 19.5 percent fell under "other" which included, Chuck E. Cheese (2.5 percent), Febreze air freshener (2 percent), Pampers diapers (1.5 percent), babysitting websites (1.5 percent), and others.

Cereal commercials constituted half (50 percent) of all the food products advertised, followed by snack foods (20 percent) and fast food (10.5 percent). In addition, 8 percent of food commercials advertised candy or gum and 6.5 percent featured juices.

Dolls represented the largest percentage of toys advertised (32 percent), followed by technology-related toys such as computer games or educational websites (23 percent) and construction/building toys (18 percent). Shoes represented 82 percent of the clothing items advertised. Most often, the shoes advertised were athletic-type shoes or sneakers (primarily Sketchers).

**Description of Setting**

Less than half (44 percent) of the commercials were set only indoors, 23 percent were set only outdoors, and 28.5 percent featured scenes that were both indoors and outdoors. None of the commercials with only girl characters were set outdoors, while 63.6 percent of girls-only commercials were set indoors. Similarly, commercials with more girls than boys were more frequently set indoors (41.7 percent) than outdoors (16.7 percent). However, the difference between the percent of boys-only commercials set indoors (31.4 percent) and those set outdoors (37.1 percent) is much smaller. Similar results were found for commercials with more boys than girls. Please refer to the figure below for a depiction of the findings.

**Gender Relationship with Setting**

| Gender Representation in Commercials | Indoor | Outdoor | Indoor & Outdoor |
|---|---|---|---|
| Girls-only | 63.6% [7] | 0.0% [0] | 36.4% [4] |
| Equal boys and girls | 60.8 % [31] | 13.7 % [7] | 25.5 % [13] |
| More girls than boys | 41.7 % [10] | 16.7% [4] | 41.7% [10] |
| More boys than girls | 34.6 % [18] | 30.8% [16] | 34.6% [18] |
| Boys-only | 31.4 % [11] | 37.1% [13] | 31.4% [11] |

Figure 1 depicts the statistically significant relationship between the gender of characters in children's commercials and the setting that those characters are portrayed in. While male-dominant commercials are likely to be shown indoors or outdoors, female-dominant commercials are significantly more likely to be shown only indoors.

## Description of Characters

Overall, 30 percent of commercials featured only one main character, 24 percent featured two main characters, 17.5 percent featured three main characters, 18 percent contained four main characters and 10 percent had no obvious "main" characters. More than half (52 percent) of the characters in the study were real people, 19 percent were cartoon or animated animals, 11.5 percent were cartoon people, 10 percent were a combination of real people and animated characters and 7.5 percent were some other type of character representation, such as imaginary creatures or animated inanimate objects.

Of *all* the commercials analyzed, the majority (62.3 percent) had only Caucasian characters, followed by African American (9.6 percent) and Asian (1.8 percent) characters. For commercials where only one race was represented, the finding was similar.

## Overall Gender Representation of Characters and Narrators

The gender representation of the commercials is exhibited in figure 5. Boys were represented by themselves in the commercials three times more than girls. Only 6.3 percent [11] of commercials had only girls, while 21 percent [37] of commercials featured only boys and almost 30 percent of commercials featured more boys than girls. About thirty percent featured equal amounts of boys and girls, while only 13.6 percent featured more girls than boys.

Over three-quarters of the commercials had narrators and men dominated in that role. Nearly 60 percent of the narration featured in commercials was of male adult voices. Twenty-one percent featured a female adult narrator, while 11.5 percent had no narrator. Children narrated only 7.5 percent of the commercials, most of which (4.5 percent) featured a male child.

## Gender Relationship with Type of Toy

The results of the study support Hypotheses 1 and 2, which predicted that action figures and construction, building or transportation toys would feature only male actors, while doll and stuffed animal commercials would feature mainly female actresses.

There was a statistically significant relationship *(chi-square =.005)* between the gender representation and type of toys. For example, commercials advertising traditional "boy toys" had only boys or primarily boys featured in the commercial and traditional "girl toys" advertisements only featured girl characters in the commercials.

None of the "boy toys" advertisements featured either "girls-only" or "more girls than boys" in the commercials. All of the commercials that advertised action figures, construction/building or transportation toys featured boys-only (33.3 percent) or more boys than girls (66.7 percent) characters or models. Likewise, none of the commercials advertising dolls or stuffed animals featured "boys-only" or "more boys than girls". The majority of "girl toy" advertisements featured "more girls than boys" (60 percent), and the rest featured only girls (40 percent). None of the commercials advertising either "boy toys" or "girl toys" featured equal amounts of boys and girls.

Sixty percent of technology-related toys were advertised in boys-only commercials. Although 20 percent of these toys were advertised in commercials with more girls than boys; 20 percent were also in commercials with equal numbers of boys and girls.

There was a distinct pattern observed in how toys were advertised in commercials targeted to children. Within boys-only commercials, 100 percent of toys advertised were "boys' toys", meaning action figures, construction/building toys and transportation toys. Likewise within the girls-only commercials, 100 percent of toys advertised were dolls or stuffed animals.

The results of the study support Hypotheses 1 and 2. There was a significant relationship *(chi-square =.005)* between the gender representation and type of toys. Commercials advertising traditional "boy toys" had only boys or primarily boys featured in the commercial and traditional "girl toys" advertisements only featured girl characters in the commercials.

**Description of Characters' Behavior and Interaction**

The most frequent behavior featured in the commercials was aggression, followed by dancing, competitiveness, nurturing and athleticism. With 72 main characters displaying aggression as their most dominant behavior, this represented over one quarter (27 percent) of the commercials. Following close behind were the behaviors of dancing (23.6 percent each) and competitiveness (22.9 percent). Nurturing (18.1 percent) and athleticism (8.9 percent) were the behaviors least observed in the commercials. Figure 2 depicts the overall representation of these behaviors.

**Overall Gender Representation of Characters and Narrators**

The gender representation of the commercials is exhibited in figure 5. Boys were represented by themselves in the commercials three times more than girls. Only 6.3 percent [11] of commercials had only girls, while 21 percent [37] of commercials featured only boys and almost 30 percent of commercials featured more boys than girls. About 30 percent featured equal amounts of boys and girls, while only 13.6 percent featured more girls than boys.

Over three-quarters of the commercials had narrators and men dominated in that role. Nearly 60 percent of the narration featured in commercials was of male adult voices. Twenty-one percent featured a female adult narrator, while 11.5 percent had no narrator. Children narrated only 7.5 percent of the commercials, most of which (4.5 percent) featured a male child.

**Gender Relationship with Type of Toy**

The results of the study support Hypotheses 1 and 2, which predicted that action figures and construction, building or transportation toys would feature only male actors, while doll and stuffed animal commercials would feature mainly female actresses.

There was a statistically significant relationship *(chi-square =.005)* between the gender representation and type of toys. For example, commercials advertising traditional "boy toys" had only boys or primarily boys featured in the commercial and traditional "girl toys" advertisements only featured girl characters in the commercials.

None of the "boy toys" advertisements featured either "girls-only" or "more girls than boys" in the commercials. All of the commercials that advertised action figures, construction/building or transportation toys featured boys-only (33.3 percent) or more boys than girls (66.7 percent) characters or models. Likewise, none of the commercials advertising dolls or stuffed animals featured "boys-only" or "more boys than girls". The majority of "girl toy" advertisements featured "more girls than boys" (60 percent), and the rest featured only girls (40 percent). None of the commercials advertising either "boy toys" or "girl toys" featured equal amounts of boys and girls.

Sixty percent of technology-related toys were advertised in boys-only commercials. Although 20 percent of these toys were advertised in commercials with more girls than boys, 20 percent were also in commercials with equal numbers of boys and girls.

There was a distinct pattern observed in how toys were advertised in commercials targeted to children. Within boys-only commercials, 100 percent of toys advertised were "boy toys", meaning action figures, construction/building toys and transportation toys. Likewise within the girls-only commercials, 100 percent of toys advertised were dolls or stuffed animals.

The results of the study support Hypotheses 1 and 2. There was a significant relationship *(chi-square =.005)* between the gender representation and type of toys. Commercials advertising traditional "boy toys" had only boys or primarily boys featured in the commercial and traditional "girl toys" advertisements only featured girl characters in the commercials.

**Description of Characters' Behavior and Interaction**

The most frequent behavior featured in the commercials was aggression, followed by dancing, competitiveness, nurturing and athleticism. With 72 main characters displaying aggression as their most dominant behavior, this represented over one quarter (27 percent) of the commercials. Following close behind were the behaviors of dancing (23.6 percent

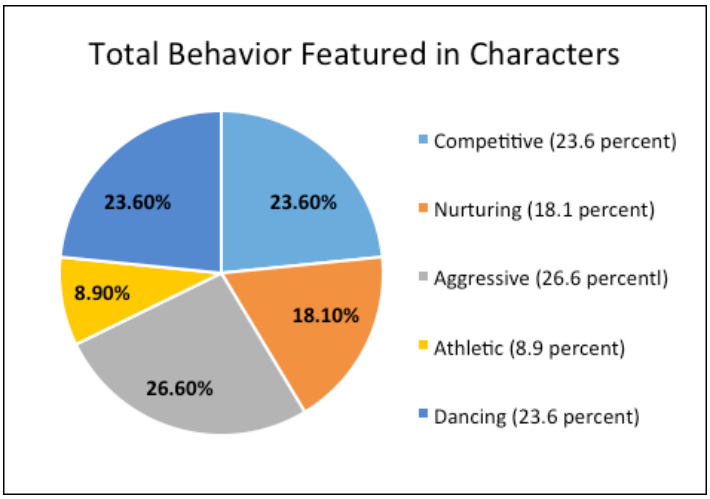


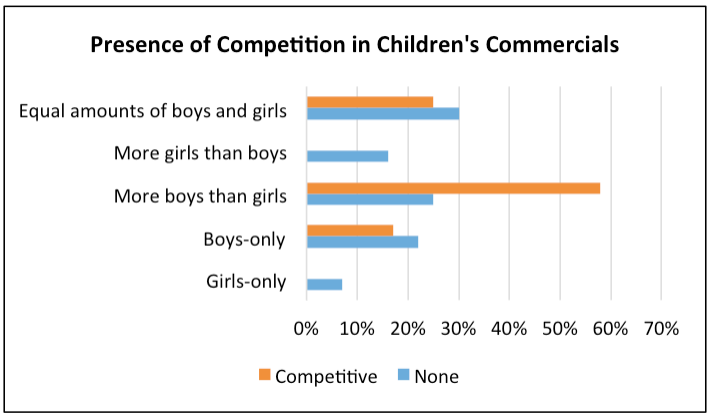

Figure 2 illustrates the representation of five traditionally gender-specific behaviors in children's commercials

each) and competitiveness (22.9 percent). Nurturing (18.1 percent) and athleticism (8.9 percent) were the behaviors least observed in the commercials. Figure 2 depicts the overall representation of these behaviors. Overall, independent behavior (47.9 percent) was the most common behavior displayed in children's commercials. The next most frequently portrayed behavior was cooperation (37.5 percent). Only 8.3 percent of commercials depicted parallel behavior.

**The Relationship between Gender and Type of Behavior**

Chi-square analyses reveal a statistically significant relationship between gender and behaviors such as competition, nurturing and aggression, which are traditionally used in a stereotypical manner in commercials targeted to children. However, results also indicate that athletic behavior and dancing show no statistically significant relationship to gender.

Results indicate a statistically significant relationship between gender and competition (p=.008). The highest percentage of competitive behavior was featured in commercials that had more boy than girl (58 percent) characters. Twenty-five percent of commercials that displayed competition were advertisements with equal amounts of boys and girls, while 17 percent of competitiveness was displayed in commercials with only boys. Neither girls-only commercials nor commercials with more girls than boys displayed any instance of competition. Please refer to Figure 3 for more information on these findings.




($X^2 = 13.766^a$, 4df, p=.008) N=200

Figure 3 shows the statistically significant relationship between competitive behavior and gender. Boys are significantly more likely to be portrayed in competitive roles than girls.

Figure 4 shows that nurturing behavior was found to be most prevalent in commercials with equal amounts of boys and girls (38 percent) and in commercials with more girls than boys (35 percent). Fifteen percent of nurturing behavior was present in girls-only commercials, while four percent was accounted for in boys-only commercials. Commercials with more boys than girls displayed only eight percent of the total nurturing behavior, while those with more girls than boys displayed 35 percent of the total nurturing behavior. These results indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship (p= .000) between female-targeted commercials and nurturing behavior.

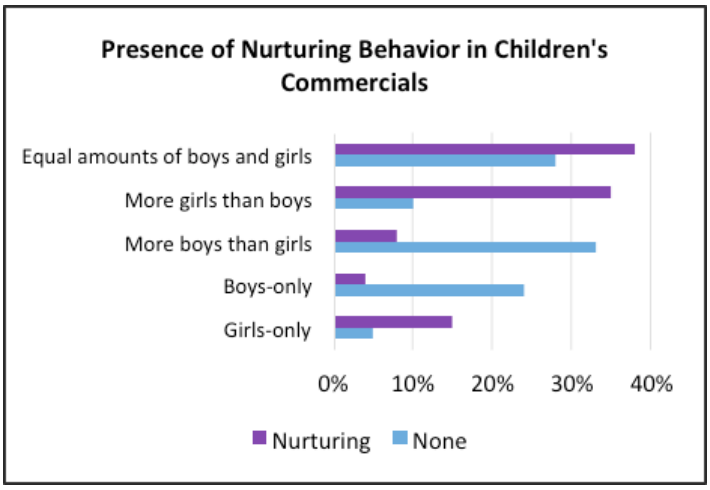
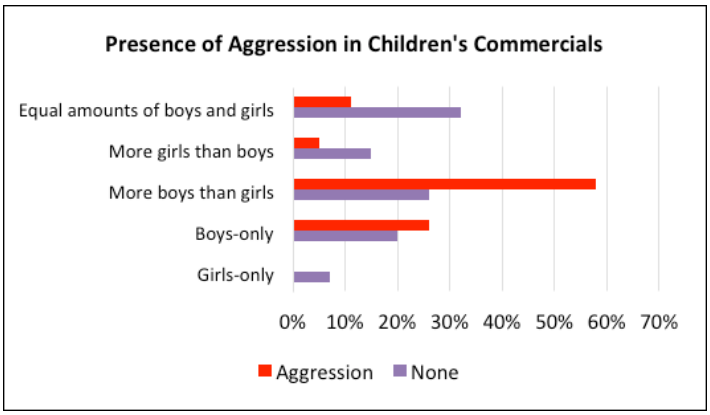



Figure 4 illustrates the statistically significant tendency of children's advertisements to portray nurturing behavior in female-dominant commercials.




*($\chi 2$ =11.124[a], 4df, p=.025) N=200

Figure 5 depicts the statistically significant relationship between male-dominant advertisements and aggressive behavior.

There is a statistically significant relationship between aggression and gender (p=.025). Aggression, the most frequently occurring of the behaviors observed in commercials, was found more in commercials with boys than girls (58 percent) and boys-only (26 percent). There were no "girls-only" commercials that displayed aggressive behavior and only five percent of those with more girls than boys demonstrated any aggressive behavior. Please refer to Figure 5 for more detailed information.

There was no statistically significant correlation found between gender and athleticism in children's commercials. Athletic behavior was found to be most prevalent in boys-only commercials and commercials with equal amounts of boys and girls (31 percent each). The next highest proportion of commercials with athleticism consisted of those with more boys than girls, at 23 percent.

Results indicate that dancing was more commonly observed in boys-only than girls-only commercials but, like athletics, there was no statistically significant association between gender and dancing found in the commercials. Findings suggest that dancing was most common in commercials with an equal representation of both genders (28 percent) and in commercials with more boys than girls (28 percent). However, the next highest proportion of dancing took place in commercials with more girls than boys, at 24 percent. Fourteen percent of the boys-only commercials featured characters dancing, while seven percent of girls-only commercials portrayed dancing.

## Discussion

Many longstanding stereotypes still remain in commercials targeted to children, although there is evidence that advertising has taken some steps toward a more nontraditional representation of gender. The results of a systematic content analysis of children's commercials aired on the Nickelodeon network during prime viewing times reveal that while not all gender roles portrayed in advertising targeted to children have remained stagnant, many of the gender stereotypes from the past three decades continue to endure today.

Mirroring the same pattern from years of antecedent research, this study found a strong correlation between gender in children's commercials and the toy being advertised. This correlation results in the perpetuation of the stereotype that certain toys are for boys and other toys are for girls. The analysis found a statistically significant relationship between gender and types of toys (p=.005). Similar to the findings of Hein and Kahlenberg (2009), the results of this study supported Hypotheses 1 and 2, which predicted that toy products such as action figures and construction/building or transportation toys would generally feature male actors, while dolls and stuffed animals would be advertised using predominantly female actresses. Within the commercials that only featured girl characters, 100 percent of the commercials were advertising a "girl toy", a doll or a stuffed animal, while 100 percent of boys-only commercials advertised a "boy toy", such as a toy truck or a set of Legos. Additionally, technology toys were targeted primarily to boys. Three-fifths of technology-related toys, such as video or computer games, featured only boy characters.

Overall, results reveal the enduring existence of a male-dominant representation of gender in children's advertisements. The data clearly show that boys are pictured 70 percent more frequently in children's commercials than are girls, even though boys age 2 to 9 years old only make up approximately one percent more of the population than girls of the same age (US Census, 2012). The strong prevalence of male-dominated advertisements, including both exclusively-male advertisements and commercials with more boys than girls, suggests that advertisers are continuing to give male children more opportunities to be visible and vocal in mediated spaces.

The narrators of the commercials in the study tend to be primarily male (64.3 percent), further

emphasizing the dominant presence of boys. A narrator in a commercial is the voice of information and persuasion, two noteworthy sources of social power. The prevalence of male narrators serves as supplementary evidence to the view that advertising reinforces not only male-dominated commercials, but also a male-dominated society.

For decades, advertising research has indicated that women are most often depicted in the home, while men are shown at work or outdoors (Eisend & Knoll, 2011; Hein & Kahlenberg, 2009). In support of this literature, this study found a significant relationship between gender and setting (p= .028). For example, while 63.6 percent of "girls-only" commercials were indoors, only 31.4 percent of "boys-only" commercials were indoors. Furthermore, no girls-only commercials were set outdoors. Overall, these findings add evidence to the view that women are or should be more domesticated, while boys are more "outdoorsy". By showing girls mainly indoors, these commercials perpetuate the narrative that a woman's place is in the home, while men have the option of exploring a wider range of environments. The implication is that girls and women are expected to remain within the boundaries of domestic environments and men are free of such limitations.

In addition to the product association and the traditional gender-oriented settings, stereotypical behaviors such as aggression and competition also continue to permeate boy-targeted children's commercials, while perceived unassuming behavior, such as nurturing, tends to be most associated with girls.

*Advertisers showed competitive behavior in commercials where boys were the main actors*: Competiveness was noticeably absent from commercials with primarily girls. Anuradha (2012) and Hein and Kahlenberg (2009) found that children's advertisements tend to characterize boys as more competitive than girls. The results of this study mirror these findings and support Hypothesis 3, as boys were found to be statistically significantly (p=.008) more likely than girls to show competitive behavior in the commercials. No girls-only commercials showed competitive behavior, but 16.7 percent of competition was shown in boys-only commercials. Furthermore, no competition was present in commercials with more girls than boys; nonetheless 58 percent of all competitive behavior was displayed in commercials with more boys than girls. The implication of this finding is that commercials are socializing girls to avoid competition.

However, 25 percent of commercials with "equal amounts of boys and girls" exhibited competitive behavior, similar in comparison with the 22 percent in Hein and Kahlengberg's (2009) findings. While this statistic appears to reflect a step away from the traditional stereotype that competition is a realm limited to boys only, it also seems to imply that girls compete more when boys are present, as there were no girls-only commercials that featured competitive behavior.

*Nurturing behavior appears to permeate girl-dominant commercials:* Nurturing behavior is evident in commercials with equal amount of boys and girls and in girls-only commercials, but still noticeably absent in boy-dominant commercials. Domesticity has traditionally been a trait associated with women (Bakir, Blodgett, & Rose, 2008; Davis, 2011; Eisend & Knoll, 2011). In children, one manifestation of this stereotype can be seen through nurturing behavior, such as caring for, feeding or cuddling a doll or stuffed animal. Hypothesis 4 was supported in that nurturing behavior tends to be more prevalent in girls, as 36.4 percent of "girls-only" commercials displayed nurturing behavior, while only 2.7 percent of boys-only commercials showed nurturing behavior. This was a statistically significant relationship (p=.000). Results also offered evidence that advertisers seem to be making some advances away from stereotypical gender roles, as the largest percentage of commercials displaying nurturing behavior were those featuring "equal amounts of boys and girls" (38.5 percent). Nonetheless, the deficiency of nurturing behavior in boys-only commercials continues to support the expectation that nurturing behavior is a tendency primarily ascribed to girls. The implication of this finding is that boys are rarely being exposed to images in commercials of males being nurturers without the presence of girls. Boys perhaps are being socialized that being nurturing is not a role for boys and men.

*Aggression was found to be more prevalent in male-dominant children commercials*: In regard to Hypothesis 5, which predicted that boys would be portrayed as more aggressive than girls, this study's findings were similar to that of Klinger, Hamilton and Cantrell (2001) and Browne (1998), in that boys are portrayed to be more aggressive than girls in children's advertisements. Most commercials displaying aggression had more boys than girls (57.9 percent), or had only boys (26.3 percent). In contrast, there were no "girls-only" commercials that displayed any

aggressive behavior. Across the board, these results reflect longstanding social expectations that women and girls should not demonstrate aggressive behaviors, yet this is an expectation of men and boys. While negative aggression is not condoned by this author, the implication of this finding is that it is acceptable for boys to fight, wrestle or use physical force, while this is not an expectation for girls. The study did not make observations as to which gender was the recipient of the male-dominated aggression.

*A propensity to show athleticism in boys was observed in this study, but athletic behaviors were also evident among girls*: Although traditional gender expectations would posit that boys should be characterized as more athletic than girls, advertisements aired on Nickelodeon seem to be making strides toward a more progressive, non-traditional representation of girls. There was not a statistically significant relationship (p=.328) found between gender and athleticism. Although there was a clear propensity for athletic behavior in boys-only commercials (31 percent) as opposed to the 15 percent of athleticism portrayed in girls-only commercials, there was an equal display of athleticism in commercials with both boys and girls (31 percent).

*Dancing appears to be a gender-neutral behavior:* Given that there exists a social expectation for boys to be masculine, independent and professional, while girls are viewed as cooperative, less serious and more animated, it would follow that girls would be more associated with dancing (Anuradha, 2012; Hein & Kahlenberg, 2009; Neto & Pinto, 1998). However, the results of this content analysis would seem to contradict this expectation. With a p-value of .426, dancing and gender were not shown to have a statistically significant relationship. Overall, commercials targeted to children do not appear to strongly link dancing to either gender. The highest proportion of commercials featuring characters dancing were advertisements with equal amounts of boys and girls (28 percent) and commercials with more boys than girls (28 percent). A possible explanation for this finding is that dancing is an activity that is often done with a male and female together. That said, the study found that there were twice as many boys-only commercials (14 percent) displaying characters dancing in comparison to girls-only commercials (7 percent).

In summary, hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported, in that a statistically significant relationship was found between boys and "boy toys" and, conversely, girls and "girl toys". Furthermore, hypotheses 3 through 6 were also supported by results in that there was a statistically significant association between boys and the behaviors of competition and aggression, as well as girls and nurturing behavior and a domestic setting.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this content analysis contributes to antecedent advertising research in the area of gender stereotyping. Results indicate the clear presence of longstanding gender expectations within current children's commercials, including the association of toy types, setting, nurturing, competitive and aggressive behaviors with a particular gender. However, findings also demonstrate nontraditional strides within advertising toward a more contemporary notion of gender, particularly in the areas of athleticism and dancing. The progress away from gender prejudice in the area of athleticism coincides with recent Fem-vertising campaigns, such as the #LikeAGirl campaign, which encourages women to proudly run and throw 'like a girl' (Mitchell, 2015). Still, there remains ample room for progress to be made.

While stereotypes will perhaps always remain a component of advertising, if progress continues, the gender stereotypes that saturate commercials today may one day cease to ensnare children's perception of themselves. For advertising to be more effective, it needs to keep abreast with cultural and attitudinal changes in women and girls.

Although this study certainly provided support for previous research that indicated a statistically significant association between gender and the types of toys advertised and certain behaviors, a broader sample size would have provided a clearer understanding of these relationships. Analyses of 200 commercials did not allow for an all-encompassing view of certain types of behavioral concepts depicted in the commercials.

Future studies can further the research of gender stereotypes in children's advertising by analyzing a broader range of children's networks. Studies could also analyze parents' attitudes and perceptions of stereotypes depicted in children's commercials, as well as commercials directed at adults on children's networks. This study found that commercials for products such as insurance, Pampers diapers and baby-sitting services were clearly targeted to parents. It is possible that the degree of gender stereotyping and even the type of stereotyping used may differ between children-targeted

commercials and adult-targeted commercials. Finally, with the increasing popularity of electronic games, this research could be further advanced by taking a more concentrated focus on the gender stereotypes associated with video games.

Overall, this study reveals that gender stereotypes remain prevalent within contemporary children's advertisements. Thus, advertisers will likely continue to market Pocket Polly to girls who are exhibiting different behaviors from boys who prefer to play with Ninja Turtles. However, the results of the study also indicate that some of the traditional stereotypes that have characterized children's commercials for the past few decades are now showing signs of transformation.

**References**


Anuradha, M. (2012). Gender stereotyping in television commercials aimed at children in India. *Media Asia, 39*(4), 209-215.

Bakir, A., Blodgett, J. G., & Rose, G. M. (2008). Children's responses to gender-role stereotyped advertisements. *Journal of Advertising Research, 48*(2), 255-266.

Browne, B. (1998). Gender stereotypes in advertising on children's television in the 1990s: A cross-national analysis. *Journal of Advertising*, *27*(1), 83-96.

Castillo, M. (2014). These states prove femvertising works. *Adweek.* Retrieved from http://www.adweek.com/news/technology/these-stats-prove-femvertising-works-160704

Centeno, D., & Prieler, M. (2013). Gender representation in Philippine television advertisements. *Sex Roles, 69,* 276-288.

Children's Advertising Review Unit. (2009). *Self-regulatory program for children's advertising.* Available at http://www.caru.org/guidelines/guidelines.pdf

Comello, M. L. G. (2011). Characterizing drug non-users as distinction in prevention messages: Implications of optimal distinctiveness theory. *Health Communication, 26*(4), 313-332.

Davis, S. N. (2002). Sex stereotypes in commercials targeted toward children: A content analysis. *Sociological Spectrum, 23*(4), 407-424.

Eisend, M., Plagemann, J., & Sollwedel, J. (2014). Gender roles and humor in advertising: The occurrence of stereotyping in humorous and nonhumorous advertising and its consequences for advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Advertising, 43*(3), 256-273.

Furnham, A., & Saar, A. (2005). Gender-role stereotyping in adult and children's television advertisements: A two-study comparison between Great Britain and Poland. *Communications: The European Journal of Communications Research, 30*(1), 73-90.

Gantz, W., & Kunkel, D. (1993). Assessing compliance with industry self-regulation of television advertising to children. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *21*(2), 148-161.

Gilmore, J. S., & Jordan, A. (2012). Burgers and basketball: Race and stereotypes in food and beverage advertising aimed at children in the US. *Journal of Children and Media, 6*(3), 317-332.

Hein, M. M., & Kahlenberg, S. G. (2009). Progression on Nickelodeon? Gender-role stereotypes in toy commercials. *Sex Roles, 62*(11/12), 830-847.

Hentges, B. A., Bartsch, R. A., & Meier, J. A. (2007). Gender representation in commercials as a function of target audience age. *Communication Research Reports, 24*(1), 55-62.

Hofstee, N., Odekerken-Shröder, G., & De Wulf, K. (2001). Is gender stereotyping more prevalent in masculine countries? A cross-national analysis. *International Marketing Review, 19*(4/5), 408.

Horovitz, B. (2011, August 15). Marketing to children gets more savvy with new technologies. *USA Today*. Retrieved from http://www.usatoday.com

Ibroscheva, E. (2007). Caught between east and west? Portrayals of gender in Bulgarian television. *Sex Roles, 57*, 409-418.

Ifezue, A. N. (2010). What makes an effective advertising for a man or a woman? *Journal of Communication 1*(1), 13-18.

Klinger, L. J., Hamilton, J. A., & Cantrell, P. J. (2001). Children's perceptions of aggressive and gender-specific content in toy commercials. *Social Behavior and Personality, 29*(1), 11-20.

Kolbe, R. H., & Muehling, D. (1995). Gender roles and children's television advertising. *Journal of Current Issues in Advertising, 17*(1), 49-64.

Larson, M. S. (2002). Race and interracial relationships in children's television commercials. *The Howard Journal of Communication, 13*(3), 223-235.

Li-Vollmer, M. (2002). Race representation in child-targeted television commercials. *Mass Communication & Society, 5*(2), 207-228.

Maher, J. K., Herbst, K. C., Childs, N. M., & Finn, S. (2008). Racial stereotypes in children's television commercials. *Journal of Advertising Research, 48*(1), 80-93.

Marketing Charts staff. (2014). *Are young people watching less TV? (Updated – Q3 2014 Edition)*. Retrieved from: http://www.marketingcharts.com/television/are-young-people-watching-less-tv-24817/

Marketing Charts staff. (2014). *Impact on daily spending of having kids.* Retrieved from http://www.marketingcharts.com/traditional/impact-on-daily-spending-of- having-kids-in-the-household-41383/

Martínez, E., Nicolás, M. A., & Salas, Á. (2013). Gender representation in advertising of toys in the Christmas period (2009-12). *Scientific Journal of Media Education, 41*(21), 187-194.

Mastro, D. E., & Stern, S. R. (2004). Gender portrayals across the lifespan: A content analytical look at broadcast commercials. *Mass Communications & Society, 7*(2), 215-236.

Mastro, D. E., & Stern, S. R. (2003). Representations of race in television commercials: A content analysis of prime-time advertising. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, 47*(4), 638-647.

McCracken, G. (1986). Culture and consumption: A theoretical account of the structure and movement of the cultural meaning of consumer goods. *Journal of Consumer Research, 13(June), 71.*

Merskin, D. (2002). Boys will be boys: A content analysis of gender and race in children's advertisements on the Turner Cartoon Network. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising, 24*(1), 51-59.

Mitchell, B. (2015). Girl power wins big at Cannes Ad Festival. *USA Today.* Retrieved from http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2015/06/23/cannes-ad-festival-glass-lion-awards/29173189/

Mitu, B. M. (2011). Television's impact on today's people and culture. *Economics, Management and Financial Markets, 6*(2), 916-921.

Neto, F., & Pinto, I. (1998). Gender stereotypes in Portuguese television advertisements. *Sex Roles. 39*(1/2), 53.

Nielsen. (2014). *Global online purchase intentions have doubled since 2011 for E-Books, toys, sporting goods; Online market for pet and baby supplies, other consumable products also growing.* Retrieved from http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/press-room/2014/global-online-purchase-intentions-have-doubled-since-2011-for-ebooks-toys-sporting-goods.html

Nielsen. (2014). *Nielsen TV: How children are influencing book-purchasing decisions.* Retrieved from http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/news/2014/nielsen-tv-how-children-influence-book-purchasing-decisions.html

Nielsen. (2014). *The littlest consumers' big value in the entertainment industry*. Retrieved from http://www.nielsen.com/us/en.html

Nielsen. (2014). *Tops of 2014: Entertainment.* Retrieved from http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/news/2014/tops-of-2014-entertainment.html

Nudd, T. (2013). Dove's 'Real Beauty Sketches' earns Ogilvy the Titanium Grand Prix. *Adweek.* Retrieved from http://www.adweek.com/news/advertising-branding/doves-real-beauty-sketches-earns-ogilvy-brazil-titanium-grand-prix-150587

Poindexter, P. M., & McCombs, M. E. (2000). *Research in mass communication: A practical guide.* Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Richter, F. (2014). *Watching TV Is the No.1 leisure activity in the U.S.* Retrieved from http://www.statista.com/chart/2980/leisure-activities-in-the-united-states/

Robinson, J. (October, 2012). The next generation of consumers. Retrieved fromhttps://www.democraticmedia.org/sites/default/files/The-Next-Generation-of-Consumers.pdf

Rose, G., Merchant, A., & Bakir, A. (2012). Fantasy in food advertising targeted at children. *Journal of Advertising. 41*(3), *75.*

Sengupta, R. (2006). Reading representations of black, East Asian, and white women in magazines for adolescent girls. *Sex Roles. 54*(11/12), 799–808.

Stereotype. (2015). In *Oxford University Press.* Retrieved from http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/189956?rskey=QMNsI4&result=1#eid

Strasburger, V. C., & Hogan, M. J. (2013). Children, adolescents and the media. *Pediatrics 132*(5), 958-961.

Toure, M. (2015). Cannes Adds "Glass Lion' to Address Gender Issues. *Advertising Age.* Retrieved from http://adage.com/article/special-report-cannes-lions/cannes-adds-glass-lions-2015-awards-lion-change/297400/

Trefis Team. (2014). Viacom's Nickelodeon continues its ratings uptrend into 2014. *Forbes*. Retrieved from http://www.forbes.com

Turrill, D. (2014). The total audience report. *Nielsen* Q3 (2014), 11. Retrieved from http://www.nielsen.com/content/dam/corporate/us/en/reports-downloads/2014%20Reports/total-audience-report-december-2014.pdf

Viacom. (2014). *Nickelodeon wins 2Q14 with kids and total viewers, marks third straight quarter at number-one*. Retrieved from http://ir.viacom.com/releasedetail.cfm?ReleaseID=857435

Whipple, T. W., & Courtney, A. E. (1980). How to portray women in TV commercials. *Journal of Advertising Research, 20*(2), 53-59.

Whitney, D. (2005). For children TV, every day is Saturday. *Advertising Age, 76*(8), 10.

Wimmer, R. D., & Dominick, J. R. (2011). *Mass media research* (9th ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth.