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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Teresa Shelley Bowman entitled "Women, Aging, and Media: How Women Are Impacted By Messages About Getting Older In Popular Culture." I have examined the final paper copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Anthropology.

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Women, Aging, and Media: How Women Are Impacted By Messages About Getting Older In Popular Culture

A Thesis
Presented for The Master of Arts Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Teresa Shelley Bowman
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to Wayne, for all of his help and especially for convincing me to go back to school when our sons went.

Acknowledgments

I would like to extend my appreciation to the generous women who participated in this project and who enthusiastically provided their opinions, thoughts, and (often) encouragement to me so their voices could be heard.

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Abstract

There is a growing body of literature about the social and economic impact of baby boomers and how aging is affecting their perceptions. The immense wealth of this group (and their willingness to spend it) is a focal point for marketers and, therefore, for the media.

However, media portrayal of older women is paradoxical. Women of the boomer generation (born 1946-1964) are highly educated, financially strong, and more independent than previous generations. Studies indicate that these women will actually control much of the country's wealth in coming years and will be the ones responsible for deciding how it is spent. It would seem that marketers would be devoting much of their time and media expenditures toward reaching this group and discovering the products and messages that motivate them. But, as a number of older women (both in literature on the subject and as participants in the research for this project) indicate, they feel "invisible" in the media.

The purpose of this study was to interview women in this age group (50 years and older) to determine their perceptions of the media and how older women are portrayed in advertising, movies, and other media sources. The study revealed that older women feel overlooked in many media outlets. Despite feeling "invisible" and that something should be done about it, older women may themselves playing a role in this phenomenon. This study contributes to anthropological literature and provides substantive findings that identify some of the factors impacting how women are portrayed (and sometimes used) in media—and how they feel about themselves and their place in the world.

Table Of Contents

Chapter

1. Introduction **1**
Issues Background 3

2. Background **13**
Research Theory 14

3. Methodology **17**
Demography of Respondents 21

4. Research Findings **23**
Purchasing Preferences: A Diverse, Independent Streak 24
Entertainment Purchases and Preferences 26
Opinions of Aging 28
Career, Family, Educations and Personal Time—Then and Now 29
Who's Happier? 31
Focusing on the Media 37
Work and Gender 39
Opinions on Advertising and Other Images of Women In The Media 41
Looking More at Aging—And Looking Ahead 49

5. Themes **53**
Theme 1: Invisibility 53
Theme 2: Inaccuracy 58
Theme 3: Independence 66
Theme 4: "Old" is a Bad Word 69
Theme 5: Concern for Others 71
Theme 6: The Exploitation of Women 76
Theme 7: Gender Differences 79
Theme 8: Personal Strategies 81
Theme 9: Changing Popular Media 86

6. Conclusion **91**
Continuing The Research 98

References **103**

Appendices **107**
Appendix A: Survey Results 108
Appendix B: Interview Material 217

Vita **230**

List of Tables

Table

A1. Question 2. What is your occupation? 109
A2. Question 4. What is your ethnic/racial group? 110
A3. Question 11. Can you name five items you have purchased *just for yourself* in the last two weeks? 123
A4. Question 12. Please list magazines you read regularly. 127
A5. Question 13. When you shop for clothes, do you prefer any particular designers or brands? 130
A6. Question 14. What is your favorite: (TV show, movie, musical artist, actor, actress) 131
A7. Question 15. In the last year, what has been your least favorite: (TV show, movie, musical artist) 137
A8. Question 19. What do you envision yourself doing five years from now? 208
A9. Question 20. In your opinion, what are the advantages that come with growing older? 209
A10. Question 21. What are the disadvantages? 210
A11. Question 22. In what ways have women's positions in society changed since you were 25? 211
A12. Question 23. In what ways would you change the way media treats women over 50? 212
A13. Question 24. In your opinion, what does it mean to age gracefully? 213
A14. Question 24A. In your opinion, what does it mean to age successfully? 214
A15. Question 25. Is there anything else regarding the media and how women our age are treated you'd like to comment on? 215

List of Figures

Figure

1. Images of Online Survey Screens. 19
2. Test Ad 1. 42
3. Test Ad 2. 42
4. Test Ad 3. 43
5. Botox Ad from *More* Magazine. 46
6. Dove Ad Images. 48
7. Dove Campaign For Real Beauty. 60
8. Marilyn Alex. 63
9. Lola Santos. 73
10. Ponds "43 and Foxier" – 2 sided ad. 75

A1. Question 1. What is your age? 108
A2. Question 3. What is your level of education? 109
A3. Question 5. What is your personal relationship status? 110
A4. Question 6: Do you have children? 111
A5. Question 7: What is your household income? 111
A6. Questions 8 & 9A. Career. 112
A7. Questions 8 & 9B. Family. 113
A8. Questions 8 & 9C. Education. 113
A9. Questions 8 & 9D. Personal Time. 114
A10. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations. 8A. Career. 115
A11. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations. 9A. Career @ 25. 116
A12. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations. 8B. Family. 117
A13. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations. 9B. Family @ 25. 118
A14. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations. 8C. Education. 119
A15. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations. 9C. Education @ 25. 120
A16. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations. 8D. Personal Time. 121
A17. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations. 9D. Personal Time @ 25. 122
A18. Question 16A. Today's society is too youth oriented. 140
A19. Crosstabulation Question 16A. 141
A20. Question 16B. Women are less affected by aging than men. 142
A21. Crosstabulation Question 16B. 143
A22. Question 16C. When I see women my own age in advertising, I am more likely to believe the message. 144
A23. Crosstabulation Question 16C. 145
A24. Question 16D. I enjoy changing my hair color occasionally. 146
A25. Crosstabulation Question 16D. 147
A26. Question 16E. If I were offered a makeover, I would take advantage of it. 148
A27. Crosstabulation Question 16E. 149
A28. Question 16F. I would consider cosmetic surgery if my insurance would cover the procedure. 150
A29. Crosstabulation Question 16F. 151

A30. Question 16G. Advertising has more influence on me now than when I was a teenager. 152
A31. Crosstabulation Question 16G. 153
A32. Question 16H. I am more likely to believe an article than an ad. 154
A33. Crosstabulation Question 16H. 155
A34. Question 17A. I have a more active social life. 156
A35. Crosstabulation Question 17A. 157
A36. Question 17B. I have a more satisfying social life. 158
A37. Crosstabulation Question 17B. 159
A38. Question 17C. My professional relationships with men are better. 160
A39. Crosstabulation Question 17C. 161
A40. Question 17D. I feel more comfortable in social settings. 162
A41. Crosstabulation Question 17D. 163
A42. Question 17E. I feel more comfortable with personal image. 164
A43. Crosstabulation Question 17E. 165
A44. Question 17F. Coworkers respect me more now than when I was first starting my career. 166
A45. Crosstabulation Question 17F. 167
A46. Question 17G. I am given as much respect professionally as men my same age. 168
A47. Crosstabulation Question 17G. 169
A48. Question 17H. I worry less about my personal appearance. 170
A49. Crosstabulation Question 17H. 171
A50. Question 17I. I make more New Year's resolutions. 172
A51. Crosstabulation 17I. 173
A52. Question 17J. I am more aware of the ages of people around me. 174
A53. Crosstabulation Question 17J. 175
A54. Question 17K. I pay more attention to advertising and articles about aging. 176
A55. Crosstabulation Question 17K. 177
A56. Question 17L. I look forward to retirement. 178
A57. Crosstabulation Question 17L. 179
A58. Question 17M. I am happier now than when I was 25. 180
A59. Crosstabulation Question 17M. 181
A60. Question 17N. I am happier than my mother when she was my current age. 182
A61. Crosstabulation Question 17N. 183
A62. Question 17O. I have more control over my life than when I was 25. 184
A63. Crosstabulation Question 17O. 185
A64. Question 17P. Women over 50 are accurately portrayed in popular media. 186
A65. Crosstabulation Question 17P. 187
A66. Question 17Q. Women over 50 are positive role models. 188
A67. Crosstabulation Question 17Q. 189

A68. Question 17R. Women over 50 all seem the same in ads and on television. 190
A69. Crosstabulation Question 17R. 191
A70. Question 17S. I feel a woman will be elected president in the next 20 years. 192
A71. Crosstabulation Question 17S. 193
A72. Question 17T. I feel more positive about the future than when I was 25. 194
A73. Crosstabulation Question 17T. 195
A74. Question 18. 196
A75. Question 18A. 203
A76. Question 18B. 205

B1. Julianne Moore – lipstick. 218
B2. Cybill Shephard - lipstick ad. 219
B3. Oil of Olay – mother's wrinkles/daughter's pimples. 220
B4. Oil of Olay – have work done. 221
B5. Ponds: 43 and foxier – two sided. 222
B6. Dove Ad/USA Today article. 223
B7. Lola Santos quotation. 224
B8. Mona Miwako and granddaughter. 225
B9. Miss Birdie and friend. 226
B10. Marilyn Alex quotation. 227
B11. Joanie MacPherson. 228
B12. Geraldine Smith. 229

Chapter One: Introduction

When I first started studying Anthropology, I became intrigued with Bourdieu's concept of capital, and how it can be gained and lost. I have personally begun experiencing this capital shift as I have grown older, since it seems older women have a diminished visibility in a youth-oriented society. I began wondering how Bourdieu's capital principles might apply to this phenomenon.

This led to discussions with my professors and others about perceptions of aging women, and many suggested that this is an area where there is a need for additional study. A quick sampling of existing resources indicated that there is a growing body of information about aging baby boomers in general, but that still, few marketers are focusing on women.

At the same time, a number of studies suggest that aging women will become one of the most potentially influential demographics in the history of the country. However, researchers also acknowledge that there is limited availability of information about this group. A phrase that reoccurs in secondary sources and the survey conducted for this project is "invisibility." Women in this age group often say they feel "invisible," but if they have the wealth and power to potentially change the country, why is this happening? Popular media and marketers in the United States are credited with making ours a youth-oriented society. But if one considers the fact that the first wave of baby boomers is approaching retirement age, and that the youngest of this revolution-creating generation are now in their fourth decade, a change in societal notions could be anticipated.

It can be argued that the baby boomer generation is largely responsible for the initiation of our youth-driven society (Tischler, 2004). But as the "never trust anyone over 30" generation moves into their 40s, 50s, and 60s, how will the perceptions of aging change?

The way in which aging is perceived is especially pertinent for women, because between the ages of 30 and 35, women start to outnumber men in all countries. Elderly women greatly outnumber elderly men in most countries (Tirrito, 2003). The proportion of women over 50 in the general population indicates that in this country, we may be entering a period where an older, female population could wield unprecedented influence. There have always been remarkable women who have accepted age gracefully and used it to their advantage. The difference now is that these older, powerful women may not be so unique. Instead of being individualists, because of the sheer numbers of aging women, they could be constituencies. But does the fact that the over-50 female segment of the population is now larger than the 18-39 group translate into influence and power? If so, to what extent is that influence and power equally distributed among members of this older group?

Evidence suggests this group has substantial economic, social, and political resources—more than at any other time in history—plus the ability to communicate their opinions and desires. Yet some of these women are asserting that there is a need for change in the way older women are perceived (and treated)—while others say they are content with the status quo.

Learning about how this ever-growing, ever-changing group of women makes its way in this society is a subject of significance for many disciplines. How this large body

of older people accepts aging (and how they could again change our society) merits study.

More resources for studying this group are becoming available constantly. The population age shift long ago got the attention of marketers, who have compiled a number of books and countless articles on the demographics (and psychographics) of this group. New media vehicles, such as magazines like *More* (targeted specifically to women over 40), are appearing. Websites devoted to women's aging are springing up, and—perhaps most importantly—women themselves are becoming more vocal on the subject.

But even in these new "targeted" media, there seem to be paradoxes. Look at an issue of *More* Magazine, and it's apparent that many of the models in featured advertising are much younger than 40. If the publication is directed to this age group, why do the ads not reflect this?

So there seems to be a lack of understanding. The depiction of older women in media seems to be different from how they view themselves. And marketers' depiction of older women may not be connected to the actual interests (and motivations) of this potentially lucrative audience.

Issues Background

It can be argued that Baby Boomer women (born 1946-1964) are the biggest, richest, most lucrative market of the future (Barletta, 2003). This would suggest that this audience, which has been lumped together as a single cohort as well as sub-divided by biological, social, and economic factors, is wielding influence like never before.

Alternatively, if one listens to the pervasive undercurrent of discontent it seems that women over 50 are misunderstood, misrepresented, and disenfranchised. It is unlikely that a group of people this large and diverse can be understood without the benefit of holistic, inter-disciplinary study or function easily as a group without formal organization and a great desire to be considered a unit. The possibility of good results coming from the unified efforts of a group of people with this much power and access to disposable income is intriguing, but perhaps the first question to answer is do these people want to be considered a group?

There are several things to be considered in order to ascertain whether or not women over 50 feel connected with one another enough to accept and celebrate each other's differences and still work together as a group. To better understand this phenomenon, the first step is to look at how women over 50 are depicted in popular media; then to explore what a sample group of women over 50 thinks of the images they see of older women in the media. Untangling the complexities of the relationship and mutual influence between the women in this demographic and popular media will increase our understanding of both entities.

Conducting research with women who are over 50 years of age as a group is by no means an attempt to ignore the diversity within this age group. The question posed by Eva Friedlander to the people gathered at the 1995 NGO Forum on Women in Beijing, China can be asked in this situation as well, "how to fashion a future that builds on, and seeks strength in, the differences that exist between the generations of women, while at the same time recognizing the commonality of interests (Friedlander, 1996)?" Certain aspects of this project will look at this group of individuals as a whole, but the objective

will be to look for shared experiences, as well as for the genuine diversity that Friedlander argues is the "reality check" necessary to gauge meaning and implication across economics and a variety of specific realities and experiences (Friedlander, 1996).

Joseph Maxwell defined context as the situation in which the participants act and as the reality that influences their actions (Maxwell, 1996). The following section describes the context in which boomer women are acting. For the purposes of this project the dominant aspect of the context is the demographic information that informs how popular media creates images of older women, how it acts on these images especially through advertising, and how these created images are received by women, especially those within the older category.

According to Mature Marketing and Research, a Boston-based firm, boomer women control more than half of the nation's discretionary income and three-quarters of the country's financial wealth (www.maturemarketing.com, 2006).

Boomers' parents (The Silent Generation) are beginning to pass their wealth along to their offspring and the resulting inheritances will spell the largest intergenerational wealth transference in history. By 2020, the spending by those 50 and older will be a trillion dollars greater than spending by people between the ages of 18 and 34: $2.6 trillion vs. $1.6 trillion (Tischler, 2004).

Women have remarkable control over all this economic power. Women not only disproportionately decide where a family's funds will be spent, they control or influence 80% of all purchases of both consumer and business goods and services. They have sole or joint ownership of 87% of homes and buy 61% of major home improvement products. They account for 66% of all home computer purchases and 80% of all health-care

services. They start 70% of all new businesses (Tischler, 2004). Martha Barletta writes that women are the ones spending the money and boomer women have more money to spend (Barletta 2003).

But marketers seem to be ignoring older consumers. "Ageism is our society's last acceptable area of bigotry," notes David Wolfe in *Ageless Marketing*. According to one marketing expert, you would think that marketers would be on this group like ants at a picnic. You would be wrong" (Wolfe, 2003).

Some marketing experts are now looking at ways to reach this market, and they believe that companies who correct assess the experiences, circumstances, and desires of women over 50 will find a receptive audience.

Take the example of Chico clothing. Chico is a label that designs exclusively for older women. The clothes are stylish, high quality, and even sexy. Chico has had tremendous success. Yet every year, when asked who its competitors are, Chico executives can confidently answer "no one." No other fashion company has chosen to pursue this lucrative market as enthusiastically and as specifically as Chico has.

Older women consumers report negative buying experience in key categories like cars and computers, because they are regarded as unknowledgeable. Research in floor covering (a product bought overwhelmingly—over 95%--by women) indicated that most floor covering stores are actually designed for men shoppers—and that a woman shopper will buy better quality goods and pay more money if she ***does not talk with a salesperson*** (Allman, 2004).

To reach an older consumer, experts feel that marketers have to make a connection with the reawakening of consciousness of what it means to be a woman, not

in a sexual way, but how being a woman is enjoyable and how women are thinking about getting the most out of their lives. There are a lot of things women have put on hold, and now they have the freedom to do them without feeling guilty.

Companies that have managed to tap into this demographic's reawakening sense of self have reaped the rewards of financial gains and customer loyalty. Financial services companies picked up on this trend early, as did New Balance shoes. But many companies are having trouble hitting the mark. They tend to lump anyone "older" into an "old" category, although the desires and needs of someone at age 40 are entirely different than someone who's 80 (Tischler, 2004). And there's another strong financial reason why marketers should be paying attention: Older women can have tremendous influence over the buying habits of younger women, especially daughters and granddaughters (Popcorn, 2000).

In *Portraying Older People in Advertising*, Thomas Robinson discusses the issue of "homogenizing" older television viewers, citing Horace Deets, 1993 Executive Director, American Association of Retired Persons. Deets points out that:

"today's television viewer is led to believe that most "older" Americans

--Are alike

--Are institutionalized

--Are in poor health

--Are senile, constipated, or incontinent; and

--Are either extremely poor or very wealthy.

These myths and stereotypes are plain wrong."

As more and more Americans enter the aging cohort, this stereotype is becoming increasingly inaccurate, and also more dangerous (Deets, 1993).

Based on his research findings, Robinson argues that not only are these stereotypes wrong, they convey a negative picture of aging which leads many Americans to view growing "older" with disdain and dismay. Also, if we buy into the role models we see on television, we may begin to behave accordingly and become burdens on society—not useful, productive, vital contributors (Robinson, 1998).

Individuals who reach the age of 65 these days can expect to live another 15 to 20 years. Longer average life spans mean people are now experiencing a second or prolonged middle age and now enjoy all the advantages of middle age for many decades (Deets, as cited by Robinson, 1998). Today, people in their sixties, seventies, and eighties are alert and full of life and vitality, and support themselves and even their children and grandchildren when necessary. Given their life expectancies, strong financial status, and increasing numbers, it would seem that advertisers would target the older consumer. The older market accounts for 40% of the consumer demand in the U.S., and this group is particularly influenced by commercials. Sixty-nine percent say that commercials often help with purchasing decisions, while 63% believe that commercials provide useful information. Seventy-five percent report they are willing to switch brands and experiment with new products. No longer saddled with the expense of raising children or paying mortgages, older Americans are able to spend money on themselves (Robinson, 1998).

Yet there is still little evidence that advertisers and product manufacturers are targeting older Americans. A growing number of products are made to make the consumer feel younger with youthful advertising appeals. The not-so-subtle suggestion is that in reality aging is so bad that no one should truly admit to being older. Even when a middle aged or older model is used, the ad copy still promises youth as the payoff and older individuals are sent the message that if they want to participate, they must take on the features and concern of the young. Younger women sell beauty products—older women sell digestion aids, laxatives, denture fixtures, and arthritis remedies (Robinson, 1998).

And the attitudes of the media show how they have "written off" older consumers. An ABC executive pointed out that his network does not sell one single dollar of advertising based on reaching viewers over 49. Fox believes it doesn't need anyone over 50 years of age to succeed with its business plan. Even CBS, known for catering to a mature audience, is changing programming to attract a younger audience (Robinson, 1998).

In addition to the targeting issues discussed by Robinson, he also describes the stereotyping of older Americans in popular media. They are portrayed as cranky, sick, decrepit, dysfunctional, senile, institutionalized, and rigid, with declining intelligence. Because of the stereotypes, when older people are used in advertising, they are usually used in humorous and health care-related ads (e.g., Clara Peeler in "Where's the Beef" for Wendy's).

A common sentiment among advertisers is that if they are not targeting a particular demographic group then why should they care how that group is portrayed.

But if this group is stereotyped, underrepresented, or excluded from advertisements, then what impression will the target group (younger people) have of growing older? And, what kind of image do older people develop of themselves from watching their portrayal in advertising? (Robinson, 1998).

A Peterson (1992) study of advertising used by Robinson in *Portraying Older People in Advertising* showed that older individuals are underrepresented; they are portrayed in a less favorable manner than younger models, and are often seen in stereotypical roles. Even when targeting an older audience, it was found that older people were negatively portrayed. Older females are shown less in magazine and television ads than older males. Older minorities are even less represented, especially minority women (Peterson, 1992).

Another argument important in establishing the context for this study is offered by Catherine Lumby in *Bad Girls, The Media, Sex and Feminism in the '90s.* In her argument, she places more efficacy and responsibility on women in regards to their interpretation and responses to women's images in the popular media. She writes that all ads use images or concepts in a one-dimensional way—in the world of the thirty-second commercial spot, advertisers are keen to reduce all of us to a single desire or fear (Lumby, 1997).

Lumby thinks that division within the women's movement has limited the opposition to negative portrayals of women in popular media. She poses that there are disagreements between those who feel they know what is best for others and those who want to preserve and support women's right to speak for themselves. She describes what she sees as factions within the women's movement: some have actively ceded the

legitimacy of feminism to powers that do not always have women's best interest at heart. Others have adopted causes that they may not be suited to (or even asked to) address. For feminists who believe the women's movement should be focused on producing chances for women to speak truth to power, this extraordinary concern with suppressing speech is more than disturbing—it's a betrayal of feminist ideals (Lumby, 1997).

It has become an item of faith in popular feminist debate that it is wrong to use women's bodies to sell things. The reasoning is simple—in a capitalist and patriarchal society, women's use-value is reduced to their sexual usefulness to men. Like watches and widgets, women are packaged and commodified for the pleasure of the dominant sex.

Lumby argues that this particular position ignores the dynamic relationship between media, capital, and social identity. Everyday reality and our perceptions of it are continually filtered through the media's lens. Separating the flow of images and ideas—and their influence on our perceptions of everyday reality, other people, and ourselves—is no simple matter. This complexity extends to the media's treatment of women over 50. Certainly any group that has the size, affluence, education, and clout of these women can influence those working in media, and change the way women are addressed and depicted.

The recurring question in the literature is why women over 50 are either ignored or missed entirely by the media. But from another perspective, is it possible that the women in this demographic are not aware (or are just becoming aware) of their power? It is possible that the media is simply giving this group what they are asking for? One of the questions for this research project is this: are women perhaps getting the popular media that their own actions have created?

Lumby criticizes the tendencies to persuade women to read images in ways that make them feel bad about themselves. Why not instead encourage them to make creative readings of images and to appropriate and reinvent female stereotypes to an advantage? Continually stressing the patriarchal reading of an image that can be read in other ways is hardly empowering for women. In fact it is a strategy which cedes awesome power to images and to those who produce them and which denies the ability women demonstrate daily to use imagination, critical resistance, and humor in negotiating images and life in general (Lumby, 1997).

Another important question for this research (and to help answer the questions marketers, feminists, and others keep asking) is why older women are not operating as a group to influence how they are depicted and perceived in the media. Though the media tends to homogenize older people into a single category, is it possible that women as they age further reduce the power they could wield by operating in factions and subgroups rather than as a cohesive pressure group? Perhaps the problem is not so much that the media is ignoring older women, but that the audience is so diverse that a single message couldn't possibly reach them all?

Chapter Two: Background

Joseph Maxwell describes the process of developing research questions. He suggests that the first issue to solve before writing the questions is what you are trying to understand through your research and then the researcher needs to consider the practical aspects of getting the research done (Maxwell, 1996). To support the purpose of this study—to survey women 50 and older to determine their perceptions of popular media and how older women are portrayed in the media—the following research questions were developed:

1. If women become more at ease with the status change that begins around the age of 50, what is the age at which this ease begins to take place?
2. What factors (status, class, education, ethnicity, etc.)—if any—play a role in how women perceive their aging?
3. Do these factors affect the age at which a woman becomes more at ease with the aging process?
4. Do all women feel ill at ease with aging?
5. What causes those feelings?
6. How do they cope?
7. Do they want to fight aging or fight the perceptions?
8. Who do they feel is responsible for the media depictions held of women over 50?
9. What changes would they make, and how would they make media perceptions and depictions more realistic?
10. Are the depictions of older women seen in popular media realistic?

Research Theory

While in undergraduate school, I first encountered Bourdieu's concept of capital through the ethnographies conducted by James Ferguson and Aihwa Ong (Ferguson, 1999 and Ong, 1999). As a female baby boomer approaching 50, I had begun to notice that the images seen in popular media no longer applied to me. It seemed to me that understanding capital is the key to understanding a capitalist society, and the argument that capital comes in different forms, might help explain why images of women start to fade in their 40s and why women over 50 often describe the sensation of feeling invisible in a youth oriented society (Bourdieu, 1977 and 1986).

To place the significance of this research into perspective, it is important to understand how different forms of capital can be used to improve one's social position. Exploring women's means of making and accumulating symbolic capital can be important—especially if perceptions of aging can be used to undermine it (Bourdieu, 1977 and 1986).

Ferguson and Ong used Bourdieu's concepts of capital to illustrate how some of the participants in their research modified their embodied forms of capital—cultural symbols such as skin color, foreign accent, or cultural taste in style—in order to succeed in their new circumstances. They argued that it is possible—although difficult—to modify embodied forms of capital (Ferguson, 1999 and Ong, 1999).

These embodied cultural symbols may make it difficult to convert any acquired capital into cultural capital (Ong, 1999). It may also be that age is a particularly problematic embodied cultural symbol—one that is difficult to turn to an advantage.

These models inspired the idea of conducting a research project on women over 50 and the popular media. But as this project was designed, it became evident that the principles and methods of grounded theory would be better applied to discover the patterns that offer further explanations and descriptions of women's experiences with popular media as they age.

In this approach, theory is thought of as developing through the process of research. In contrast to propositional hypothesis testing research, grounded theory is designed to allow themes to emerge from the data. Barney Glaser wrote that grounded theory is a methodological option with a simple inductive approach, which makes it well suited for new areas of research (Glaser, 1998). Instead of theory, the prescribed technique was employed to discover themes derived from the data. The hope is to gain insight into women's experience of aging as well as to gain some knowledge of how to undertake this inevitable process with a sense of success.

Grounded theory may be a useful tool to explore the concept of status passage. If there is indeed a transition into acceptance that is accompanied with a sense of accomplishment, a defined role, the benefits associated with contribution (both for the benefactor and recipient) along with the prestige associated with those factors, it would be useful to identify many of the various elements of both the transition and the new role (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Grounded theory evolves through the continuous interplay between analysis and data collection. The obligations of the researcher include the practical applications of information. The researcher is also obliged to tell the story of the informants or

consultants, and to develop a theory that will be beneficial to society (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

I also found Maxwell's thoughts on theory to be useful. According to Maxwell, theory is defined as a set of concepts and the proposed relationships among these concepts, or a structure that is intended to represent a model of something about the world (Maxwell, 1996). Maxwell distinguishes description and interpretation from theory, although he states that they also fit the model described above. He states that description is a factual narrative of what happened. Description is not theory because it makes no attempt to go beyond the observable. Interpretation is the account of the meaning given to a situation or event by the people who are participating in the research. To construct an explanation based on a description or interpretation or to fit them into an existing explanatory framework is to convert them into theory.

It is necessary to move beyond a concrete description or interpretive account into explanation to achieve theory. Maxwell states that in qualitative research both existing theory and grounded theory are legitimate and valuable. Theory is an explanation and clarification of how some aspect of the world works (Maxwell, 1996).

Chapter Three: Methodology

Both qualitative and quantitative data were used in this project. The strengths of qualitative research derive primarily from its inductive approach, its focus on specific situations or people, and its emphasis on words rather than numbers. Also considered for this project is the issue of how to incorporate postmodern insights and utilize reflexivity in ethnographic research. The first step is an ontology that asserts that there is a social world independent of our knowledge of it and an epistemology that argues that it is knowable (Davies, 1999). While the qualitative data allows the participants to describe their perspective on popular media, quantitative data is useful for both descriptive purposes and to measure frequencies in characteristics and relationships between factors.

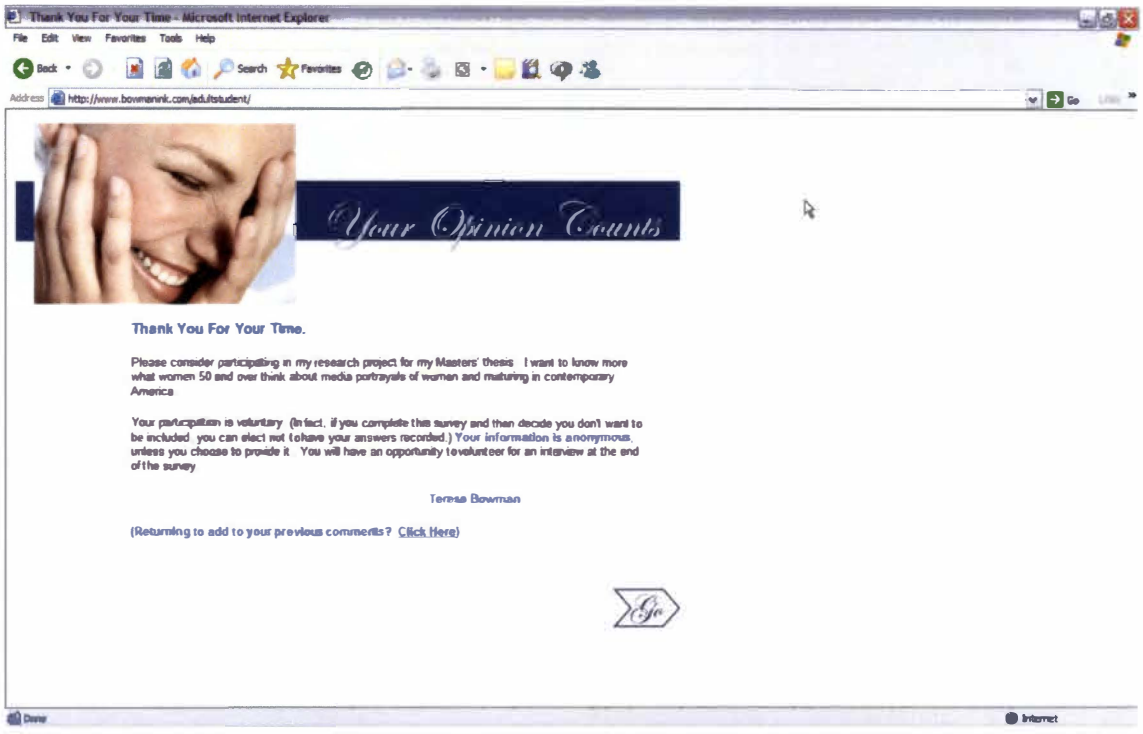
For the sake of convenience and some commonality in background, the universe of participants was limited to women over 50 who were part of the University of Tennessee community (students, faculty, staff, and alumni). This association would make prospective participants accessible through university communication channels. Though every attempt was made to encourage women from diverse backgrounds to participate (flyers and e-mail notices were sent to a variety of university groups representing different races, professions, and other demographics), the survey participants were in many ways homogenous. The Adult Student Services Center and *Staff Stuff* publications for employees of the university agreed to send announcements of the research via their list-servs and the rest of the participants were found through flyers posted in university offices and word of mouth. Participants self-selected and represented middle class, college educated disproportionately. Conducting a similar study with a more expansive,

diverse population sample is a goal for the future, so women from as many walks of life as possible can have a voice in this matter which permeates this society.

A total of 50 surveys were gathered using an online survey form (Figure 1), along with ten follow-up personal interviews. Once permission was obtained from the university IRB, announcements were sent out with information about the project, including an internet link to the on-line survey. The same information was included on flyers that I was permitted to post in departments and offices on campus. Interested participants who were 50 or older could visit the website and fill out a survey that included both closed- and open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions consisted of life history and opinion questions. Some of these questions were in Likert scale form. The open-ended questions were designed to obtain opinions on popular media (survey questions and responses comprise Appendix A).

While filling out the on-line survey, the participants were given the option of remaining anonymous or providing their name and contact information as potential interviewees. The women who agreed to a follow-up interview were among those who provided contact information. Of the 50 women who filled out the on-line survey 54% provided contact information and 20% met with me for an interview (interview questions and images are reproduced in Appendix B).

There were ten women who met with me for a recorded interview which consisted of open-ended questions that expanded on the information they provided on the survey. These were the respondents with whom scheduling was possible during the research window. The interview was scheduled to be completed in approximately one hour; however, many interviewees were so enthusiastic about the subject and the material that



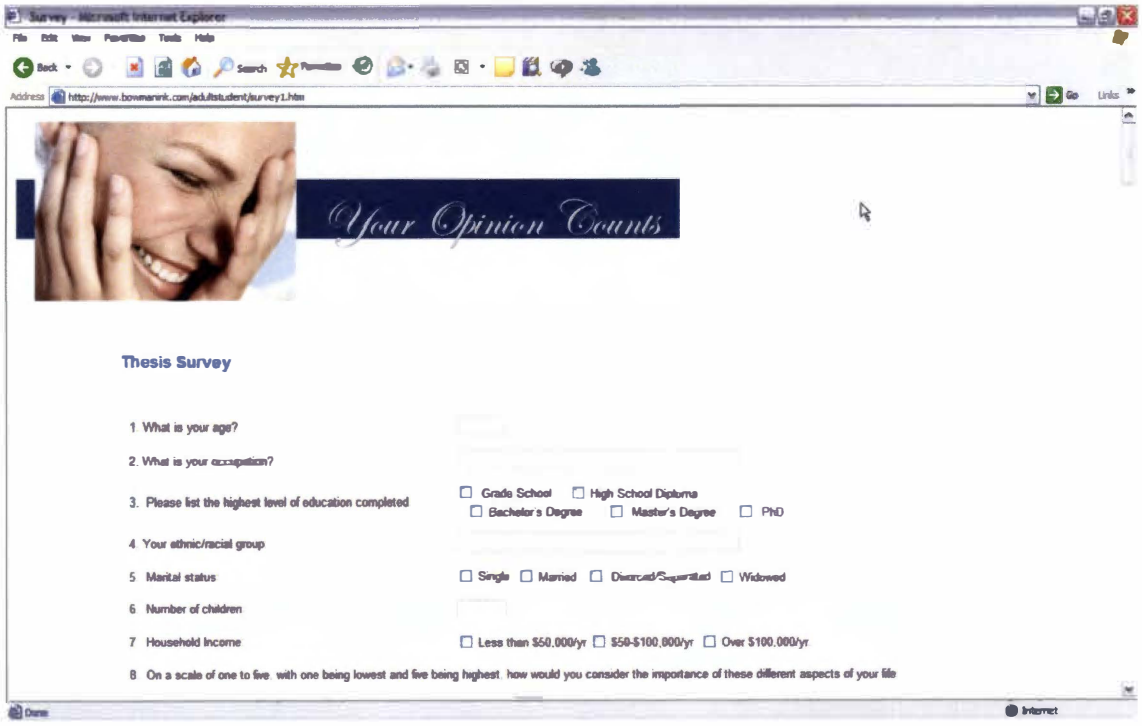


Figure 1. Images of Online Survey Screens.

some interviews and discussions lasted as long as four hours. Some interviewees even corresponded with me later, thanking me for pursuing this topic and noting that they felt this was the first time someone has listened to them about this topic. The interviewees were shown a series of advertisements and photographs and asked what they thought of the media portrayal of their age group as well as how it made them feel. The last part of the interview was designed to prompt continued conversation on the subject of media. The interview sessions were taped and notes consisting of key words were taken during the conversations.

Because some participants recommended the survey to friends by word of mouth, a couple of respondents came from outside the university community; they were included in the survey.

The survey questions were designed to facilitate the coding of the interview. Statistical analysis was conducted on the survey questions to find associations between the variables. Data is broken out in cross tabulations and mean scores are reported as deemed valuable in Appendix A.

A note about the selection of advertising samples to show as part of the survey and the interviews: In looking at products advertised to women, beauty products were by far the predominant category featuring models, and the ones that seemed to show models of different ages. This allowed me to show numerous examples that could bring the concept of aging and media to the forefront, so they seemed most logical to use.

Demography of Respondents

Before attempting to apply what the participants shared in the survey and interviews, they should be introduced as a group or in statistical language as a sample. Total sample size is 50. They are all female and 50 years or older. Their ages range from 50 to 77, but 88% of the sample are in their 50s. The mean age of the overall sample is 55.12.

All but three are employed, including the two participants who are in their 70s. One is retired from the military and she, along with five others, are taking classes as well as working. Occupations were broken down into six categories, education and research (22%), administration (16%), clerical (22%), social service (8%), medical (14%), retired or unemployed (6%), and those who listed themselves as full time students (12%).

Most of the participants had obtained a college degree; in fact they make up 80% of the sample, with the rest having a minimum of a high school education. The participants with a high school education had garnered years of on-the-job and job-related training. Of those with a college degree, 38% had a bachelor's degree, 28% had a master's degree, and 14% had a PhD.

The group is predominantly European/American, married, with children and an annual household income of over $50,000. The ethnic affiliation of the sample is comprised of 83% who identified themselves as being either white or Caucasian; another 6% said that they were of European descent but they had ancestors who belonged to an ethnic group that would be described as other than white or Caucasian.

One participant did not respond to the question on the on-line survey that asked about her ethnic affiliation, and for the rest of the sample 2% said they were Native

American, and 4% said they were African American. One person did not state her relationship status, but for those who did 60% were married, 10% were widowed, 22% were divorced or separated, and 6% said they were single. It is important to note that the relationship categories provided sometimes did not accurately fit their circumstances, according to some of the members of the research sample. Some of the women who were not married stated in other parts of the survey or during the interview that they were in committed relationships or partnerships that did not fit the options from which they had to choose.

Most of the participants had children (80%), and several mentioned having grandchildren. There is not a count as to how many are grandmothers because that was not a specific question on the survey or during the interview. Specifically, 18% of the sample members said they had one child, 36% had two children, 20% had three, 4% had four, and 2% had five children.

The mean age of the interviewees was 54.5. Sixty percent were from 50 to 54, and 40% were 56 or older. All but one of those interviewed was working (that person is retired). Jobs breakdown as follows: 40% clerical, 20% education, 20% administration, and 10% medical.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

Of the data collected during this research, much of it applies directly to the relationship between the participants and the media. There is also data that offers some insight into how this sample population indirectly reacts to popular media, through the information they shared about their consumerism, and their likes and dislikes of advertising, entertainment and art.

The findings enhance the demographic description of the sample population given in the previous chapter and shed more light on their opinions and habits, particularly as they relate to media. In analyzing the data, I chose not to report it in the order of the original survey (see Appendix A for a complete report of the data in its original order), but to organize it in related groups so that it's easier to see connections in the information.

The data are categorized as follows:

- A review of respondents' predilections in merchandise.
- Entertainment preferences (television, films, actors and actresses, and music).
- Opinions on various aspects of aging.
- Responses to samples of advertising and portrayals of women in media.

Themes that emerged from the open-ended question responses and the interviews are detailed in chapter five. Survey findings that are pertinent to the themes are discussed further in that chapter.

If the participants were given the option to list more than one answer to a question, the answers will be given in whole numbers representing how many times that particular item was listed. If they were asked to provide only one choice, the information is given in percentages of the sample population who chose the same item. On a few occasions, all 50 participants did not answer a question. When pertinent, these are noted in the data.

Purchasing Preferences: A Diverse Independent Streak

Media has an impact on consumer purchasing, and advertisers spend billions each year to call our attention to new products and to build brand loyalty. So one true test of media impact is the pocketbook: survey respondents were questioned about their purchasing preferences.

The first impression I had while reading through the compiled data about the purchasing preference provided by the participants was that their preferences were as varied as they were. Participants were asked a series of questions about their purchasing habits. First, they were asked to list items they had purchased recently. The answers to this general question varied widely and were of minimal value in the analysis. However, when asked about recent purchases ***made just for themselves***, some interesting things emerged.

Responses fell into five basic categories: food and beverages; clothing; toiletries, cosmetics, and personal care; household; and entertainment. The purpose of this question was to look at buying patterns and to see what roles branding and brand loyalty might play in personal purchases. One interesting point about the responses to this question is

that even though a number of brands were mentioned, many of the answers were for products generic in nature and routine items. The respondents did not, for the most part, "treat" themselves to too many things—other than a few things such as Ben and Jerry's ice cream, flowers, wine, chocolate, or in one case, a kiln.

The participants listed 51 food items purchased just for themselves. This included dining out, which was listed by six respondents. Seven respondents listed items that were "diet," and seven mentioned desserts (including chocolate). The rest of the food items were general grocery or pantry items.

Forty clothing items were reported. Clothing was a key category, since this is a personal purchase and one that typically reflects status or an individual statement. In this question, most respondents still weren't specific: they mentioned the type of item, but there were only a few mentions of clothing brands.

A follow-up question later in the survey asked specifically about clothing brand preferences. Fifty-six percent of those surveyed stated that they did not have specific brand preferences, but based their purchases on quality, price, and fit. This was noteworthy, since clothing sales are often brand-driven. When participants did mention clothing brands, they could be described as either mid- or discount-priced. The mid-range clothing labels had the highest frequency. Most of these labels can be found in department stores, or specialty retail stores such as Talbots and Eddie Bauer. The rest of the labels were those found in discount department stores like Old Navy and Kohl's. These labels were mentioned ten times as the preferred brand of clothing.

Branding is the current marketing buzzword. There are dozens of books on the subject, and business magazines constantly report on new branding ideas. Advertising

agencies tout branding as a key skill. Many companies feel that the power of their brand is their most important asset.

So it seems surprising that, with millions in marketing dollars being thrown at brand building in apparel, participants did not respond more enthusiastically to the brand question. However, as will be reported later in the interview section, there may be other reasons why clothing marketers haven't made some brand connections with this group.

In another highly personal product category, branding seemed to be slightly more important. In the toiletries, cosmetics, and personal care category, 53 products were listed by participants. Cosmetics (including skin care items) were the most frequently mentioned purchase. Participants bought 31 cosmetic items, eight hair care and styling products (including color), and nine forms of medications (both prescription and over the counter). Only one participant mentioned any type of salon or spa treatment. Many of the medications were mentioned by brand name (as could be expected), but it is interesting to note that of the 31 cosmetic items, 21 (67%) were identified by brand.

Household items were varied and ranged from decorative to clothing care. Fresh flowers and garden items were the largest sub-category, with six flower and plant purchases, a stepping stone kit, and a gas trimmer.

Entertainment Purchases and Preferences

Books, magazines, and music were the most common items bought to entertain themselves. (One person surveyed purchased a puzzle.) Entertainment preferences were also highly varied, as might be expected, and it was difficult to gauge any particular patterns from the responses. Dramas and news were the most favored types of television

shows, but no individual programs were singled out by more than four or five respondents.

Classic movies were the favorites of the group, with 40% of the participants identifying films in this genre. The most favored movie was *Gone with the Wind,* as indicated by 14% of those interviewed. There was no gender difference between ages of favorite actors and actresses. The choices made by the respondents were divided first by gender and then into two age groups: those who were over the age of 50 and those who were younger. The participants preferred older actors, because 62% choose actors and 56% chose actresses who were over 50. Sean Connery was the most favored, with 14% choosing him. Tom Hanks was the favorite actor who was under 50 at the time the survey was conducted, but will have his 50th birthday in July 2006. The youngest actor listed as a favorite was Matthew McConaughey, who is 37.

Meryl Streep (57 years old) was chosen as the favorite actress by 16% of the participants and Julia Roberts (39 years old) was the favorite actress under 50. The oldest living favorite actress was Doris Roberts who is 77 and the youngest was Jennifer Garner who is 34.

Four votes for Rod Stewart made him the most favored musician and the two top music genres were pop and easy listening, while 28% did not list a least favorite type of music.

While entertainment preferences were all over the board, there were strong consensuses in respondents' ***least*** favorite forms of entertainment and people. Although three participants mentioned they enjoyed reality shows, 56% of the participants said that

reality shows were their least favorite. Rap and Hip Hop was "dissed"—with 23% saying it was their least favorite type of music.

I found the information gathered from the survey for this group of questions to be in many cases predictable (many products and entertainers are ones you'd expect this age group to purchase or watch). But some of the information gathered was intriguing: This is a group with money to spend, but they don't seem to be indulging in a lot of items (save some Ben and Jerry's) for themselves.

Opinions On Aging

Respondents were asked a number of questions about their opinions on aging. Questions were structured so that they could voice their thoughts on both advantages and disadvantages of getting older. As explained in the methodology, participants were asked to give their answers on a Likert scale of one to five, and these results are detailed in Appendix A.

For analytical purposes, the responses one and two (disagree or strongly disagree) were added together, as well as responses four and five (agree and strongly agree) to illustrate toward which end of the scale opinions tended to lean. Responses of three were considered neutral, neither agreeing or disagreeing. Cross tabulation between some basic characteristics provided by the participants (age, education, income, and occupation) and some of the survey questions were included with overall scores.

For the purpose of cross-tabulation, some of the characteristics were broken down into subcategories. The categories of income and levels of education were subdivided in three different ways. Income was categorized as respondents making less than $50,000

per year; respondents making $50,000 to $100,000 per year; and respondents making over $100,000 per year. Education was broken out first by high school, bachelor's, master's, and PhD; then high school and bachelor's together and master's and PhD; and lastly those with high school diplomas and those with college degrees. Finally, the ages of the participants were subcategorized in groups of those who were 54 and younger and those who were 55 and older (this also reflects the mean age of survey respondents).

The decision on how fine to go with the categories when reporting cross-tabulations was based on how sharp the distinctions were between categories. For example, if there was a large difference each of the categories, then providing the percentage for all levels of education was the best way to illustrate the findings. If those with high school and bachelor's degrees had response close in nature, and those with master's and PhDs had responses close in nature to the same question, the information was broken out into pairs representing the two combinations. But if those with a high school education had a different score while those with college degrees were all close, then it would be reported by high school and college degrees.

Career, Family, Education and Personal Time—Then and Now

In the first set of Likert-scale questions, participants were asked to rate the importance of career, family, education, and personal time now versus when they were age 25. For the "current" portion of the question, the importance of career rated equally among the participants, with 32% rating it both high and low in importance. At age 25, it was slightly more important, with a 38% rating. When cross-tabulated with income, more participants (40%) with household earnings less than $50,000 a year gave career

importance a high rating. The lowest percentage of high career importance (33%) came from those whose household incomes were over $100,000 a year.

There are noteworthy changes in career importance over time as well. The largest number of low importance ratings in career at 25 (47%) came from those who are presently making less than $50,000 yearly and the highest ratings at 25 (56%) came from those with the highest earning at the time they completed the survey. So it appears those with the highest income are able to shift their priority from their career to other areas now, while those with lower incomes have intensified their focus on their career over time.

In other crosstabs, the highest ratings of career importance (57% presently and 71% at 25) came from women with a master's degree. Occupationally, 63% of the women in administrative jobs rated their careers high in importance now. At 25, 17% of the women who are currently students gave their careers a high rating. That has now increased to 50%. Finally, more women who are 54 or younger gave their career a high rating in importance (44%) while those who are 55 or older are starting to shift their attention away from their careers since 40% gave their careers a low rating in importance.

Most of the participants gave a current high importance rating (70%) to family, a noteworthy increase over when they were 25 (50%). Those with household incomes of $50,000 or less had the largest proportion of high family importance both now (87%) and at 25 (60%). In the education crosstab, those with higher levels of education experienced a similar increase in family importance (50% at 25; 67% now) to the overall sample.

The importance of education was fairly consistent over time for the participants, with 46% ranking education high in priority now and 48% ranking it high at age 25.

Those with household incomes between $50,000 and $100,000 had the largest proportion of high importance, with 54% giving it that rank. There was only a slight difference in importance of education for those with high school or bachelor's degrees (45%) and those with more formal education (48%). There was a larger difference when they were younger: 45% of those with less education gave it a high importance at 25 while 52% of those with a master's or PhD's gave it a high importance. More of the participants who were 55 or older gave education a high rating (56%), while 37% of those who were 54 or younger gave a high rank of importance to education.

The importance of personal time increased with age. Presently, 54% rank the importance of personal time high, while 38% gave it a high rating when they were 25. Those making less than $50,000 a year gave the highest rating of personal time at 25 (80%), which is almost twice as much as the two higher income categories. The importance of personal time decreased with age for the lowest income group to 47%. The shift away from placing a high value on personal time for this group could be related to their increased focus on career.

Who's Happier?

A variety of questions were asked to determine whether or not respondents were comfortable with their current positions in life. These questions addressed happiness, control, outlook, and social life.

There were two Likert-scale questions that addressed the respondents' personal happiness. They were asked if they are happier now than when they were 25, and they

were asked if they would consider themselves happier than their mothers at their current age.

The largest percentage (46%) of the participants said they were happier now than when they were 25, while 26% said they disagreed with this statement. Those with the lowest income level had the lowest percentage of agreement (27%). In the education sub-group, the participants with a bachelor's had the highest level of agreement (58%) while women with a master's had the lowest (36%). Respondents who were over 55 had a 53% agreement as opposed to those 54 and younger (41%).

For the question about being happier than their mothers, there was a flat response: 34% agreed and 34% disagreed. In crosstab breakouts, those with the highest level of income had the highest level of agreement (44%) as did those with master's degrees (50%), those working in the medical field (72%), and those 54 or younger (41%).

Participants were asked if they feel more positive about the future today than when they were 25. Forty-four percent disagreed with this statement and 32% agreed. In the income sub-group those who made more than $100,000 had the highest percentage of agreement. Those with a high school education had the highest percentage of disagreement (60%), and those who had a college degree had 40% who disagreed.

When asked about current activities, the majority of women agreed that they had more control over their lives (76%), but only 16% agreed that they have a more active social life. In the crosstabs, most disagreed that their social lives are more active now. Since participants have more freedom to choose how they spend their time, they seem to be opting for more personal choices. Those with a household income between $50,000 and $100,000 reported the highest percentage of control (88%) and the two other income

groups had an agreement to the statement in the 60% range. Those whose occupations came under the education category had the largest number in disagreement (27%) that they had more control over their lives.

While social lives are less active, this doesn't mean they aren't rewarding. In addition to the level of activity in their social life, respondents were asked to gauge their satisfaction with their social life and their comfort in social settings in comparison to when they were younger. For the group as a whole, 42% agreed that they now had a more *satisfying* social life. Those with incomes less than $100,000 had a higher percentage who agreed with that statement (41%) but those with the lowest income had 53% who disagreed. Those with the highest income level had an even distribution between those who agreed and those who disagreed (33%). Although the middle income level and the lower income level were close in the proportion who agreed, the middle income group leaned more toward social life satisfaction. Those holding PhDs reported the lowest percentage in agreement (29%), while other education levels agreed in the 40% range. Students reported the highest level of agreement in the occupations (67%) and those in clerical positions were the highest in disagreement (46%). Those who were younger agreed markedly more than the older ones in the sample (52% and 29%).

Based on level of comfort in social settings (72% agreed to feeling more comfortable in social settings), it can be argued that a large percentage have gained social confidence over the years. The two lower income levels had more who agreed with the statement (74%). Those with high school or bachelor's degrees had a higher percentage who agreed (74%) as opposed to those in the highest income level (56%), students and social service workers (100%), medical professionals (86%), and clerical workers (73%)

were the highest in agreement by occupation. A higher percentage of the younger participants were in agreement with this statement (82%) when compared with those who were older (61%). The younger participants also had a larger spread between those in agreement and those who disagreed (78% compared to the older group at 44%).

If the top two choices on the Likert scale are the only ones considered for the next statement, only a slight majority of the participants agreed that today's society is too youth oriented (54%). However, most other respondents chose "3" as their answer, which leans the question more strongly toward agreement due to lack of resistance. The highest percentage in agreement was in the lowest income category and the lowest were in the middle income level (33%); all the other categories were fairly evenly distributed.

The following group of findings is in regards to personal and media image. In response to the statement about feeling more comfortable with personal image, 60% agreed. Those with household incomes over $100,000 had the highest percentage in agreement (78%) and the two lower income categories scored in agreement in the 50% range. Those with a high school education scored the highest in that category (70%), with the rest of the education levels fairly even as was the age split when compared. The lowest level of agreement was with those who were retired or unemployed (33%) but no one was in disagreement, so the rest selected the middle point on the scale, skewing this group toward agreement. The other occupation group that had a low rate of agreement was administration (38%) with 25% in disagreement leaving the rest of the group in the middle, so these results also skewed toward agreement.

The sample as a whole also tends to worry less about their personal appearance (52%). This same value was represented in the age group breakout. Those with master's

degrees had the lowest number of responses in agreement (21%) to this question; the highest were those with PhDs (72%).

Interestingly, opinions on changing hair color were highly polarized. Forty-six percent disagreed with the statement that "I enjoy changing my hair color occasionally," and 40% agreed. Those making less than $50,000 had the largest consensus in agreement at 60% (40% in this group disagreed), which may suggest that this is a relatively affordable luxury. The middle income level had the largest percentage who disagreed (54%) and those making over $100,000 had 44% who agreed. When the education levels were divided into two groups, those with high school or bachelor's degrees had the most in agreement (48%), while 29% of those with higher levels of education agreed. Those in clerical or social service occupations scored the highest in agreement (72% and 50% respectively) while students and those who were retired or unemployed had the most who disagreed with both at 68%, indicating their priorities may lie in other areas.

While more of the older subcategory enjoy coloring their hair (43% as opposed to 37%), more of the younger subcategory agreed that they would take advantage of an offer for a makeover (52% as opposed to 35%). Overall, 44% agreed to a makeover and 24% disagreed. It is noteworthy that 40% overall and several of the subcategories had substantial middle score indicating that possibly it would depend on who was offering and what brand of products would be used.

Cosmetic surgery is a subject that came up several times while I was collecting data, and it will be discussed further in the chapter on themes. But when asked specifically if they would consider cosmetic surgery (with insurance paying for it), 54% of the sample disagreed, while 34% agreed. The lowest income level had the lowest level

of agreement (20%). The two higher income categories had similar agreement scores in the 40% range. The highest level of disagreement was the middle income category (58%). Those with a high school education had the highest level of agreement in the education category (50%), and the highest level of disagreement came from those with master's degrees (64%). The respondents with the most agreement to this statement in the career category were those who were retired or unemployed (67%), as well as the older category in the sample (57% as opposed to 15% for the younger group).

The lowest income category had the highest percentage who said that they were more aware of the ages of people around them but overall the sample had an even distribution between those who agree (36%) and those who disagree (36%). The higher the education, the less agreement with this statement—14% of those with a master's degree agreed, compared to 48% of those with a high school diploma or bachelor's degree. More of the younger respondents (43%) reported more awareness of others' age than the older ones (30%).

Most of the participants are looking forward to retirement (68%). Their plans for this time in their life will be discussed later in this chapter. There is a small amount of variation that is seen when looking at the cross-tabulated results. Those with the highest level of income had 89% in agreement with the statement. In education, high school and PhDs have the highest percentages of agreement. Students had the highest level of agreement with this statement at 91%, and those in social services the lowest at 25%.

Focusing On The Media

A series of questions asked for direct opinions on different aspects of the media. Most of the participants (58%) do not think that women over 50 are accurately portrayed in popular media. There is some variation in the degree to which the sub-groups disagree, with some responding strongly. The higher levels of education (masters and PhDs) registered 71% who disagreed with the statement that women are portrayed accurately. No one in this sub-group agreed with the statement. The lower two levels of education disagreed at 48%, with 7% agreeing with the statement and the rest choosing the middle of the scale. In occupations, those working in administration and social service had the highest level of disagreement at 75% each. The student subgroup was the only one to skew toward agreement, 17% disagreed, 50% chose the middle of the scale, and 33% agreed making this group's response quite different from the others.

In a related statement saying that "women over 50 all seem the same" the overall response was not that strong (34% agreed and 34% disagreed). In crosstabs, the lowest percentage of agreement in the education sub-group was with respondents who had a master's degree (7%) and the highest agreement level was with those who had a bachelor's degree (53%). Participants in the medical profession had the strongest level of disagreement (62%) and the highest level of agreement came from those whose occupations are clerical (54%).

Another relatively flat response was to a statement that women over 50 seen in advertising are more believable. This statement relates specifically to women's roles in the media and how they are portrayed. The results skewed slightly toward agreement with 38% agreeing to the statement, 30% disagreeing, and 32% in the middle of the scale.

Those with a high school diploma or bachelor's degree agreed by 48% (the high school education response was 60%), and for those with higher levels of education, 24% agreed (master's 14%). The two higher levels of income were divided into thirds on opinion (agree, disagree, and middle of the scale) and those making less than $50,000 agreed by 53%. The professions with the highest levels of agreement to the statement were clerical (55%) and administration (50%) and the strongest disagreement came from students who disagreed at 40% and agreed 17%. The remainder of the professions were fairly balanced in their responses.

It appears that this phenomenon could be related to the fact that those surveyed did not believe older women were being portrayed accurately in the media: if they are represented improperly, then how can they be credible? This idea seemed to continue when participants were asked to respond to a statement that women over 50 are good role models: 34% agreed with the statement, 34% disagreed, and 32% chose the middle of the scale—not a particularly strong endorsement.

In crosstab breakouts, percentages of agreement were noticeably higher. Women with incomes between $50,000 and $100,000 felt the strongest about women over 50 as positive role models (67%). In education breakouts, those with Masters and PhDs felt the strongest about this point (76%). PhDs by themselves were even more positive on this subject (86%). Respondents over 55 were significantly more positive than younger women in the survey. Seven-four percent of the older participants felt women over 50 were positive role models, while 56% of younger respondents agreed with this statement.

When quizzed about other aspects of media credibility, the majority (78%) of the participants agreed that they were more likely to believe an article than an ad. Those

making over $100,000 a year had the highest percentage of agreement (90%). All levels of education had high levels of agreement, with PhDs being the highest at 100%. Those with clerical jobs had the lowest percentage of agreement (55%), but this group also strongly skewed toward agreement, with only 18% disagreeing with the statement.

When the articles are about aging, 50% of the participants agree that they now pay more attention to them (as well as ads about aging), while 26% disagreed and 24% chose the middle of the scale. Respondents with the highest incomes had the lowest percentage of agreement (33%), but this subgroup is still skewed toward agreement because 22% disagreed and 44% chose the middle. Those with PhDs had the highest percentage of agreement at 86%, those with masters had no one in agreement (57% chose the middle), with high school and bachelor's there were similar agreement responses averaging 59%.

Very few of the participants (10%) agreed that they are influenced more now by advertising than when they were teenagers. There was strong disagreement in all of the subcategories.

Work and Gender

The next section of finding deals with work and gender issues. More discussion on the participants' attitudes concerning gender issues will come in the next chapter. The majority of the participants (60%) agreed that they have more respect from coworkers than when they first started their career, while 18% disagreed. Those with higher levels of education had a higher percentage of agreement (72%), and those with high school or bachelor's had a 52% rate of agreement. Incomes breakouts on this topic were fairly

level, with the middle income category peaking at 67%. Those working in social service (100%) and education (73%) had the highest level of agreement. Clerical workers had the lowest percent of agreement at 36%.

Although most of the participants did not feel they had the same level of professional respect as men, many of them thought that their professional relationships had improved. There was a much higher level of disagreement (58%) when it came to respondents believing they have the same professional respect as men while 22% agreed. There was very little variation in the subcategories on this issue. As for their professional relationships with men, 58% thought they were better, 22% disagreed, and 14% chose the middle of the scale. The highest level of income had the lowest percent of agreement (44%) and the lower two income levels had similar levels of agreement averaging 63%. Those with a high school education had the highest level of agreement at 90% and those with college degrees had 50% agreement.

In response to the statement that "women are less affected by aging than men" there was a high consensus (74%) of disagreement to that statement. Participants with the highest level of income had the flattest response, 44% agreed and 44% disagreed and the two lower levels of income strongly disagreed at 76%. The higher levels of education had the weakest skew toward disagreement at 57% (PhDs were 42%) and the lower levels of education score 86% in disagreement.

Many (52%) agree that a woman will be elected president in the next 20 years; 26% disagree. Participants making over $100,000 had the highest percentage of disagreement at 44% , as did those with high school educations (30% split with 30% who agreed). PhDs had the highest rate of agreement at 72%. When high school and college

educated respondents are cross-tabulated, 30% of high school educated women agree, while 61% of college educated women think we'll see a woman president.

It is interesting to note that 90% of the participants said they do not make any more New Year's resolutions.

Opinions On Advertising and Other Images of Women In The Media

For the purposes of this survey, a series of ads for a fictitious product ("New Morning") was created. The series of three ads, all approximately the same size, with the same copy, promoted a skin care product. Each ad, however, featured an image of a model obviously in a different age group from the other two.

The reason for the questions featuring the ad series was to gauge how respondents might react in a "real world" situation to advertising, and to see how much impact the age of the model might have on their opinions. As a follow up to the review of the series of three "New Morning" ads (Figures 2-4) respondents were also shown a variety of other images from actual advertising and asked their opinions on the models and messages.

Ad 1 in the series featured a woman in her late fifties or early sixties. Ad 2 in the series featured a woman in her twenties, while Ad 3 featured a woman in her late thirties or early forties. Respondents were asked which ads had the greatest impact.

Ad 3 received the most positive comments. There were a total of 38 positive comments concerning this ad.

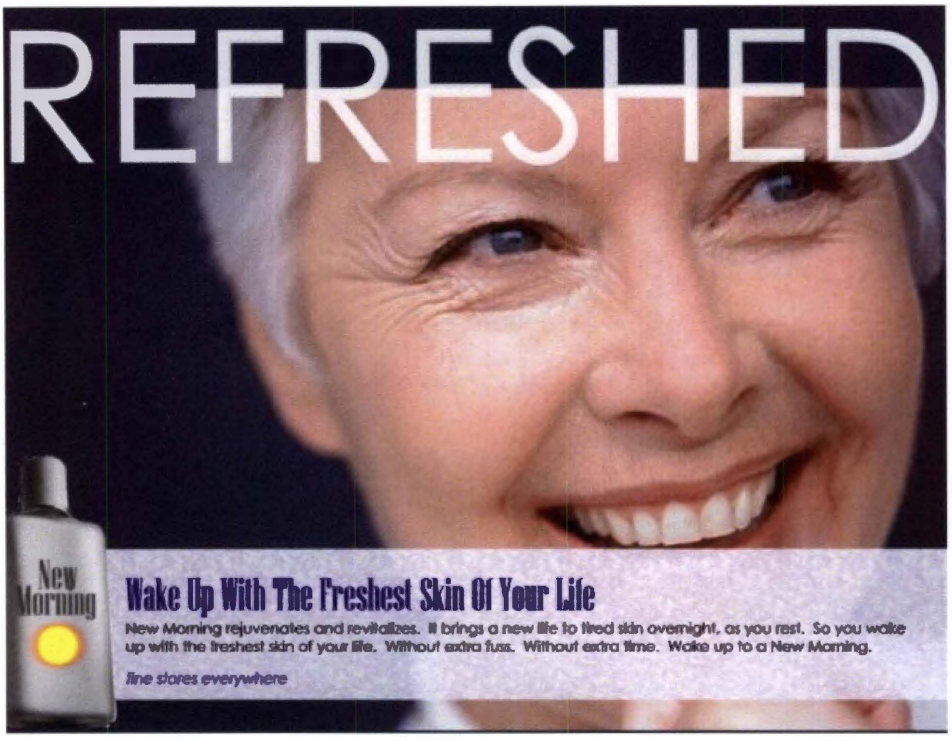


Figure 2. Test Ad 1.

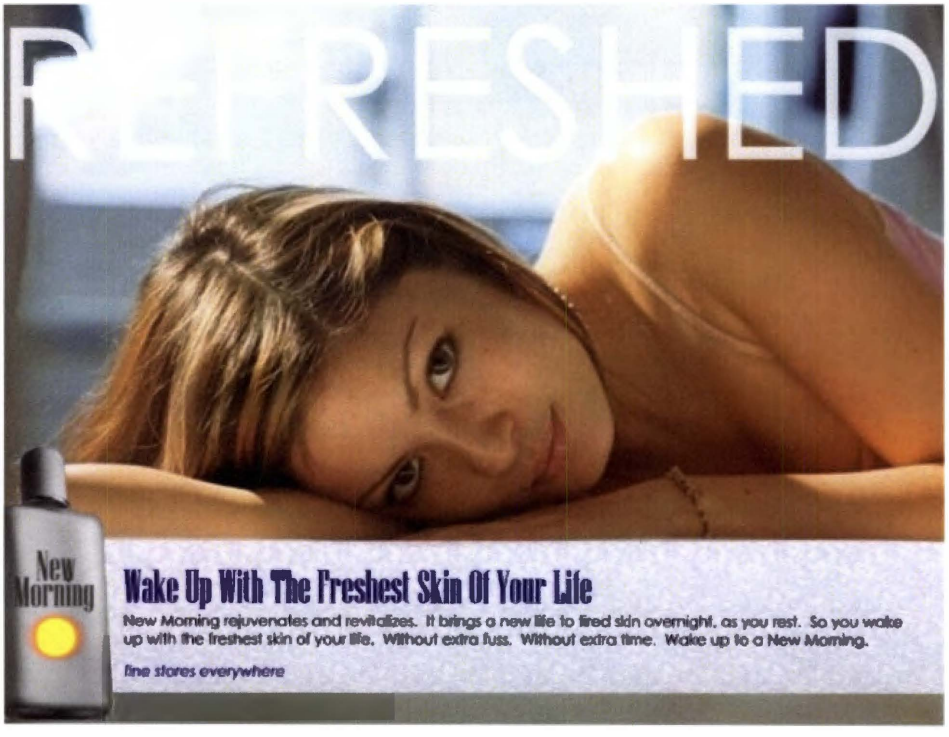


Figure 3. Test Ad 2.

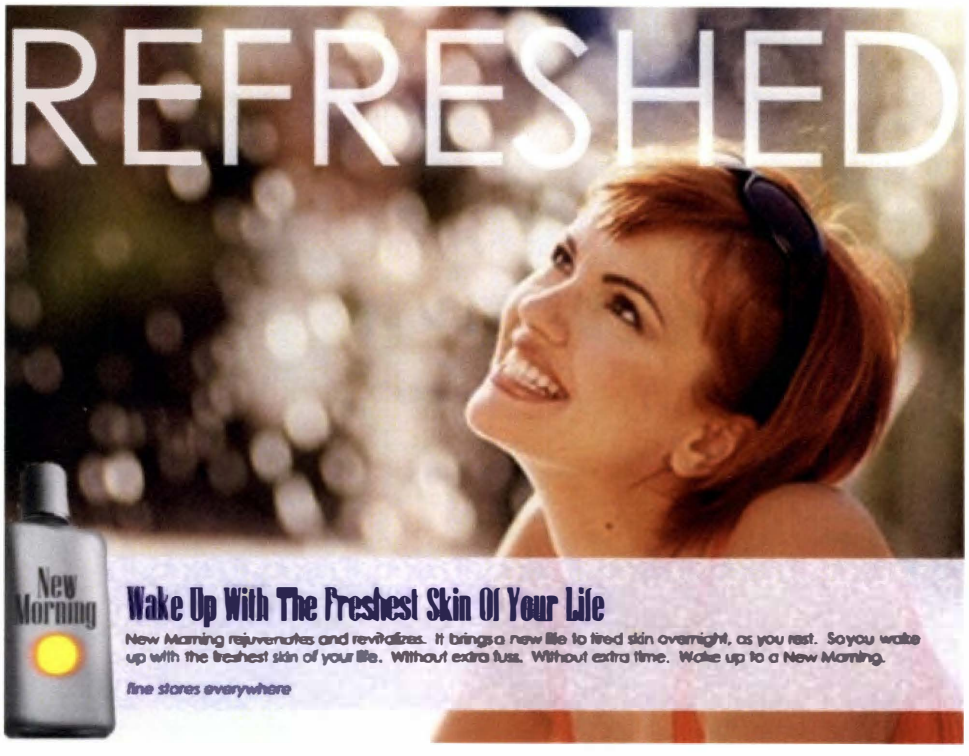


Figure 4. Test Ad 3.

The three most commonly made comments were that 12 of the respondents stated that the ad was age appropriate; 6 said the ad fit the product; and 5 liked the setting. There were four negative comments about Ad 3, two of which were made about the other ads as well. The remaining two negative comments were that the model was too young.

Ad 1 received 27 positive comments. Nine respondents stated that they could relate to the model in this ad and five said that the model was age appropriate. There were 13 negative comments made about Ad 1. The most common negative comments were that the ad did not fit the product; the model was too old; and the model's skin was too wrinkled.

Ad 2 received three positive comments--the model was youthful; the model has beautiful skin; and one respondent liked the setting. There were 21 negative comments made about Ad 2. Seven respondents thought that the model was too young; four thought she was too sexy; and four thought that the ad did not fit the product.

Based on the number of positive and negative comments, it would seem that Ad 3 had the greatest positive impact on the informants. The 13 negative comments concerning Ad 1 is almost half the number of positive statements and the negative comments about Ad 2 were 21 with 3 positive comments.

It is worthwhile to note that the term "age appropriate" is a phrase used by the respondents themselves, without any prompting. The question was worded to ask respondents "which ad has the greatest impact on *you,*" which puts the emphasis on the individual's personal reaction and response. Therefore I believe the term "age appropriate" is being used by the respondents in relation to themselves.

Beyond positive and negative, the types of comments are also telling. Twelve of the respondents made comments suggesting that the model in Ad 3 was age appropriate and nine of the 27 positive comments on Ad 1 said that they could relate to the model. This suggests that even though many of the respondents could relate to the model in Ad 1 they found the model in Ad 3 more age appropriate for the product and therefore would likely find ads with youthful looking middle aged models more eye-catching and believable. This may help explain that when looking through a publication like *More* magazine (targeted to women over 40) that many of the models in advertising appear to be much younger than 40—while older women will relate more strongly to older models, they still respond more strongly to ads featuring younger models in "idealized" situations.

(Note: In creating these sample ads, while the product and copy were identical, it was impossible to find stock photographs that had the same exact perspective and graphic look. The differences in photography may have had some influence over the audience. A repeat of the study using ads with custom matched photography would possibly provide more accurate results.)

However, the response to the ads shown obviously begs a question: if survey respondents are saying they want women their own age represented more in advertising and other media, why did a larger group select an ad with a younger model? And if consumers like these in a 50-plus age group are responding more positively to ads featuring younger models, why wouldn't advertisers use younger models to make their messages more effective?

In the next series of questions, respondents were shown a series of actual advertisements or images from actual ad campaigns, and asked their opinions about the messages that were conveyed. In the advertisement for Botox (Figure 5), the company is trying to suggest that its product, popular among women for reducing facial wrinkles, could also be used for men. The question, "Do you think men and women should both consider anti-aging products in the same way?" was posed to respondents, with 48% saying no, 40% saying yes, and 12% unsure.

Different social perceptions and standards for men and women were cited as the reason for participants' answers in all three categories. This could be indicative of the variety of methods that women use to cope with societal differences when it comes to how aging is perceived. It can be argued that participants who answered "yes" to the question and cited different standards for men and women as the reason are saying that

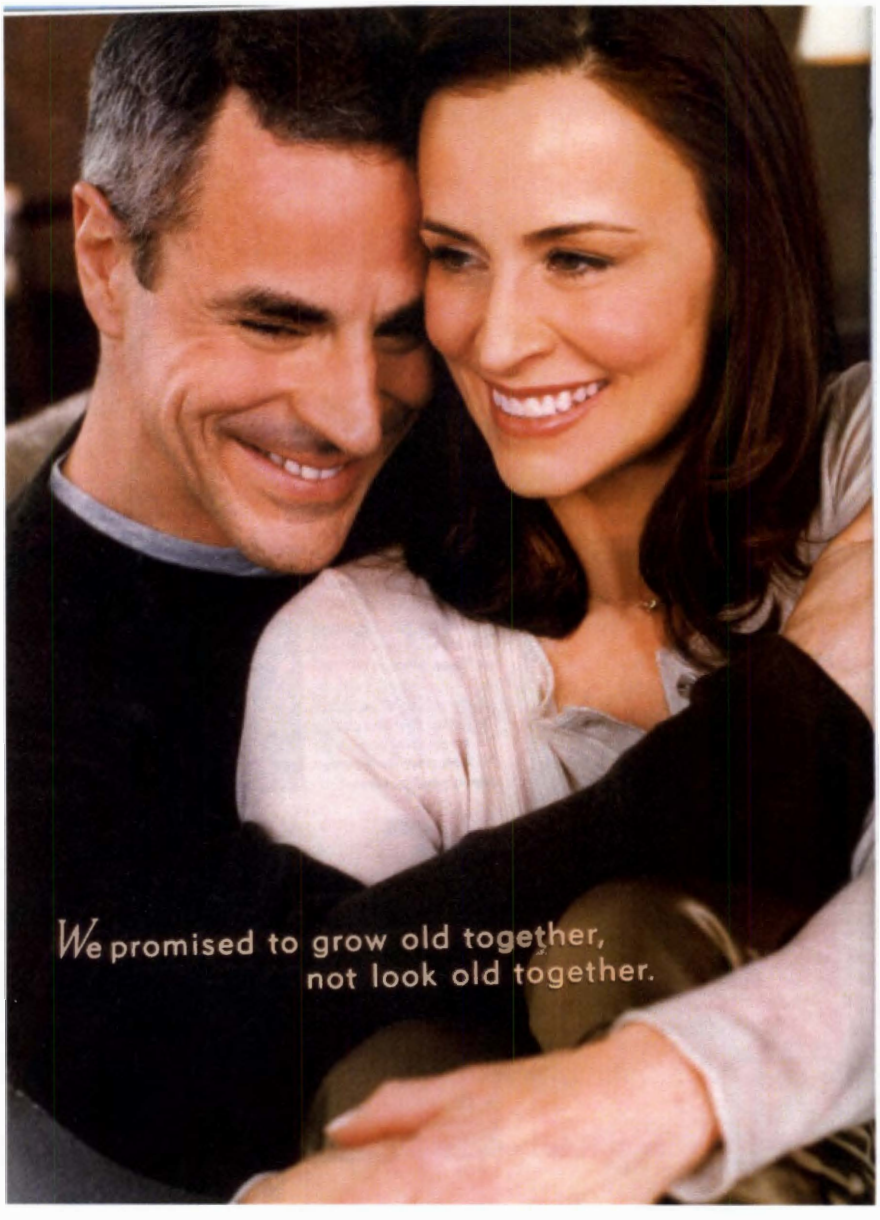


Figure 5. Botox Ad from *More* Magazine.

the standards should be equal, and the women who said "no" for the same reason are saying that anti-aging products are necessary for women to be perceived equally to men in terms of aging. The other reason used in both affirmative and negative categories is that men and women actually age differently. Many listed biological differences such as hormones or skin texture between men and women as the reasons for why they think men and women age differently.

The next question featured two images of models (Figure 6). Without identifying the product, respondents were asked, "Would you consider buying personal beauty products advertised by these women? Why or why not?" The models for this question were taken from the Dove campaign using "real women" to market products. This campaign, as noted in other places in this thesis, is considered ground-breaking for its use of non-models in photos and in television. When the Dove campaign was discussed during interviews, respondents generally had a very positive opinion of it. It is interesting that when these two images from the campaign were shown separate from it, they generated a number of negative responses.

Respondents noted that Model A had "sun damaged, wrinkled or aging skin" (16%), and that she looked ill (8%). Only five people had positive comments about her. Model B was seen in a more positive light, with 16% of respondents saying that she looks "healthy" and 8% noting that she had taken care of her skin. A few respondents said that each model was "beautiful" or "real looking," but when the images were removed from their original "Campaign for Real Beauty" position in the Dove Campaign, the overall opinion of the respondents was that the models weren't effective at selling beauty products. This may indicate that respondents were basing their answers on cultural



Model A



Model B

Figure 6. Dove Ad Images.

conditioning—the models weren't traditional American "beauties"—and that while open to new ideas of beauty in the right context, even this older sample struggled with breaking out of perceived "standards."

Looking More At Aging—And Looking Ahead

At the end of the survey, a series of open-ended questions explored how respondents looked at their futures, and how they felt about aging. Questions were both personal ("What do you envision yourself doing five years from now?") and philosophical ("What does it mean to age gracefully? To age successfully?"). Respondents were asked one final, direct question about how they would like to see the media treat women over 50, and they were asked how they felt women's position in society had changed.

In five years, the respondents expect to be active, no matter what their age. They plan travel (26%), retirement (18%), and even second careers (10%). Twenty-two percent expect to be doing the same thing they are today, while others want to teach, write, or finish degrees. They are still focused on self improvement, and they want to spend more time with family. They don't plan to slow down.

Many see that there are advantages that come with aging. Thirty-six percent said that wisdom is an asset (another 8% said experience), while 26% identified freedom and 9% noted time as advantages. They feel more financially secure, are less worried about the opinions of others, and feel they have better perspective on life.

There were three respondents who stated that they saw very few or no advantages to growing older. The remaining respondents reported a general increase in available

time and resources, which allows them to pursue the things that really matter to them. Three other respondents made the observation that they often feel invisible, and although that feeling is often upsetting, there are advantages as well.

When asked about the disadvantages of aging, common concerns were physical limitations (56%) and health issues (50%). Twelve percent cited living in an ageist society, while 8 percent noted invisibility (again) as a disadvantage. There was concern over losing parents, loved ones, and friends. Loneliness was an underlying issue in many answers.

In responding to the question about how women's positions have changed in society, 42% noted that women now have more career opportunities. Twenty percent said women have more positions of power, and 14% said women have more professional respect. However, 14% also noted that women are still at a disadvantage and there are not as many opportunities as there should have been. Although many of the respondents indicated there have been advances in several areas since they were 25, most of them also said that women are still second class citizens. Women are paid higher salaries now but they are still not equal to men's salaries. Women are still held responsible for childcare and running the household with very little assistance from their male partners.

Respondents believe more opportunities are open for women now. This includes careers formerly considered male dominated. Some of the participants reported a concern that some careers such as teachers in primary and secondary schools which have been thought of as female dominated have not been elevated to an appropriate status. Beyond the unfairness of this perception there is a concern that if these careers are not

perceived as valuable the quality of the work is at risk. So in the case of teachers, the fear is that quality of education is at risk.

It is important to note that the concerns for children, home-life, and the running of the household indicated by many of the respondents are not a call for the return to previous ideals of the nuclear family which include a working father and stay at home mother. Most of the women who voiced concerns about family life also celebrated the options for today's young women to delay or avoid marriage and motherhood while still being considered successful. These women also cited that there have not been enough advances in the positions of women, indicating that women will remain second class citizens until the professional playing field is truly equal while at the same time responsibility for home-life is held correspondingly by both partners.

Finally, a common fear expressed by the respondents was that without the true diligence of younger women, there will be no more advancement toward equality, and the gains made since they themselves were 25 will be lost. They expressed that a concern that older women have failed to pass the importance of this responsibility on to young women, for the most part.

When asked directly how they would change the way the media treats older women, 36% said the media needs to present a realistic image of aging. Twenty-eight percent wanted to see a positive image of aging. Some would not change things (4%), while small percentages noted that they'd like to see such things as less sex to sell products, more sexuality from older women, more romantic roles for older women, and less medicalization of aging. A few simply asked for more respect.

Two questions complemented each other. Respondents were asked what it means to age "gracefully" and "successfully." For graceful aging, 44% of those taking the survey said it means acceptance, while 22% said it means "be your best." Sixteen percent noted care for self and others (10% said care for health). Ten percent said humor and dressing appropriately. Other responses included "do not complain," "Elegance, grace, and class," "poise," and "be a role model."

There seems to be a common thread of remaining engaged in life and offering assistance to others in many forms. Financial security and planning appears to be essential as well. The elements of graceful aging can be divided into four main categories: attitude, healthcare, social networks, and style.

For aging successfully, the answers changed significantly. Thirty percent said aging successfully means engaging in life and being open to new experiences. Twenty-eight percent noted health and fitness. The two questions then saw a crossover—24% said acceptance is aging successfully. Twelve percent noted being happy is success, and others gave answers including having a good social network, reaching goals, having minimal regrets or forgiving one's self, and having financial security.

Finally, the survey ended with an open-ended question asking if there was anything else regarding media and women over 50 that respondents would like to say. Answers were diverse, as expected, but among the more noteworthy replies:

- Age is not a disease, it is a process (10%)
- Older women are still invisible (6%)
- The idea of a prominent, visible crone scares most people in this society.
- Stop replacing women when they reach a certain age. Men aren't replaced.

Chapter Five: Themes

The online survey was complemented by a series of personal interviews done with select survey participants. Ten personal interviews were completed, and participants were asked a series of questions designed to elaborate on many of their survey answers. From a comparison of these interviews, the online survey data, and secondary resources, it is possible to identify a number of key themes from the research.

It is also interesting to note that while some themes were more prominent than others, there seems to be an interconnection among them—one has an influence on another, as evidenced by interviewees' comments and the research data.

Interviewees are identified by fictitious names in the following discussion in the interest of privacy.

Theme 1: Invisibility

The lack of a presence in popular media was a recurring observation made by the women who participated in this project. The word "invisible" was used 19 times by participants in the open-ended survey questions on popular media and during the interviews, in reference to how they see themselves portrayed. It is important to note that three of the participants listed being invisible as one of the positive effects that comes from aging, but they noted that it is a double-edged sword. It provides freedom—but being invisible is a liability when you *want* to be noticed.

Some of the participants described this absence or invisibility in other terms that allude to the same notion by noting the lack of attention or awareness of the feelings, interests, and needs of older women. Many expressed their desire to see more women

over 50 in various forms of popular media and their frustration over seeing women holding various positions in popular media replaced once they reach a certain age. Not only did they want to see older women appearing more often, they expressed ideas on how they think women over 50 should be portrayed, which will be discussed later in this section.

The areas in which the participants said they felt invisible are advertising, entertainment, and some areas of their personal lives. Before discussing these issues, some background on how popular media became so youth oriented may be worthwhile.

In *Ageless Marketing,* David Wolfe wrote that age-based advertising and programming originated in the 1960s when there were three television networks. The network with the lowest ratings was ABC, according to the Nielsen Rating Service which at that time did not include age when reporting viewing patterns. ABC persuaded Nielsen to begin basing its reports on age, and the service discovered that ABC had a younger audience than NBC or CBS. ABC turned this distinction into an advantage by selling air time to marketers based on the idea that they could get customers while they are young before another brand gets them (Wolfe, 2003).

The focus on young consumers continued into the 1970s when the first wave baby boomers were in their 20s, starting families, buying and furnishing homes, and buying many consumer items (Barletta, 2003). This youth focus became ingrained to the point that it has not shifted even though baby boomers are beginning to reach their 60s. In addition to youth orientation, the traditional thinking is that women primarily purchase items for the home and family (Barletta, 2003). These three factors play a large role in making women over 50 feel invisible in many areas of the media.

The participants described how they felt invisible in the surveys and interviews. One of the ways in which invisibility is experienced is in finding information about consumer products of interest. Lois said that she "hates that I no longer belong to the target groups." She now has more money to spend than ever before, but she finds it difficult to find the things she wants and that it is even worse for her mother, who has practically given up on shopping. Mary also stated that it would be nice to see commercials for products that she is interested in.

In advertising, the negative side of invisibility outweighs the positive for the participants, but as discovered in the online survey, women over 50 may play an inadvertent role in this issue themselves. When asked if the presence of a woman their own age made an ad more believable, the response was relatively flat, skewing slightly toward positive (38%) but 30% disagreed and 32% selected the middle of the scale. But when presented with three ads for the same product with the major difference being the age of the model, more respondents thought that a 40-something model was "age appropriate" than a 60ish model. While more participants said they could relate to the older model, they also thought the ad with the younger model had more impact.

Another area where absence is felt was given by Wanda, who said it was generally not recognized that many older women are technically savvy and creatively cutting edge, and therefore generally not included in target audiences for technical media. She mentioned that there are magazines like *Omni* which feature articles and ads concerning these topics, but she had the feeling that women like herself were not included in the target group. Some of the data collected for this research supports Wanda's argument. Four survey respondents said that it was very important to them to

be current and "at the top of their game" in their professions, while six said that accomplishing goals was a key component of aging successfully. If professional journals are an indication of the desire to stay current, a significant number of respondents (26%) listed professional journals among magazines they read regularly, as well as three computer magazines. Twelve respondents (24%) envision themselves in learning activities that included finishing degrees and research, and nine of them plan to engage in creative activities that could sharpen their creative edge.

The issue of the feminine "ideal" is another area in which women over 50 feel invisible, and this is reflected in all areas of popular media. Feminine beauty will be further discussed later in this section, but it is noteworthy that many women over 50 feel overlooked or left out when it comes to cultural ideals set for their gender. It occurs multiple times. Wanda said that this image of the "perfect female" is in the media and it is "young, nubile, and in one defined shape. Women over 50 are excluded from that and therefore they are excluded from certain roles in society just because they don't match the cultural ideal."

One of the survey respondents said that she felt invisible in terms of sexual attractiveness. This type of invisibility is reflected in popular media. Lois said that "it's like you reach a certain age and they just throw you away." Jean Kilbourne supports Lois' statement in the article, *Advertising and Disconnection.* "Women are portrayed as sexually desirable only if they are young, thin, carefully polished and groomed, made up, depilated, sprayed, and scented—rendered quite unerotic in fact—and men are conditioned to seek such partners and to feel disappointed if they fail," Kilbourne notes.

She further wrote that "we never see eroticized images of older people, imperfect people, or people with disabilities (Kilbourne, 2003)."

In her interview, Wanda commented about aging and sexuality: "I think there is this thought that sex, or the power of sexuality is going to diminish as you get older, and it does change. But it does not cease to be an issue in life. . . You'd think you'd have that whole thing taken care of by the time you're in your 50s, and yet there's a lot of stuff that happens in life over the issue of sexuality. People breaking up over affairs and stuff." However, since sexuality is perceived as a young person's avocation, it becomes absent in films and other media about older people (particularly women) almost to the point of *de facto* censorship.

There have been a few films over the last several years in which women over 50 play the leading roles, with *First Wives Club* and *Something's Gotta Give* being two examples. In an interview with Goldie Hawn for *AARP Magazine*, Nancy Griffin wrote that Goldie Hawn, Diane Keaton, and Bette Midler tapped into a market of older females hungry to see characters with whom they could identify. In spite of marketability, Hollywood insiders report that it is virtually impossible to get funding for these types of movies. *Something's Gotta Give,* a smash hit that featured a nude scene with Diane Keaton, only got funding after Jack Nicholson signed on as a cast member. This seems to suggest that it's not just the audience that's invisible, but even prominent older actresses do not escape this phenomenon.

Theme 2: Inaccuracy

In addition to sometimes feeling invisible, inaccurate portrayals of women over 50 in popular media was a recurring theme in interviews as well as the survey. When asked if they thought women over 50 were accurately portrayed in popular media, four percent said they did and 58% said that did not. They were evenly split on whether they thought women over 50 in popular media were positive role models or if they all seem the same with 34% in agreement and 34% who disagreed. The examples provided by the respondents are categorized in three ways, inaccurate portrayal of physical appearance, marketers missing the point in consumer products, and an inaccurate portrayal of the lifestyles of these women.

One of the interviewees, Margene, thought that the images most often seen are getting more accurate, but none of the others who were personally interviewed agreed. The consensus among the rest of the interviewees was that older women's portrayals were either extremely young looking (Heather said it looks like someone "slapped a gray wig on a 25 year old"), or extremely old and feeble looking The women who participated in this research felt like they were somewhere in the middle. Many of the participants in both the online survey and the interviews (36%) said that they want to see more realistic images in popular media.

Thomas Robinson agrees with this observation in *Portraying Older People in Advertising* and explains why the images are so extreme in advertising. When elders are the target of the advertising, the images are presented in a positive manner because marketers want this desirable image to represent their product. When the target audience is younger, the older characters are given minor roles and undesirable characteristics such

as being sick or feeble, and marketers are continuing to use older individuals in stereotypical roles (Robinson, 1998). This has led to what might be considered a very dangerous conundrum for marketers: Many television ads are targeted to younger viewers, and they use stereotypes of older individuals to emphasis their points to the younger audience. The real irony of this is that younger viewers are abandoning television for other media such as the internet, so the concentration of older viewers who are watching themselves get made fun of is growing. Research shows that television has dropped to the number four medium of choice for younger audiences—behind the internet, e-mail, and text messaging (Center for Media Research, 2005).

One company, Dove, has launched a campaign that challenges the societal views on age, body shape, and race. Dove's ad campaign, dubbed the "Campaign for Real Beauty" (as used in several places through this document) features non-models with body types that break the supermodel norm for beauty products. In conjunction with the ad campaign (Figure 7), Dove conducted a global research project in collaboration with the research firm Strategy One to determine social views on beauty. The study surveyed more than 3,200 women in ten countries. The results are extremely interesting.

According to the Dove survey participants, a mere 2% considered themselves beautiful, and only 9% were comfortable calling themselves attractive. However, 49% said that women who are beautiful have greater opportunities in life. Though they thought the media bombards them with idealized images of women, the majority agreed that beauty can be achieved through attitude and spirit, and 85% said every woman has something beautiful about her.

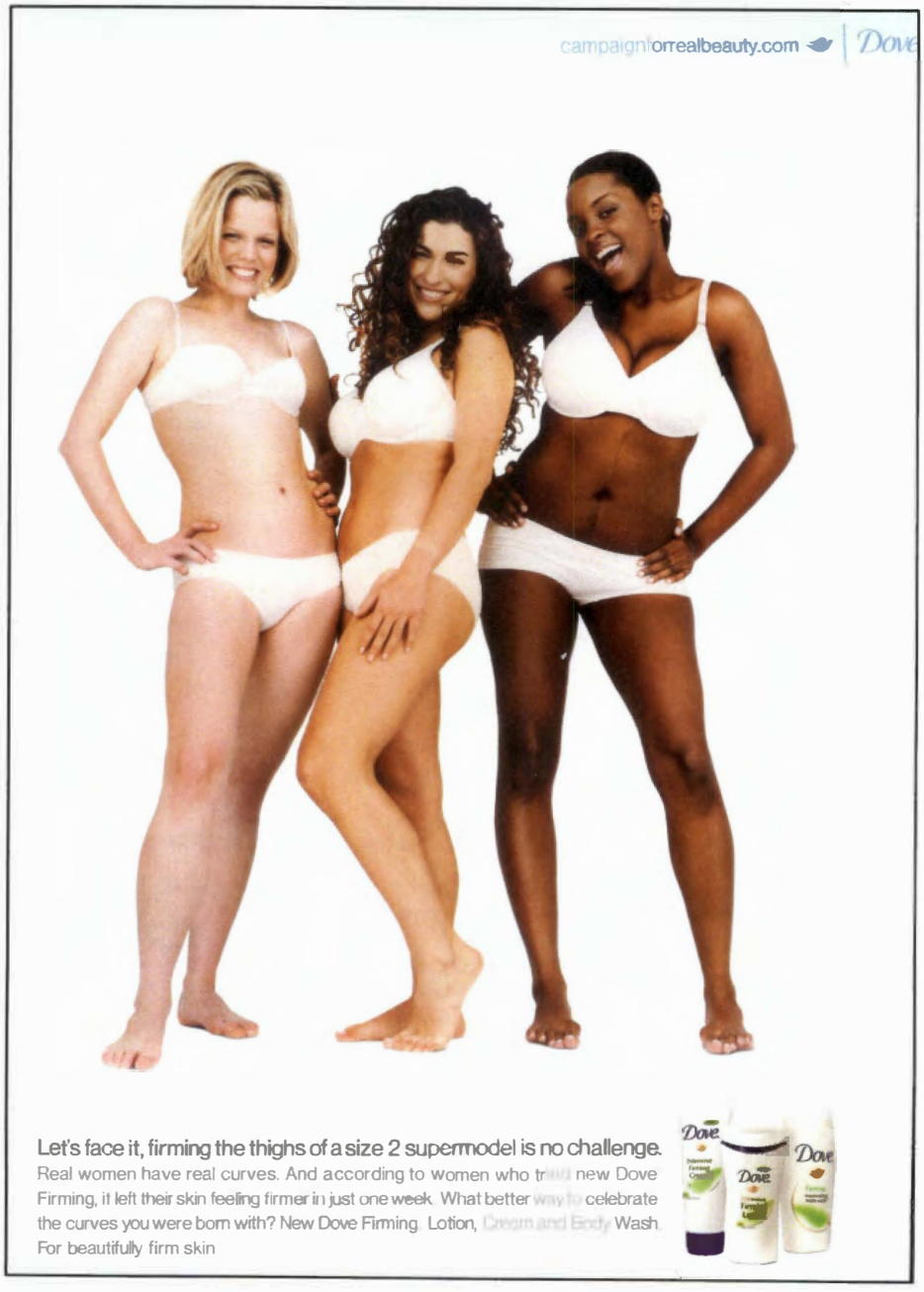


Figure 7. Dove Campaign For Real Beauty.

To dig deeper into the mystique and controversy surrounding the Dove campaign and the media attention to it, the people interviewed for this project were shown images from the campaign and were asked their opinions of it. All of the interviewees appreciated this approach to advertising, but Lois did not like to see people in their underwear and Wanda thought that advertisers would have to be very careful about using this approach because it would be easy for it to become exploitative. Nicolette said that she would like to see more of these types of ads because they promoted women's self esteem and they gave men a realistic view of women. She further explained that the unobtainable ideal presented in most of advertising victimized women and created unrealistic expectations for many men. Kilbourne echoed this in her article by saying that the unrealistic and unobtainable images "define desirability—our own as well as others'. Inevitably, this affects our self-images and radically distorts reality" (Kilbourne, 2003).

The participants were in agreement that the definition of beauty needs to be expanded. Certainly, the physical side of beauty is a key aspect, but they also wanted to see internal forms of beauty, which one survey respondent said included grace and intelligence. Another thought that this kind of beauty "was reflected in outer appearances." Though the consensus is there should be changes in societal standards of beauty, there is evidence that these standards are often ingrained—in spite of a conscious effort to challenge them. Consider again what occurred when my online survey asked women to comment on two of the images from the Dove campaign out of context—a wrinkled but smiling 96-year-old African-American woman, and a white-haired Caucasian woman: Most respondents had a negative view of their looks.

Another example of how the societal concept of beauty can be ingrained is from the interview portion of this project. Several portraits of women over 60 from Tennesson's book, *Wise Women A Celebration of their Insights, Courage, and Beauty* were shown to the interviewees. These prompted a variety of comments from the participants, but the following portrait of Marilyn Alex (Figure 8) indicated some incongruency between the conscious desire for a change in the image of beauty and the internal perceptions (developed through years of exposure) that inadvertently perpetuate the standards. This also supports Kilbourne's argument that societal standards may have an effect on self perception and the perception of reality.

This image was adhered to a card with the quote and the person's name and age on the back, so the participants saw the image without any information and made comments. Then they looked on the back for extra information before making additional observations. All of the interviewees thought that Marilyn was around their age (eight were in their 50s and two were in their early 60s). None of them thought that she was especially attractive. Wanda made the comment that she "looked like a good average person" and that was the general opinion expressed by the participants--until they turned the card over and saw that she was 70. The knowledge of Marilyn's age changed the tone of the comments about her, and she was then considered exceptionally beautiful.



I think it's cool being older—I still get hit on. People are always telling me how beautiful I am now. It's like they are almost incredulous because the old stereotype is that we shouldn't get more beautiful with age. I have respect for the body and live in harmony with nature. That's where beauty comes from. Marilyn Alex, 70 (Tenneson, 2002)

Figure 8. Marilyn Alex.

These examples suggest that while it may be a reflex judgment about beauty based on years of media conditioning, the definition of beauty can be expanded—in fact, it seems that women are more than ready for broader definitions of beauty, and a few details about circumstances (the age of a model, for example) gives them the freedom to agree to something outside the narrow societal definition. It's there, but it has to still be coaxed out, if one finding of the Dove survey is to be believed: 67% of all women 15 to 64 withdraw from life-engaging activities due to feeling badly about their looks (among them things like giving an opinion, going to school, going to the doctor).

The second inaccuracy in popular media described by the participants concerns consumer products. Thomas Robinson's research revealed that 85% of the current advertising to older Americans is health related, and that older consumers were not targeted for other products because advertisers did not see them as major players in the consumer market (Robinson, 1998). Mary told me in her interview that she feels like the only time she's targeted is in wheelchair ads. Margene and other participants feel that they are inundated with anti-aging products. By ignoring other products of interest to this demographic, advertisers are missing out on a potentially lucrative market (Barletta, 2003, Robinson, 1998, Wolfe, 2003).

Health is a concern for the group, but the treatment of disease is only one aspect. Respondents think that instead of focusing on the treatment of age related diseases in the media, there should be a shift toward maintenance and fitness. This would help reduce the notion that aging is a disease, which is a recurring comment made throughout the project.

Another identified area of media inaccuracy is in how the lifestyles of women over 50 are portrayed. One of the survey respondents summed up the general opinion expressed by the participants when she said "Show that older women do more than housework and childcare." One of the most common depictions of older people in advertising is as a grandparent (Robinson, 1998). While it is true that many of the participants are grandparents, and spending time with their families was a high priority, they do much more than that. Most of the participants work (92%), 10% listed student as their major occupation and many more mentioned taking classes. Twenty-six percent mentioned travel, and 10% were planning second careers.

Another respondent complained that women over 50 are portrayed as being "either uneducated or bumbling if poor or middle class, or as bitches if rich and neither is close". This narrow depiction excludes many women over 50 and fails to portray the range of lifestyles and diversity of this group.

One reason that the respondents think portrayals of women over 50 are inaccurate is that popular media ignores the positive side of aging and that there is the assumption that they are unhappy with being older. But as mentioned before, 46% indicated they are happier now than when they were 25. Margene and Sarah both said that they are proud to have made it this far. Some of the advantages given by the respondents include an increase in available time and resources, along with the wisdom, self-awareness, and abilities to know what their true dreams are--and the abilities to make them come true. Independence and freedom are also positive aspects of aging for many. Heather said that she will "just take off and drive anywhere."

Nicolette said that she is much happier than she was when she was 25. She takes care of herself now. "I'm more relaxed. I'm following my Native American religion, so I don't just go to church on Sunday, I go to church all the time."

Another misconception is that a person no longer thinks young when they get older. Adaleen and Lois both made a point of noting they were young at heart. Adaleen gets on the floor to play with her grandkids, which she said is very different from how her mother was.

Margene summed it all up by saying that "it's important to get out into the world—if you have to take a pill, put on a Depends, or anything else just do it and keep living. It's better than sitting at home. I don't want to do that."

Theme 3: Independence

Many participants expressed frustration over the media. Although 76% said they pay less attention to its message than when they were younger, and as Jolean and Lois said in their interviews finding the desired consumer product has become more challenging. The participants also described the creative ways they work around this problem. For many this means a move from the intrusive nature of popular media to interactive sources of consumer information.

The two major, interconnected sources they go to are personal networks and the internet. These sources are interconnected because through the internet women can conduct research, make purchases, and expand their personal networks to a worldwide scale. David Wolfe wrote that marketers are just now exploring the possibilities of tapping into feminine relationships as a source for advertising and marketing (Wolfe, 2003). The participants in this research support this as an option but it is important to note two characteristics to avoid stereotyping. The first is that their relationships are one of several sources they refer to when they are considering a product. Indications are that relationships are important to the participants but independence is also valued and this is reflected in their consumer decisions. Nicolette expressed her independent thinking in her interview when she said that "I get my information from other places than popular media. I'm tired of being told what to think so now I ignore it." Sarah has a similar approach and she said that she did her own investigating before making a purchase. She finds articles (78% of the respondents said that they believe articles more than ads), looks on the internet, and considers endorsements from friends. In *Eveolution*, Faith Popcorn wrote that women are three times more likely to learn about a product from other women

than men. This includes generational influence: "odds are that when a young woman buys her first face cream she'll begin by looking at the familiar labels she's grown up with." Popcorn uses the term "Brand Me Downs" to describe this process (Popcorn, 2001). This is not a guarantee that brand loyalty is inherited but young people do often ask their mothers when they need information. The Dove study noted that 61% of all women and 69% of girls (15 to 17) feel that their mother has had a positive influence on their feelings about themselves and their beauty.

The internet has become a source for both interconnected and independent information. Use of the internet is on the rise, and 50% of internet users are adult women. This number is increasing, especially in the female 55 and older group (Popcorn, 2001). A research brief released from the Center For Media Research reports that there are 33.2 million people online in the United States between the ages of 50 and 64. This is triple the number of users over 65, indicating a rising wave of older users (Center for Media Research, 2005). Participants support this. Adaleen stated during an interview that she "knows what I like and what I want. I go to the internet to find it. I used it this morning to plan a trip." There are a number of websites designed for women and they include ways to interact and to find information independently through chat rooms and search engines. One example of this type of website is iVillage.com. This is a leading women's site with 7.1 million visitors a month. When Renova was launching a anti-aging cream, it used iVillage as a vehicle. Visitors could chat on-line with a dermatologist for information and search through articles.

Another way participants expressed their independence is with clothing brand preferences. When asked to list their preferences 56% said they had none. Some of the

reasons provided included that they shop for quality, fit, and price. It could be argued that this group is open for the right marketing approach and there are a number of clothing brands that cater to older women. In an on-line article for www.cnnmoney.com, Parija Bhatnagar wrote that Chico's (listed as a preferred brand by two of the respondents), whose core clientele are older women has over $1 billion in annual sales and has had double-digit growth for the eight years. Last year they opened ten lingerie stores called Soma that targets the same group. Mike Smith, Chico's vice president of investment relations, said that with Soma they are vying for the "graduates" of Victoria's Secret with an image that is more sedate and less sexy (Bhatnagar 2005).

Another company that has added brands to lure older women is Gap Inc. The company's other stores include Old Navy and Banana Republic. These stores sell clothes to about 8% of women under 35 but reach only 3% of older women. A new store concept, called Forth and Towne, was created to lure this demographic. Gary Muto, Forth and Townes's president, said that older women are "underserved" and that the mall is a "barren wasteland" (Tina and Lois both described the difficulties finding clothes in malls). Forth and Towne is offered as an alternative to on-line shops like Coldwater Creek and J. Jill, who also cater to this group of consumers. Forth and Towne promotes itself as a store for women who have "grown up, grown into themselves, and want to look as fabulous as they feel (Bhatnagar, 2005)."

There could be any number of reasons why more than half of the participants did not have clothing brand preferences but one possibility is that it is a conscious decision to disengage from the popular media and societal pressures to conform.

Theme 4: "Old" is a Bad Word

For the most part, the accomplished women who participated in this project are pleased to be where they are in life. Almost half (46%) said that they were happier now than when they were when they were 25. They have more control over their lives (76%), more resources at their disposal, and have very active plans for the future. They are more comfortable with their image (52%) but even though they were not asked directly, the odds are that most of the sample would not like to be called ***old***. There is enough negative imagery associated with aging in popular media to make it an insulting term to many people, and there is evidence to suggest that the negative connotation may impede successful aging.

Old is not the only age-related term with negative connotations, and it seems that with first wave boomers entering their 60s, finding an all encompassing term that is not considered negative is proving to be a challenge. Because of the negative imagery associated with any term meant to label people over 50, there is an abundance of bad old words in the vernacular. In an article for *USA Today*, Janet Kornblum describes the problems associated with these words. One problem is how to label organizations and activities design for persons over 50. In an effort to attract boomers while at the same time maintaining the stronghold the *AARP* membership base (persons age 60 and older), the former *Modern Maturity* magazine was changed to *AARP*. The organization's annual convention is called "Life @ 50+." AARP is the largest advocacy group for those 50 and older, but it struggles with finding appropriate names. Retired no longer applies, since people are working longer. So the group now use the acronym as its title, much in the

same way that Kentucky Fried Chicken became KFC to avoid the connotations of the word "fried" (Kornblum, 2005). Even "middle age" seems negative, because it refers to someone who is no longer young, and "golden years" sounds like a fading sunset which does not give the image of primacy and vitality, characteristics that apply to many in this group (Barletta, 2003). Adopting the trend of laying claim to negative words in the same way that the gay community has reclaimed "queer," some boomers are now referring to themselves as "geezer" (Kornblum, 2005).

There are differing opinions on "senior," with Kornblum reporting that boomers do not feel this label applies to them. Wolfe, however, had a different proposal, which is to expand the term to include those who are in their 40s (Kornblum, 2005, Wolfe, 2003). He argues that in every other sense "senior" is a good thing. Being a senior in high school or college is good, a senior vice president or partner is good; senior is superior in every context except aging. No one wants to be associated with the socially reinforced negative images of aging. If everyone enters the "senior" class with all the associated privileges at the midpoint in their life, then maybe the term will become positive in this context as well. Wolfe makes an interesting point about words associated with aging but he also said that in actuality this idea would meet a great deal of resistance (Wolfe, 2003).

Ageism is cruel. Women who have gained wisdom, patience, and competence (listed by respondents as positive aspects of aging) are often portrayed in media as being on the downhill slide of desirability as women and workers. As with beauty, the implications associated with aging may go beyond image. There is evidence that negative images of aging may have an effect on health and quality of life (Wolfe, 2003). In a study reported in the *Washington Post*, elderly participants who were shown negative

images of aging exhibited signs of cardiovascular stress. The signs of stress were reduced when the participants were shown positive images of aging. Negative images were also associated with lower scores on memory tests (Trafford, 2000).

Another project involved both young and old native Chinese and elderly participants who were deaf and those who had hearing. The researchers thought that native Chinese and the deaf would have less exposure to negative effects of cultural images of aging. The results were that the elderly who were deaf had better memory than those who had hearing and the old native Chinese had similar scores on memory tests to the young (Yoon, 2000).

One of the respondents wrote in the survey that she found ageist greeting cards offensive. They may be offensive on many levels if they plant a seed of negativity toward ageing. Wolfe advised readers to think twice before sending an ageist greeting card to someone (Wolfe, 2003).

Maybe it is better to just call them people. This speaks to the wisdom of the participants who do not like labels or negative humor.

Theme 5: Concern for Others

Many of the participants expressed a concern for others that extended to the community, the environment, and other women. In literature concerned with marketing to women, the sense of community is a reoccurring theme. Barletta predicted that popular culture will soon transition from a youth-driven mode characterized by male oriented values to an "older and wiser" mode more aligned with female values like understanding, harmony, and giving back to the community (Barletta, 2003). In the

meantime, women who are likeminded with the survey participants are continuing a tradition of valuing relationships and acting on their concern for others. In response to Lola Santos' quote (Figure 9), Nicolette said "that's the key" and Sarah said "yeah that's why we're here." Other survey respondents seem to agree, because 48% said that kindness, caring for others, and being a role model are what it means to age gracefully or successfully.

This does not mean that they do not seek balance, because they also listed ways they take care of themselves. They are planning to spend more time involved with others; 42% plan to spend more time with friends and loved ones and four of those mentioned that they are devoting time specifically to helping others reach their goals; six participants plan to have more time for volunteering and community service.

This is the time when some women over 50 begin to speak out on causes that concern them. Adaleen joined Campus Workers because she was concerned about workers' rights. This is not a new concern for her, but when her children were still living at home she could not afford the time away from family, home, and work and she could not risk losing her job since she was a single mother. The same transitions made it possible for Nicolette to get involved in environmental issues.

A number of changes were noted about the differences in the position of women in society since they were 25. Women have more career opportunities, positions of power, and professional respect. But respondents feel they are still at a disadvantage and 14% said that there has not been as much change as they had hoped. They report that they felt



Make use of all your faculties while you are going toward your golden years, because you want to be of service. To give of yourself, to love—this is why we are on earth. Lola Santos, 76 (Tenneson, 2002)

Figure 9. Lola Santos.

they could change the world early in the women's movement, but this feeling is no longer there. When asked if they feel more optimistic about the future than when they were 25, the answer skewed toward disagreement with 44% disagreeing and 32% agreeing. Many of them fear that not only is there a loss in momentum toward equality, but a danger of losing the progress that has been made since there seems to be apathy over still being second class citizens.

Although the participants agree that it is important to refrain from stereotyping or judging, this apathy is perceived to be the case with younger women. One participant wrote that inequality (for women and all those who are disenfranchised) does not seem to bother women as much as it did.

When asked if they felt that today's society was too youth oriented, 54% agreed. But when considered with other comments made by participants, it seems that things may be more complicated. In the open-ended questions and interviews, participants mentioned having concern for younger women. Some of the issues of concern for the participants that affect young women are that they are expected to work now, but they still have responsibility for the children and home; that girls are still being taught that it is important to be pretty; and even with more career opportunities women (especially young women) are still expect to be sexually appealing to the point of exploitation. While they expressed frustration over feeling invisible, they also realize that it is younger women who have the cookie cutter ideal of beauty imposed upon them. Interviewee's responses to the following ad illustrate this point.

There was a mix of reactions among the interviewees to the Pond's ad (Figure 10). Sara and Tina liked it and thought it was cute and funny; Betsy appreciated the ad's wit, but thought it was on the border of being exploitative; the rest of the interviewees did not like the competitive tone of the ad. They thought that the perception that younger and older women were in competition and held animosities toward each other was a notion that did not need to be perpetuated. Mary and Lois thought that it made older women feel bad or left out since 43 was relatively young, and Niclolette and Wanda were concerned about the insinuated animosity between young and old. Mary also said that personally she was not the "least bit interested in this (feigning a yawn), but there are many women my age who are and I am worried about that." Judging by the reaction to this ad, Barletta may be correct when she advises advertisers against supposedly humorous aspersions in ads directed toward women. Perhaps this impression that today's popular

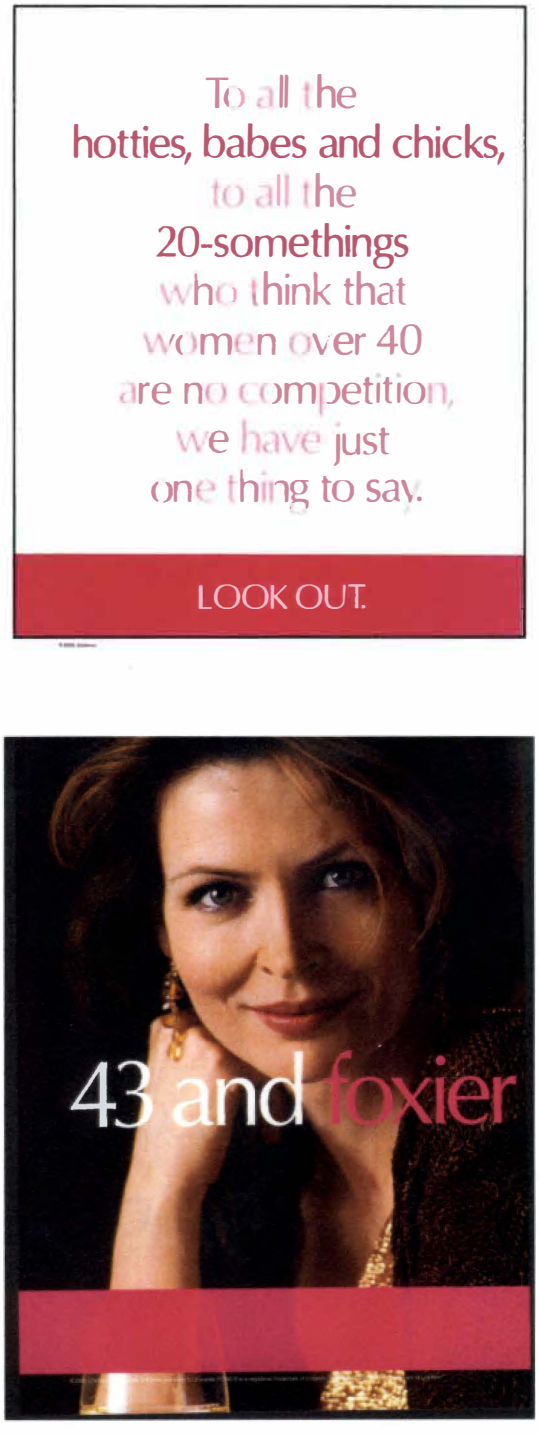


Figure 10. Pond's "43 and Foxier" – two sided ad.

culture (or society, as noted in the survey question) is too youth oriented does not indicate the desire to take away the focus on youth or animosity toward the young, but instead it might point to the wish to be visible and acknowledged.

Theme 6: The Exploitation of Women

The exploitation of women; unrealistic images; insulting, misleading, suggestive ideas; and general bad taste are some of the features of media forms disliked by the participants. Several of the participants wrote that they would like to see sex used to sell products much less often. To further illustrate their distaste for exploitative advertising, when asked their opinions of the three models in our test ads for "New Morning," 22% thought that model B (by far the youngest) was too young and sexy. One participant said that she looked "sexually refreshed," and four said the model did not fit the product.

The research discussed in other sections of the paper shows that exploitative advertising has the potential to negatively impact self images, health, relationships, and the environment, not to mention insulting the viewer (Kornblum, 2003, Wolfe, 2003). There has been some literature published from the feminist perspective on the issue of exploitation and advertising, and a few examples will be used to further illustrate some of the resulting problems listed above. The relationship between negative imagery and exploitation in popular media and older women's self image, health, and relationships have been discussed in other sections of this chapter, so this section will be focused on sexual exploitation. The recurring objection by the participants to this type of exploitation is two fold: not only is it distasteful, but more importantly it is harmful; and

the pervasiveness of this selling vehicle seems to be increasing, in spite of the objections. Unheard objections contribute to the feeling of being invisible.

Wanda wondered why feminists have not called the media into account over its use of women's bodies to sell products. She is of the opinion that things were changing when the feminist movement was strong and speculated whether the sexual revolution played a role in confusing the issue. While acknowledging the importance of sexuality and the encouragement of no longer viewing the body as dirty, it is also important to avoid exploiting women. She said that it makes her ask why we are all engaging in it.

One reason there is not a bigger uproar against using women's bodies to sell products and imposing an impossible ideal of beauty on women is a difference in philosophy within the feminist movement. Some feel they should speak out against what they feel is exploitation, while another group believes that it is up to women themselves to decide. This difference limits the action the movement can take. (Lumby, 1999). Several participants mentioned on the survey that they had concerns that the progress made toward equality during the women's movement will be lost because younger women are not interested in the movement. In an article for *Slate* magazine, Ellen Willis wrote that the second wave of feminism has exhausted itself. She cited the anti-porn movement and the fudging of the distinction between consensual and coercive sex as the reason for the loss of credibility by the women's movement. It denies women's sexual autonomy (Willis, 1999).

It is important to note that some of the participants would like to see more exploration of the sexuality of older women. Jolean and Lois mentioned that in the interviews and it was also mentioned in the survey. *Something's Gotta Give* and *About*

Schmit are examples of movies many respondents said they would like to see more of. Some of the feminist literature on this issue does not take issue against all erotic material, but it argues that advertising, unlike art, yokes erotic images of women to products. The intention is not to sell us on sex but to sell us on shopping. The risk of this type marketing is that the images in popular media come to define what and who is sexy (Kilbourne, 2003).

Nicolette expressed concern about the unrealistic and unobtainable standards and expectations created by societal images of beauty. These expectations apply to both men and women. For women, it is to fit the beauty mold. For men, it is to have relationships with those women who meet the standard. One type of popular media that perpetuates the unrealistic images is magazines. The magazines (as well as television and billboards) directed toward men are filled with images of the perfect woman, while women's magazines have articles on how to keep men sexually happy (Kilbourne, 2003).

As Wanda and other participants expressed, most people would think that women over 50 would have the whole sex issue "taken care of." But even though it changes, sex remains a main issue in many women's lives. Objectification like the censorship/freedom of expression debate within feminist thought is an issue that has caused division within the movement. Some feminists say that it is never appropriate to objectify another person, while another camp argues that objectifying is inevitable. The important factor that applies to equality is that everyone can be *subjects* as well as *objects* (Kilbourne, 2003). One answer, especially for those interested in becoming visible again as a sexual person, is not to abandon the erotic but to take it back from the marketing

arena where it has become a vehicle for ageism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination.

As exploitative and at the very least distasteful as it seems to many women to see women's bodies used to sell products, and to have an unobtainable and unrealistic ideal imposed upon women, it stands to reason that the division among women based on differing philosophies concerning this issue could prevent women over 50 from weighing in on the portrayal of women in the media.

Theme 7: Gender Differences

Gender differences pertaining to this subject were explored in two areas, professional relationships and image. Although progress has been made, many of the participants thought that there is more work to be done before there is equality. When asked how women's positions have changed since they were 25, 14% said that they had more professional respect in general, 44% said that there are more career opportunities for women now, 20% said that more women are now in positions of power, and several mentioned more financial independence.

It is interesting to analyze the nature of professional relationships with men when looking at the survey data broken out in cross-tabulations. Overall, sixty percent of women surveyed reported they get more respect from their coworkers than when they first started their careers. Fifty-eight percent agreed that there has been an improvement in their professional relationships with men (28% said they're not better). But more women (63%) whose household income is less than $100,000 per year said that their professional relationships with men are better than those with higher income (56%) as

well as those with a high school education (90%) compared to those with college educations (50%) who agreed. In occupational breakouts, students had the highest percentage of agreement at 83%, while the lowest rate of agreement was with participants who worked in administration (50%). The younger women in the sample (those 54 and under) had the highest agreement at 67%.

Generally speaking, the professional relationships of the participants have improved but they still do not think they have the same respect as men their age. The largest percentage (58%) said that they did not receive the same professional respect as men their age. Cross-tabulations can be seen in the appendix but every demographic category reported that they did not receive the same professional respect as men their age.

Most participants (74%), disagreed with the statement that women are less affected by age than men, and in breakouts, this was particularly true among women who earn less money or have less education. On whether men and women should use anti-aging products in the same way, participants were more evenly split (48% no, 40% yes), which is interesting and perhaps signals a call for equality or that they'd like to see the men in their lives spruced up a bit.

There were some observations on gender differences pertaining to popular media made during the interviews. Several of the participants said that they would like to see actresses appearing in leading and romantic roles after they reach 50. Lois said that she would like to see actresses over 50 (like older actors) take romantic roles with younger men. Other than very rare exceptions, actresses who are older are relegated to supporting and character roles. In an interview for *AARP* magazine Goldie Hawn observed that "even the great Meryl Streep has to take supporting roles (Griffin, 2006).

Nicolette talked about the inequality in television shows. There is no female equivalent to shows like *Beauty and the Geek*. Women who look like the ones in the Dove ads would not appear in shows where they get the beautiful guy. She said the only show for women is where they make them over into the image that the men who control these kinds of things think women ought to look like – "I think that stinks."

Theme 8: Personal Strategies

For the women in this sample, there seem to be three basic approaches to the aging process: embrace it, maintain yourself in harmony with it, and/or fight it. The categories are not mutually exclusive and the boundaries between them are permeable. These are tendencies, and most of the participants would not necessarily fit neatly into one category. It would be difficult without further questions to label all 50 participants, but they did share enough information about their philosophies to give an overview of the options available to make the most of this phase of their life.

Those who embrace aging do not believe that anti-aging products work and many of them do not use any cosmetics, including two interviewees, Nicolette and Mary. Several told me that they have earned their wrinkles and would not resort to cosmetic procedures even if they could afford them. Four survey respondents said that no cosmetic surgery was a factor in successful aging. They would like to see images of wise old women in the media, and some talked about their dismay over the number of women who do not want to be crones. Mary said that "there are so many women who do not want to be old or wise." Women who have this philosophy celebrate the positive aspects of aging.

Participants who practice maintenance use a moderate approach to aging. They may employ anti-aging products and cosmetic procedures, but they see them as tools and take a judicious and reserved approach to their use. They generally tend to use a holistic approach that includes health, spiritual, and mental care, skin care, diet and exercise to preserve their beauty and vitality. Fourteen survey respondents wrote that health (physical and mental) maintenance and fitness were the means to graceful and successful aging. They are careful to dress stylishly and appropriately.

Both the embrace and maintain categories believe that beauty radiates from within, and urge caution in using medical intervention. Sarah and Adaleen discussed the problems associated with drug advertisements that are seen increasingly in popular media. The recent flood of erectile dysfunction disorder (EDD) medications is a reflection of the popular focus on sexuality. However, a number of interviewees saw the humor in the over the counter male enhancement product called Enzyte, which was among the favorite funny commercials. These medications are potentially dangerous and interviewees made the argument that the money spent on research and development would be better spent on finding cures for cancer, kidney failure, and other more dangerous diseases.

Another problem with advertising medication is suggestibility. This type of advertisement risks talking someone into believing they have disease. Legal requirements for listing the side effects of a drug might even prevent someone from taking the medication or discussing health issues with doctors due to fear of being prescribed the drug in question. Research participants believe it is better to discuss medications with a doctor who can explain the side effects and assist with deciding on the

best treatment without the undue risks and confusion brought about by this type of advertising.

Sarah and Jolean add a word of caution and some insight into a holistic approach to aging, in regards to both anti-aging and beauty products and cosmetic procedures. They advised there is nothing wrong with using these tools, but it is important to have reasonable expectations. This was echoed in the survey as well, because three respondents said that moderation in medical intervention for appearance sake is essential to successful aging.

The respondents who fight aging will use every means available including cosmetic procedures. They want to have a youthful appearance that includes hair, makeup, and clothes. Many will not reveal their actual age. Heather said that she thinks there is a sense of accomplishment and confidence if you reach a certain age and you are well groomed, fit, and youthful looking. She does not plan to ever let herself go. She, like many of the participants, said that inside she is ageless.

For those who choose to fight aging, it is mostly about appearance according to Heather, and she added that "There is no choice about aging but you do not have to look or act it." Based on responses to survey questions and interviews other participants are like minded in their approach; three advised using all means available and one wrote that looking youthful was an important part of successful aging. While 54% of the online survey participants said they would not consider cosmetic surgery even if their insurance company covered the procedure, two interviewees said that they had undergone cosmetic procedures; one said that she was considering it, and throughout the project respondents reported they are considering that option. As for clothing, the majority of participants

stated the importance of dressing appropriately, though some who believe in fighting aging may also believe that youthful dress is part of the battle. Most agree with Tina, who advocates the preservation of a youthful appearance but believes in certain decorum. She thinks that it is important to dress stylishly, but also appropriately for your age.

As mentioned previously, choices for makeovers, hair color, and even cosmetic surgery varied within the overall survey group, with participants taking surprisingly strong stands either for or against different cosmetic options. While many of those surveyed would not opt for cosmetic surgery, an interesting figure emerged: participants who were retired were significantly more likely (67%) to choose plastic surgery, and older participants in the survey would choose this option more (57%). This is in line with the statistics in an on-line article for CNN by Rea Blakely, which notes that cosmetic surgery has increased for those over 60 from 121,000 procedures in 1997 to 435,000 in 2001. Seniors are willing to undertake the increased risk involved with the elderly and surgery to undergo cosmetic surgery. Seniors also run the risk of having to have additional surgery. But they're still interested in things that will enhance their appearance (Blakely, 2005).

One popular element of successful and graceful aging was mentioned in each school of thought is to "be your best." This goal was one of the recurring themes throughout the data; 22% of those surveyed cited it as essential to aging gracefully or successfully. Being one's best goes beyond appearance and includes reaching personal goals, staying at the top of your profession (including technical skills and continued learning), and serving as a role model. To be your best was not described as a burden to the participants, but as a way to make the most of this phase of life.

Acceptance permeates every approach to aging is cited throughout the data to such an extent that I decided to discuss it separately. When asked what it means to age gracefully and successfully survey respondents mentioned acceptance 35 times directly and several other times in different terms. Other ways of expressing this attitude include enjoying the process and being happy, which were listed 11 times.

Acceptance very well could be the key to avoiding some of the downfalls of aging. As discussed by David Wolfe, research show that suggestibility can be a powerful force and negative images of aging (especially those internalized) can inflict a self fulfilling prophecy (Wolfe, 2003). Though the majority of the participants acknowledged the importance of acceptance in regards to graceful and successful aging, indications are that the unrealistic and impossible societal standards of beauty imposed on women of all ages can make acceptance challenging. The tendency to view the body as a project was explored by Dobscha and Ozanne, and they wrote that women internalize and form a self image from the perspective of the dominant view. They learn that to be beautiful is to be good and that one must suffer. The body must regularly be scrutinized both privately and publicly, restricted and labored over continuously. Advertising accentuates the fear that women have of the process of aging (Dobscha and Ozanne, 2000). Knowing the value and overcoming the challenges to reaching acceptance speaks to the wisdom of those who work toward it and makes its achievement very impressive.

Other elements that represent acceptance and the radiant quality that many respondents noted as essential to older women's beauty are confidence, elegance, poise, and grace, and wisdom. These characteristics take time to develop and evolve so they, along with life experience, are some of the assets that makes the beauty possessed by

older women uniquely their own. Sarah noted that there is something to be said about making it to 50. To work on being happy with oneself and accept the inevitable changes that come with time allows a person's beauty "to shine through from the inside."

Theme 9: Changing Popular Media

In addition to more of a presence in popular media that is accurate and positive, there are more adjustments that the participants would make to how women over 50 are portrayed. They want to be treated with respect. They want to see diversity in age, ethnicity, and body size. They want to see humor in ads for products they are interested in.

A frequent comment made by participants is that no one has asked them how they feel about this issue. Barletta wrote that an important component of respect is to "listen and marketers should accord women as much response as if the communication were coming from men" (Barletta, 2003).

More diversity in the popular media is another commonly desired change. Wanda stated that she thought the single standard of beauty excludes women over 50 and Barletta supported that by saying her experience in advertising has shown her that women resent the rigidity of this societal standard. She also discovered that women do not want to look 18 forever and they would prefer seeing attractive, normal looking women with intelligence in ads (Barletta, 2003). In *The Ageless Market*, Wolfe notes that the use of young models in ads for products to be used primarily by older people is seen for the ploy that it is (Wolfe, 1990). Using fear to sell products is another form of disrespect. Beyond resenting the barrage of ads for anti-aging products because they feel they are ineffective,

unnecessary, or place aging in a negative light, participants resent the use of fear to pressure them to purchase a product. According to Wolfe, a better approach would be to intimate how a product or service can be helpful in achieving desires (Wolfe, 1990).

Mary told me that she longs to see more diversity in the media, and many other participants agreed. They would like to see more women of color, more alternative lifestyles, and more realistic looking old women. Mary added that "Crones or women of wisdom are left out, and it's hard to be one when you don't have a model." A respondent to the online survey noted that the idea of a crone is "frightening" to many in this society and this fear could be an important factor in contributing to the invisibility of older women. Wolfe points out that many of the advertising executives are either young or they have not yet dealt with their own aging. This fear and misunderstanding of older people shows in the ads they create (Wolfe, 2003).

Several respondents said that body image should be addressed and women of all sizes should be shown in a positive light in the media. Some of them also said that they feel pressured by the "thin" images commonly seen. This was one of the reasons so many of the participants liked the concept of Dove's Real Beauty Campaign and would like to see similar ones launched by other companies.

Humor is one element that all ten of the interviewees said they would like to see more of in ads directed toward them. Given the struggle to be heard and taken seriously, and the products for which they are typically the target audience (anti-aging and medical products), it stand to reason that humor might not be considered by advertisers. Humor is a double-edge sword for advertisers—it can work brilliantly or fail miserably. Unless the audience is known to respond to humor in a predictable manner (classic examples are

beer commercials or cleaning products featuring the husband as the dolt in commercials), it can be difficult to get marketers to risk it.

But there does seem to be a tremendous opportunity for marketers with this group to try to put life into commercials with some humor particularly for categories such as clothes, entertainment, travel, and consumer durables. And there seems to be enough research done on the subject so that marketers could focus their efforts and be reasonably confident of success. Survey participants noted they do not want to see negative humor that is at the expense of anyone, but as Wanda said in her interview, they would like to see a subtle, sophisticated wit. According to Barletta, one of the ways to incorporate humor that would be appreciated by most women is to create situations in which women can relate to the actors (Barrletta, 2003). Wolfe noted that senses of humor change with age. Out of six types of jokes, put down jokes ranked first with young people and last with older people. The appreciation for sex jokes was different as well. Younger people preferred those types of jokes to be raw and direct and older people like them ironic and subtle (Wolfe, 2003). A subtle approach is a paradox for advertisers who think they have to be bold and dramatic to cut through the clutter of the thousands of other messages that consumers are exposed to every day, and that may be another reason why advertising keeps missing the mark with this audience. To tap into the riches of this demographic, marketers may simply have to re-train themselves to turn the volume down.

A common practice mistake made by manufacturers and their advertising agencies is to look upon this group as a single group of consumers (Harris, 2003). Now baby boomers, the great individualists, are being treated homogeneously. The importance of recognizing their varied interests and needs has been discussed, but it's

difficult to overemphasize the dramatic differences between a 50 year old and someone in their 80s who are often filed under the same label. Boomers in particular would resist being homogenized. This is reflected in the market. Many women over 50 already have much of what they aspired to when they were younger so there is less of a tendency toward a materialistic orientation and more toward individualistic consumer behavior (Wolfe, 1990).

While recognizing the importance of individualism, it is also important to note the balancing act between individualism and equality with women. Women want to be recognized for themselves, but they absolutely hate it if they perceive they are being treated differently from men simply because they're women. Barletta calls this misguided approach to initiatives for marketing to women as "women's unique needs." Instead of showing their understanding of women, this approach does not see that women actually want to be listened to like men (Barletta, 2003). Again, this can be a subtle distinction, and advertising typically isn't about subtlety. But those who understand this critical point (which is an issue for women of all ages), can cash in big.

Consider the example of Mohawk Industries, the world's largest floorcovering company. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, research indicated to Mohawk that women customers for retail floor covering would actually buy lower-quality merchandise after talking to a male salesperson. This was partly due to uncertainty about what to buy and partly because of mistrusting the salesperson. The combination of mostly female customers and mostly male sales staff had a significant negative impact on a flooring store's overall sales and profitability.

After two years of testing store concepts, Mohawk convinced some of its better dealers to invest in a new store layout called "Floorscapes." The Floorscapes store was organized so that a customer could walk in and, without knowing much about flooring, still identify what she needed and *make decisions on her own, without talking to a salesperson*. Information is available to read throughout the store displays. Salespeople were taught to greet customers and then *leave them alone* until they started asking specific questions. The result of this is that Mohawk Floorscapes stores sell better quality goods that have an increased profitability averaging 20%. The percentage of customers who choose to buy from a Floorscapes store rather than a competitor is also dramatically higher—all because the communications medium was changed to accommodate the desires of the women who make the decisions to buy flooring (Allman, 2004).

With a few adjustments in media, it seems that marketers, entertainment companies, and others can reach older women effectively. They will just have to do it differently.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

It is clear that while older women are becoming a larger and more influential segment of the population, they are underrepresented in popular media, or—perhaps worse—stereotyped in many cases. The findings of this research project, combined with secondary research gathered from a variety of sources, indicate the complexity of older women's interactions with and perceptions of popular media. The recurring theme in this study (and others) is the idea that older women feel "invisible" in the media. They don't perceive portrayals as realistic or accurate many times, but more often, they actually feel excluded.

But how much of this may they actually be doing to themselves? Survey and interview responses to advertising suggest that older women may still react more strongly and positively to advertising featuring younger women. When given the option in this survey to choose from three ads for the same product with different age models, respondents, while reacting very negatively to a very young model, still selected an ad featuring a model clearly younger than themselves. When the responses were broken out by age, older participants indicated by comments that they felt a connection with the model their age in the ad, but still selected an ad with a 30-something model as having the most impact (in number of positive responses). In fact, studies show that baby boomers in general react very negatively to anything considered "old." Many businesses and services have actually changed names to avoid the word because boomers avoid it so strongly (Kornblum, 2005).

Participants in this survey were also asked several questions to measure brand awareness and loyalty. A large number of respondents suggested that for personal items such as clothing, they did not necessarily prefer particular brands, and other questions on branding indicated moderate response to branding initiatives by advertisers. In *After 50 How the Baby Boom Will Redefine the Mature Market,* Leslie Harris wrote that contrary to the thinking of some marketers about 50 percent of those aged 45 and older are always looking for better products (Harris, 2003). It's not that older women don't want to buy brands; it's just that in many cases they do not feel marketers have yet earned their business.

This is a particularly interesting paradox: Are these women not responding to millions of dollars in brand building communications because they feel invisible, or have advertisers chosen to target other market segments because older women have not responded to their messages? Respondents to the survey, when asked how women over 50 are treated in the media, had overall favorable responses. So it may be that instead of revolting against media depictions, women over 50 have somewhat accepted what they see. This is particularly intriguing considering the economic power that this group will hold in the coming years.

But there may be other telling signs from this survey that suggest how women over 50 may use this power. Survey respondents indicated that they often make purchases or spend their time not on themselves, but on others—particularly family members. It may be that the way these women are responding to the media is not directly on behalf of themselves, but on behalf of others.

This research project was limited in scope by design, considering the complexity of this issue. It was designed to consider the opinions on media of a small sample of women from an urban area in the upper south, and it perhaps generates more questions than it answers. However, there do seem to be some glimpses of useful insights from this study. To return to some of the original questions used for developing the study, here are some thoughts:

1. **If women become more at ease with the status change that begins around the age of 50, what is the age at which this ease begins to take place?**

   Many of the women in this survey were still in their fifties, and many indicated that they are at least somewhat at ease with their new positions in life. There is no magic age when a woman suddenly is granted ease with her changing status since there are so many factors involved. It is an individual decision/experience. (This may be a challenge for further research.) Other factors--including health, relationships, career, and finances—also play a role. The research participants mentioned aspects of their lives that would indicate an ease with their status. One of the most common was acceptance. Others mentioned include being at the top of their career, enjoying adult relationships with their grown children, and the wisdom and experience that comes with being around for 50 years or more.

   Advertisers are just beginning to realize that today's women feel pride in how they are redefining 50. These women are not comparing their youthfulness to models seen in fashion magazines but to what their parents' generation looked like at age 50 (Harris, 2003). This is supported by the women who participated in

this study, many of whom stated that 50 was much older for their parents than it is for them. This goes beyond focusing on youth to saying something about their self confidence and that in turn may indicate an ease with their status.

2. **What factors (status, class, education, ethnicity, etc.)--if any--play a role in how women perceive their aging?**

   These factors do play a role in how women perceive their aging. In fact, breakouts even within this relatively homogenous group show that there are differences based on age, income, education, or occupation. Any of these—and likely many others—can influence an individual.

3. **Do these factors affect the age at which a woman becomes more at ease with the aging process?**

   Again, a more diverse sample would be needed to make an inference about this matter. The participants in this study were for the most part well educated, middle class, and of European descent. Many of these women indicated that they are at ease with this point in their lives, but a study with a more diverse group of women would provide information from which comparisons could be made on these factors—and probably identify a number of other factors that can have an impact on this issue.

4. **Do all women feel ill at ease with aging? What causes those feelings?**

   From the survey responses, no—the participants were not overly panicked about aging. There was a level of acceptance. Yet many of them are not fighting aging as much as the reduced recognition and misperceptions that come with it. Many respondents didn't so much dislike aging as they did the sadness of realizing that they may be losing opportunities or just running out of time

5. **How do they cope?**

   This is a busy group. Even some in their 70s are still employed. They have things to do (in fact, lack of personal time is still an issue). And they're often doing things for others, particularly family. Many have large social networks which would often help with coping. For the most part, they expressed an interest in learning, sometimes in a formal class setting and sometimes they are self-taught; they travel; they are interested in preserving their health and remaining fit; and they are active in their communities. A tenth of them are planning second careers. Many in this group cope by maintaining a balance between taking care of themselves and helping others.

6. **Do they want to fight aging or fight the perceptions/depictions?**

The perceptions and depictions, it seems for the most part. They were unhappy with the unrealistic images that are seen in the media and they would like to see older women in the media in a realistic and positive light. Some of the participants were prepared to fight aging in every way possible. Many more advocate acceptance of aging while doing everything they can to remain healthy and fit along with wearing stylish and appropriate clothing, make-up, and hairstyles. It is worth noting that many respondents said they were glad that someone was researching this issue, and that they enjoyed the opportunity to voice their opinions.

7. **Who do they feel is responsible for the perceptions held of women over 50?**

Our respondents certainly feel a youth-oriented society is partly to blame for both perceptions and misperceptions of older women. But the participants in this group didn't shirk taking some of the blame themselves. At the same time however, it is interesting to note that this is not a revolutionary group—they likely won't try to effect dramatic change. But they will have influence because of their growing power. A question that remains is how much the power will be tempered with acceptance of the status quo.

8. **What changes would they make and how would they make perceptions and depictions more realistic?**

There is a consensus among the participants that they would like to see more of a presence of successful, stylish, vital older women in popular media. Outside of advertising, which virtually every participant said preserved an unrealistic image of older women, there are some older women who present a positive image of aging. Participants noted Diane Keaton and Goldie Hawn as examples, and *Calendar Girls* and *Something's Gotta Give* as movies featuring these types of characters. They would like to see more of them in expanded roles.

9. **Are the depictions of older women seen in popular media realistic?**

The answer to this one seems to be yes and no. Participants could cite examples of women in media (Keaton in *Something's Gotta Give* or Lauren Hutton's nude pictures) where older women weren't relegated to matronly, sexless positions (*USA Today* 2005). But of more concern to this group than realistic portrayals seemed to be the limited numbers of portrayals of older women.

Will this change? The sheer numbers of this demographic and the economic power they will have suggest that it almost has to. But perceptions and mindsets do not change easily. Consider this: Goldie Hawn, the bubbly, ditzy, bikini-clad blonde of *Laugh-In* days, is now 60, and she has distinguished herself with a long career of both comedic and dramatic roles and as a director and producer. She has been working hard recently to get approval to produce movies

involving older women. Her *First Wives Club* with Keaton and Bette Midler was a box-office success.

Yet she is struggling to get a green light for films that would certainly appeal to a large segment of the population—a segment that even if they don't go to theaters the first week will almost undoubtedly make up for it in on-demand and video rentals.

Hawn believes that the success of movies like *First Wives Club* proves that there is an untapped market of older females who want to see characters with whom they could identify. But not everyone, it seems, is convinced of this yet, which seems surprising considering the amount of money spent on researching the preferences of consumers and on finding ways to get them to spend money.

Why hasn't someone seen the remarkable media potential for women over 50? Maybe they feel invisible, and maybe many marketers have ignored them in the quest for more youthful consumers. But if we look at the marketer's Golden Rule--e.g., he (or she) who has the gold, rules--then chances are they won't be invisible for long.

What may be very interesting to see, based on the information gleaned even from this small survey, is what they might do once they are in the media limelight.

Continuing The Research

Conducting ethnographic research has many rewarding aspects. There is the opportunity to meet people and to learn what they want to say. The interest created by this project and the willingness of the participants to share their opinions and feelings was

gratifying. Based on the enthusiastic responses from the respondents and interviewees, I would argue that there is a wealth of information to be discovered through continued research in this area—both by expanding the population sample and by exploring attitudes about media in additional areas.

There are several possible approaches to expanding the population sample. One would be to continue the approach taken with this project, which was to focus on a fairly homogeneous group in a central location. This could be done systematically by region. Another way would be to focus on diversity and look for ways to find willing participants from different ethnic groups, social economic and education levels, as well as work environments. (Note: in future research, it would be worthwhile to define participants' income more carefully, to determine which is personal and which is household.)

One particular approach for this could be to utilize Michael Weiss' "clustering" technique. Clustering is based on the concept that people with similar values and buying preferences tend to "cluster" together in communities. Marketers have used this approach to target consumers neighborhood by neighborhood, and have been able to zero in on individual blocks within communities that are most likely to be inhabited by their prospects (Weiss, 2000). There is a significant body of knowledge about consumer behavior already available with clustering, and delving deeper into the issue of older women and the media through this technique may be a quick way to create cross-references between existing information and newly-gathered data.

Eventually there would be enough sample population to begin conducting comparisons to gain information, look for ways to make connections, and to appreciate differences. Finally, various cross-sections of a diverse sample could be interviewed to

explore whether lifestyle (or any number of other factors) is more important for identifying target groups than age.

Fine tuning and continued learning about method is an aspect of conducting research that was a personal discovery which I hope continues throughout my career. This knowledge from experience along with information given by participants has provided inspired ideas for future projects.

This project revealed a number of issues that deserve further inquiry. The three sample ads used in this survey (the "New Morning" ads) were intended to start building an information base, and they did spark significant discussion and commentary. But differences in backgrounds and photographic perspectives of the models may have influenced respondent's comments. It would be worthwhile to look deeper into this area, using a series of ads that are carefully balanced graphically so that the response could more accurately be measured on a single difference—three models of different ages in the same pose. Asking respondents to comment on women of different ages featured in sample ads representing other product categories is an area of keen interest, to see how attitudes may differ based on the types of products being sold. These could include financial, travel, clothing, and others—particularly those that have not traditionally featured older women but for which older women will play a bigger role in the future.

Participant comments suggest another topic for further research might be the shift of focus from disease treatment to preventative health and fitness. This could also reveal possible ways to change the notion mentioned by several of the participants as bothersome that aging is a disease. Entertainment and information are other areas of interest for this sample population, and it would be beneficial to add more questions on

these subjects as well. Finding out if old really is a "bad" word is another topic of interest. Asking some questions about the perceptions associated with "old" could reveal some feelings about aging as well as spark some lively comments. Two questions that I would add are: Are you old? And how does that question make you feel? Because this topic generated much interest and comment, focus group discussions would be another way to gain additional information.

My greatest hope is that this project and additional academic research will ultimately connect marketers to these consumers with information about desired products and perhaps more importantly, restore media visibility to women over 50.

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Ads featured in the survey and shown during interview:

Dove Campaign for Real Beauty is a trademark of the Unilever Corporation. Featured in *More* Magazine, October 2005.

Botox is a trademark of Allergan Corporation. Featured in *More* Magazine, October 2005.

Dove Firming is a product of the Unilever Corporation. Featured in *More* Magazine, October 2005.

Olay Total Effect and Regenerist are products of Proctor and Gamble. Featured in *Ebony* Magazine, September 2005.

The Ponds anti-aging line is a product of the Unilever Corporation. Featured in *Self* Magazine, October 2005.

Revlon Super Lustrous Lipstick and Full Moisture Lipstick are products of the Revlon Corporation. Featured *O Magazine*, October 2005.

Appendices

Appendix A: Survey Results

Following are the basic results from the online survey, in graphs and tables where appropriate.

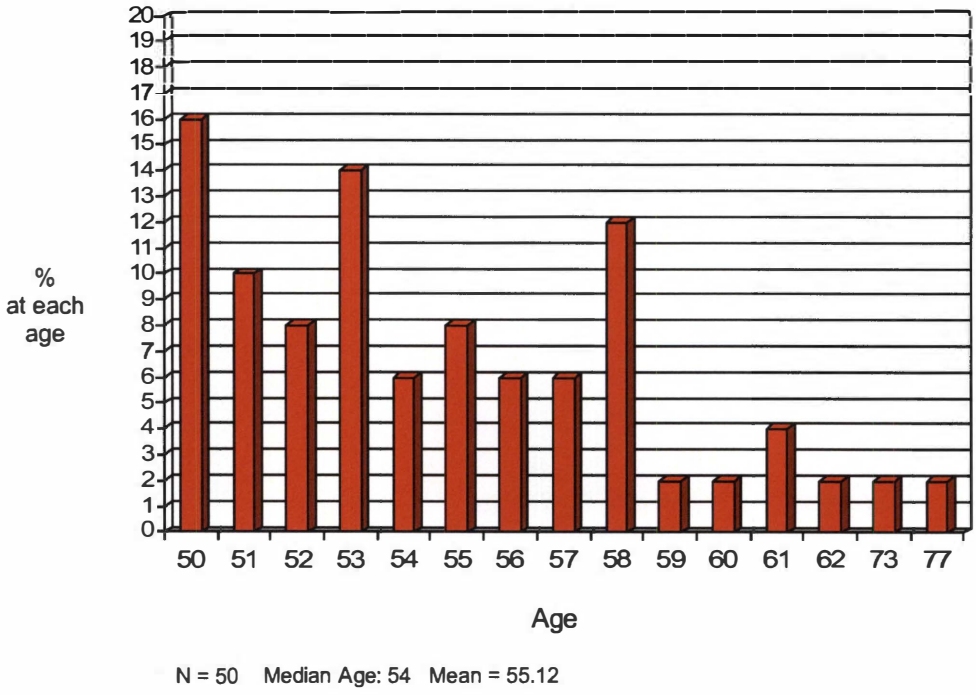


Figure A1. Question 1. What is your age?

Table A1. Question 2. What is your occupation?

Education	11
Clerical	11
Medical	7
Administration	8
Student	6
Social Service	4
Unemployed/retired	3

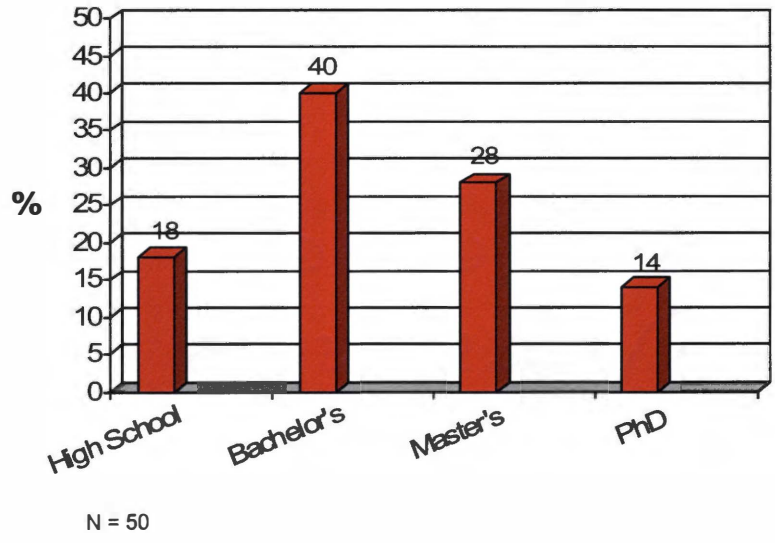
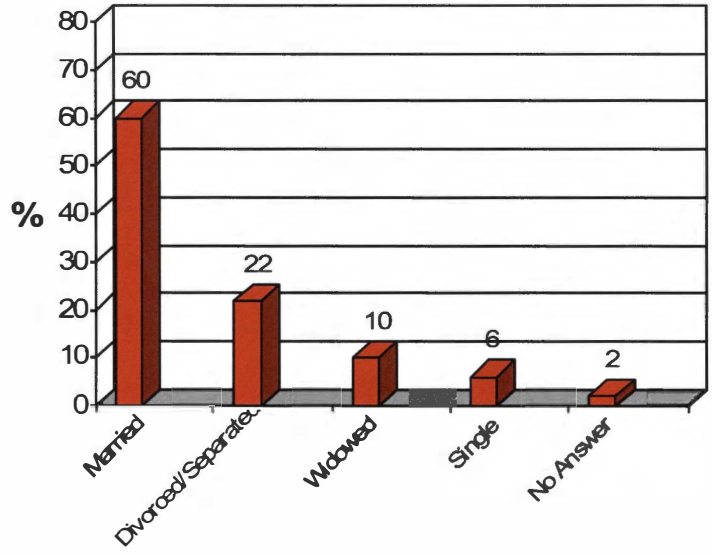


Figure A2. Question 3. What is your level of education?

Table A2. Question 4. What is your ethnic/racial group?

White	86%
African American	4%
Native American	2%
White but a mix of ethnic groups	2%
Irish Caucasian	2%
White with a tiny bit of Native American	2%
No answer	2%

N = 50



N = 50

Figure A3. Question 5. What is your personal relationship status?

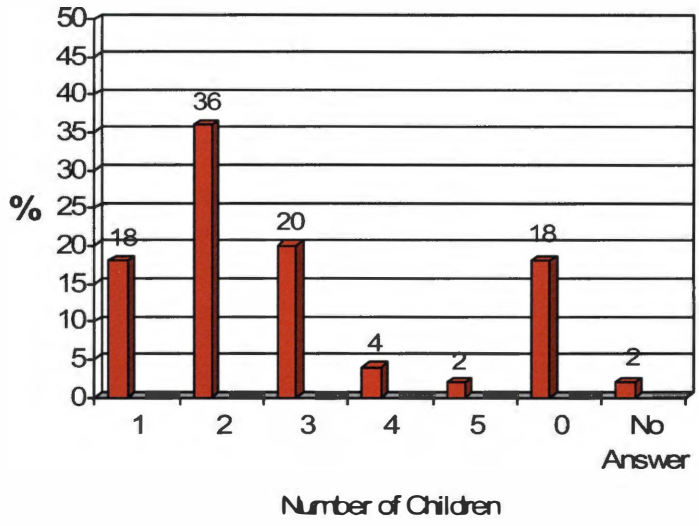


Figure A4. Question 6. Do you have children? If so, how many?

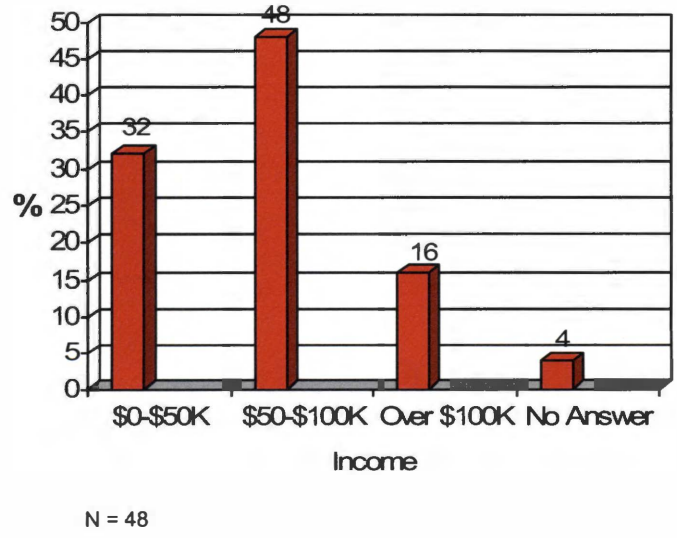
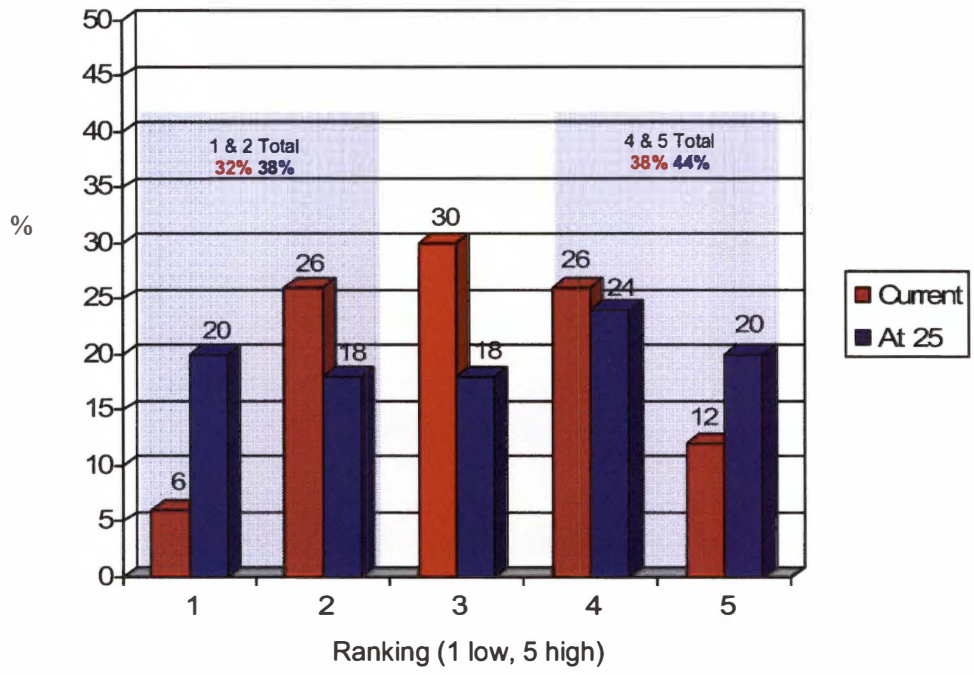


Figure A5. Question 7. What is your household income?



N = 50 Overall Mean for Importance of Career = 3.12 @ 25 = 3.18

Note: because Likert scale data was reviewed to gauge opinions either positive or negative on issues, the 1 and 2 categories and the 4 and 5 categories were often combined to get a picture of the strength of opinion in favor of or against an issue. The combinations are noted in these charts. For crosstab breakouts, the categories are combined for easier readability.

Figure A6. Questions 8 & 9 A. Career.

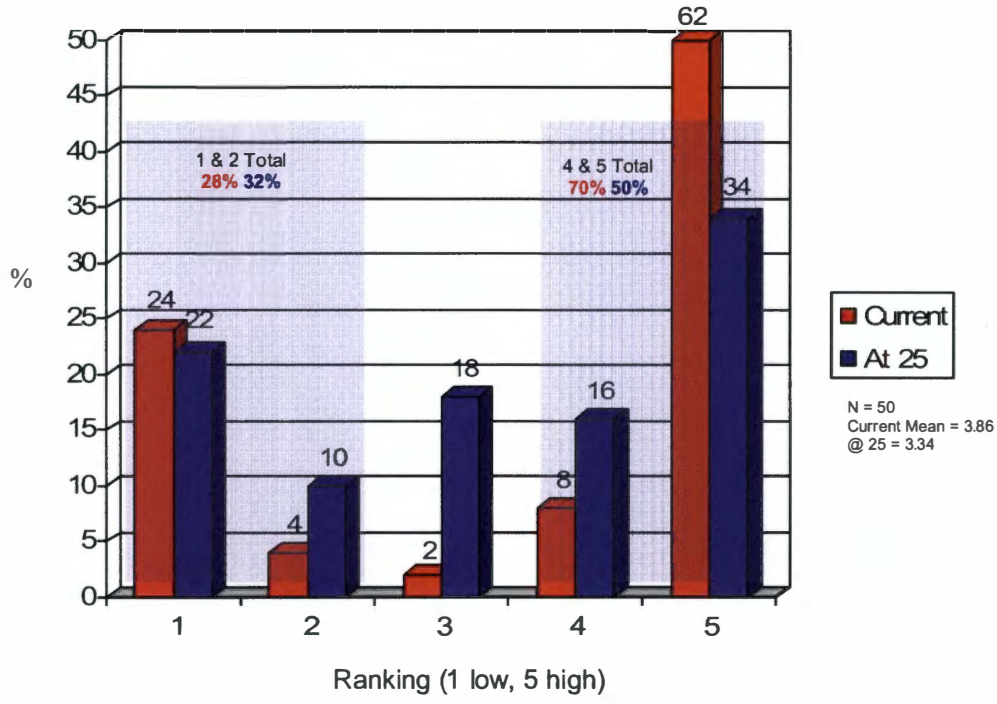


Figure A7. Questions 8 & 9 B. Family.

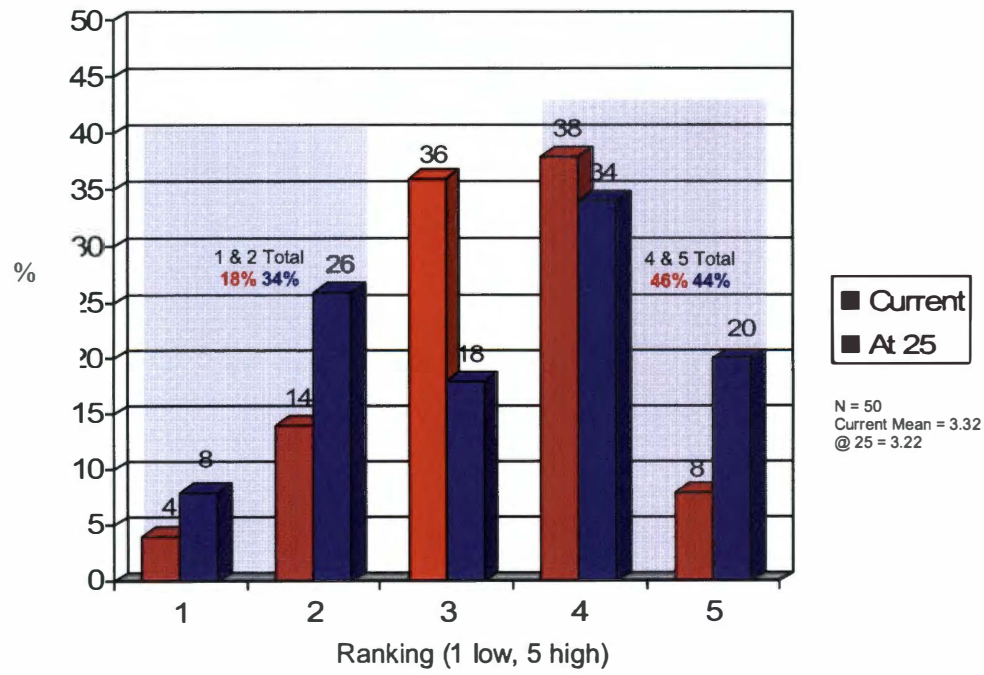


Figure A8. Questions 8 & 9 C. Education.

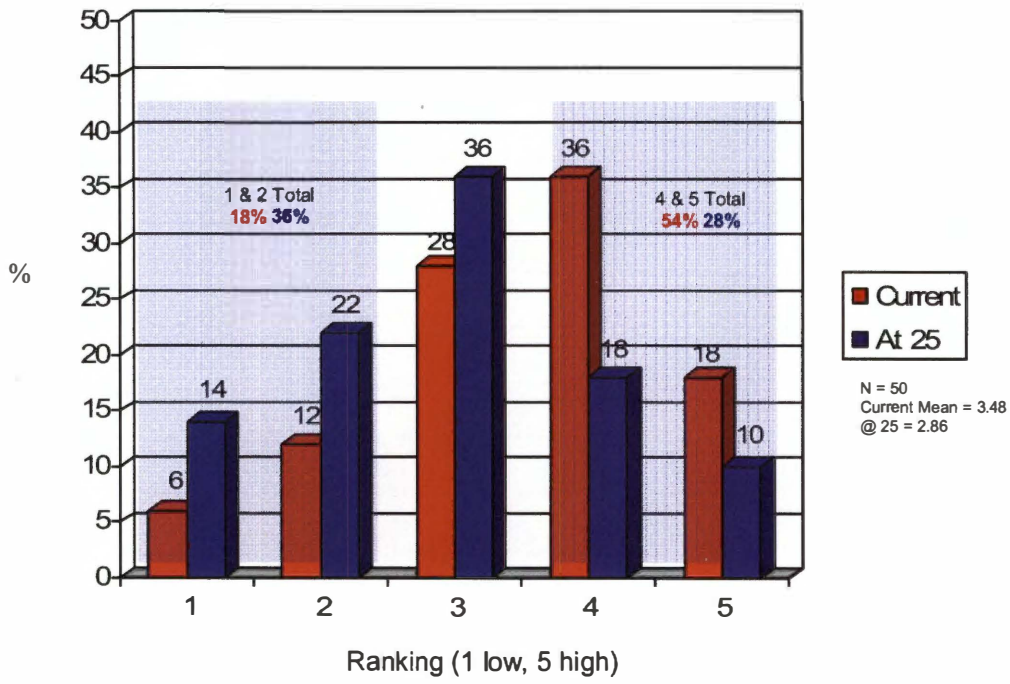


Figure A9. Questions 8 & 9 D. Personal Time.

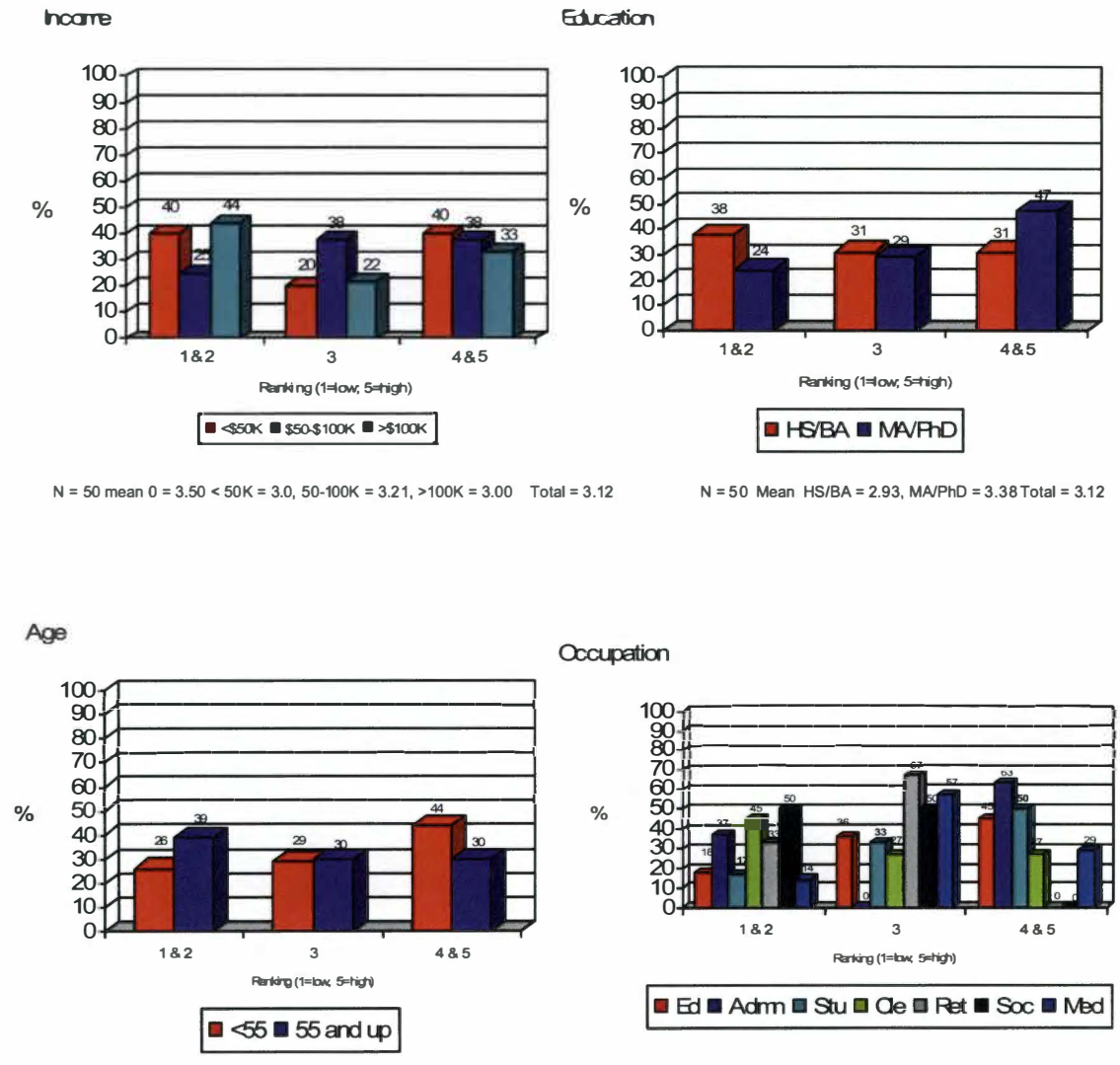


Figure A10. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations.
Crosstabulation 8A. Career.

(Note: Rounding means sometimes totals do not equal exactly 100%)

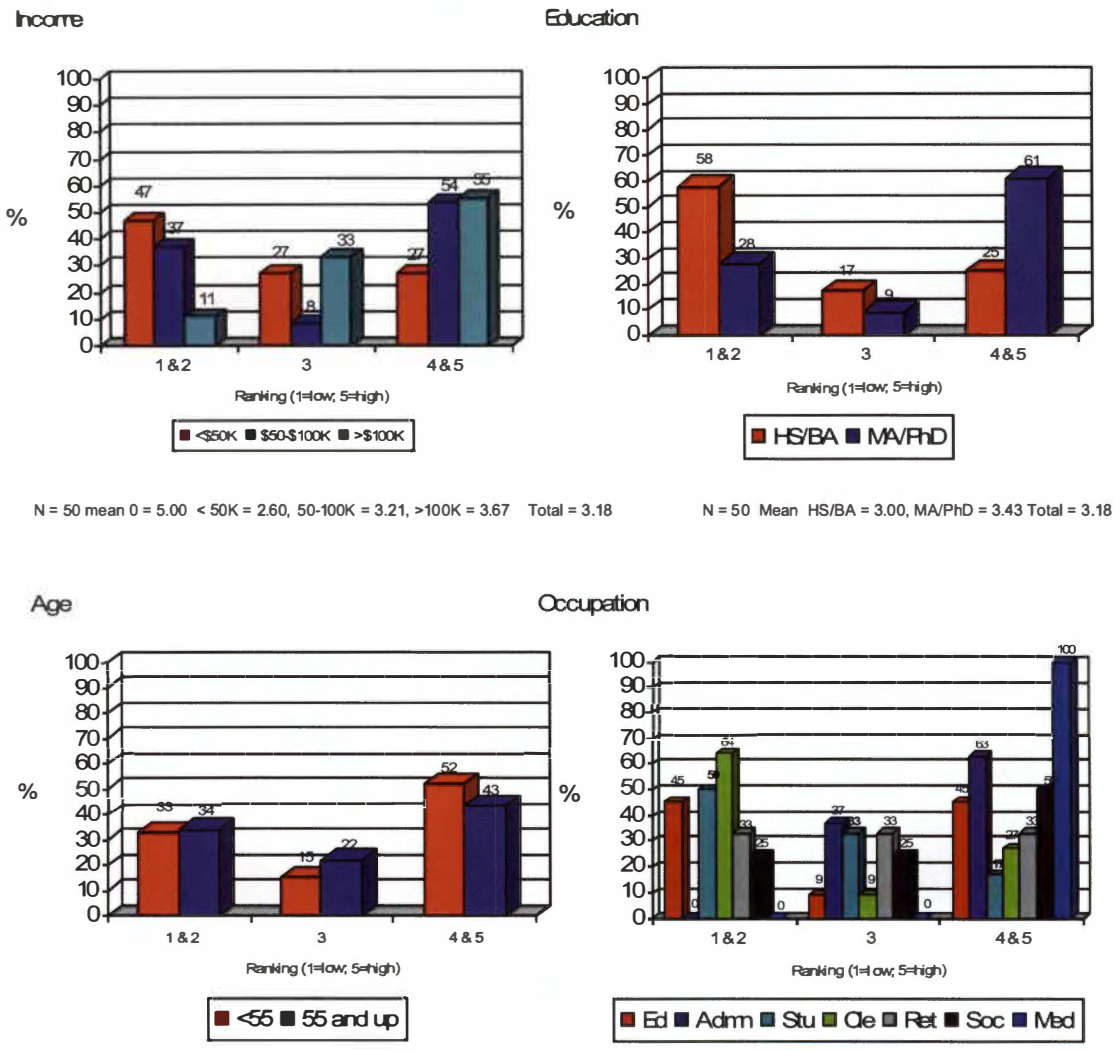


Figure A11. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations.
Crosstabulation 9A. Career @ 25.

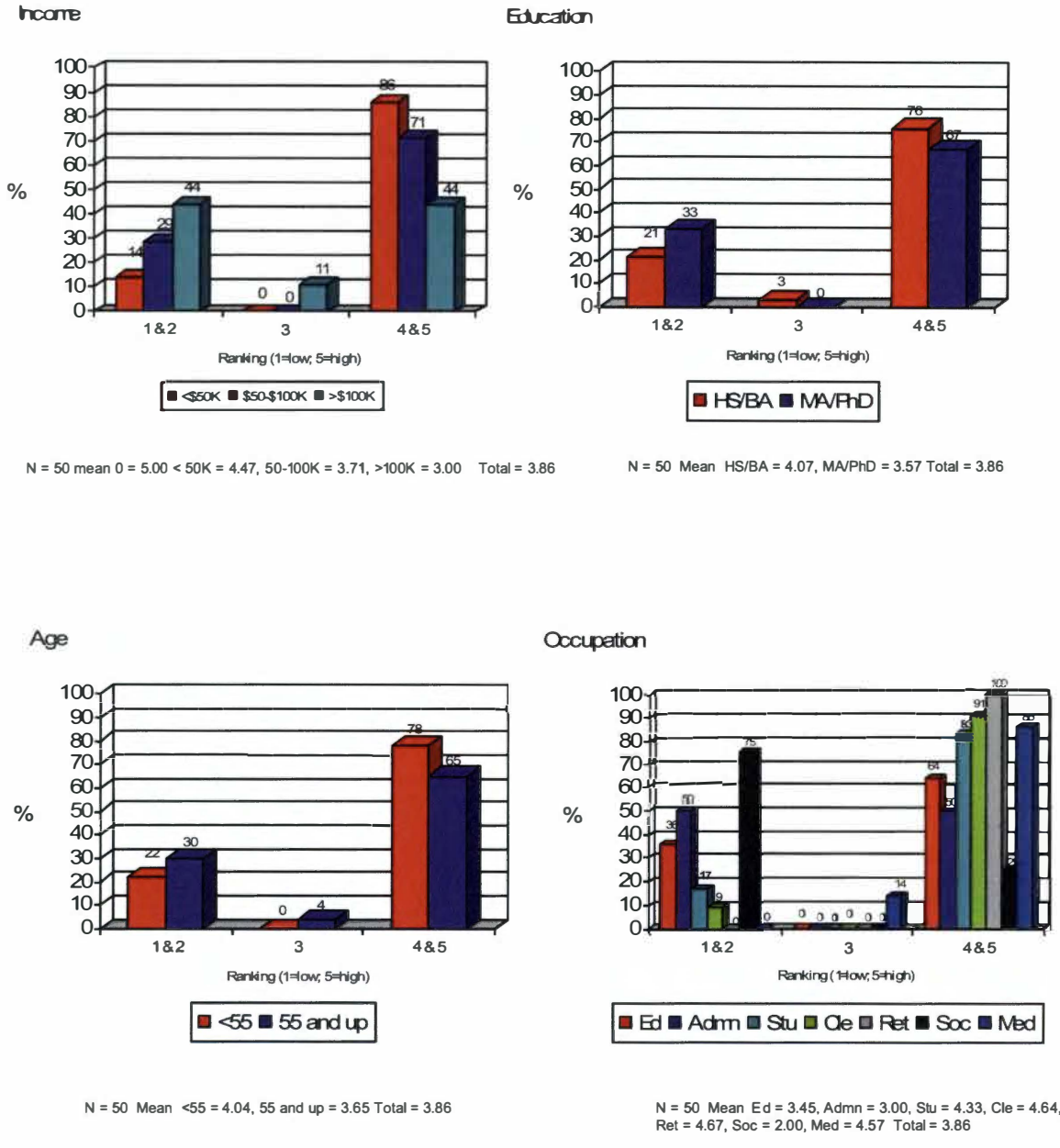


Figure A12. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations.
Crosstabulation 8B. Family.

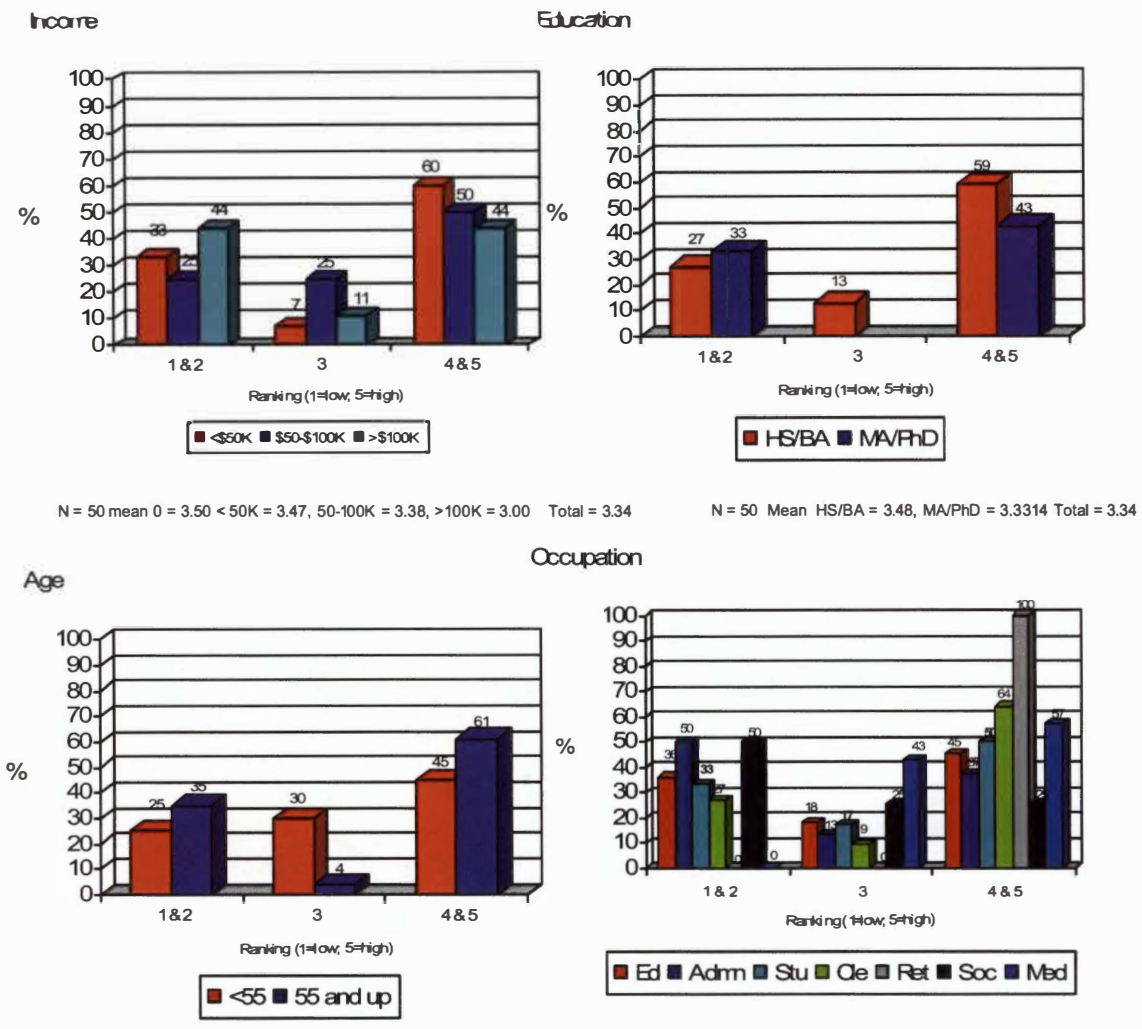


Figure A13. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations.
Crosstabulation 9B. Family@25.

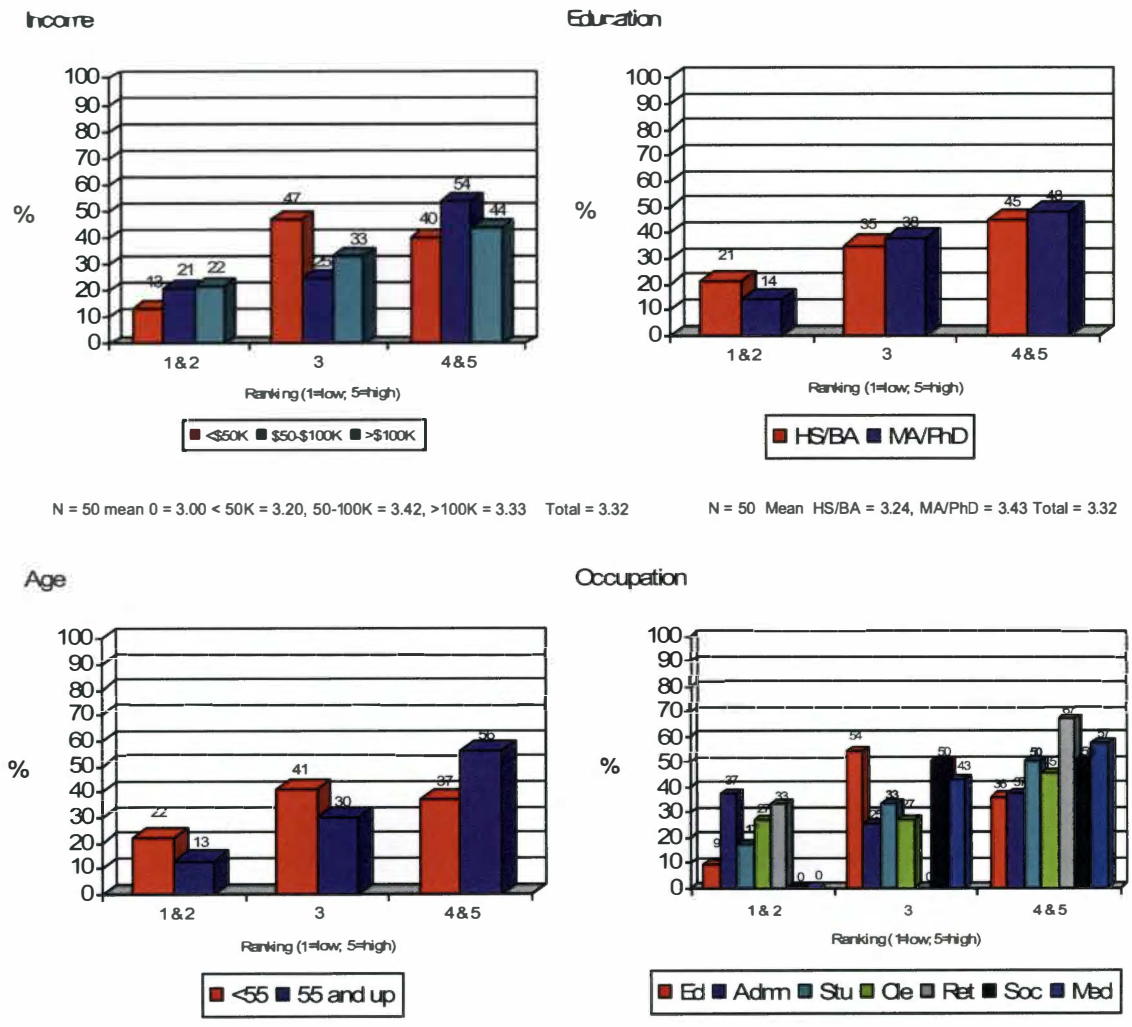


Figure A14. Questionx 8 & 9 Crosstabulations.
Crosstabulation 8C. Education.

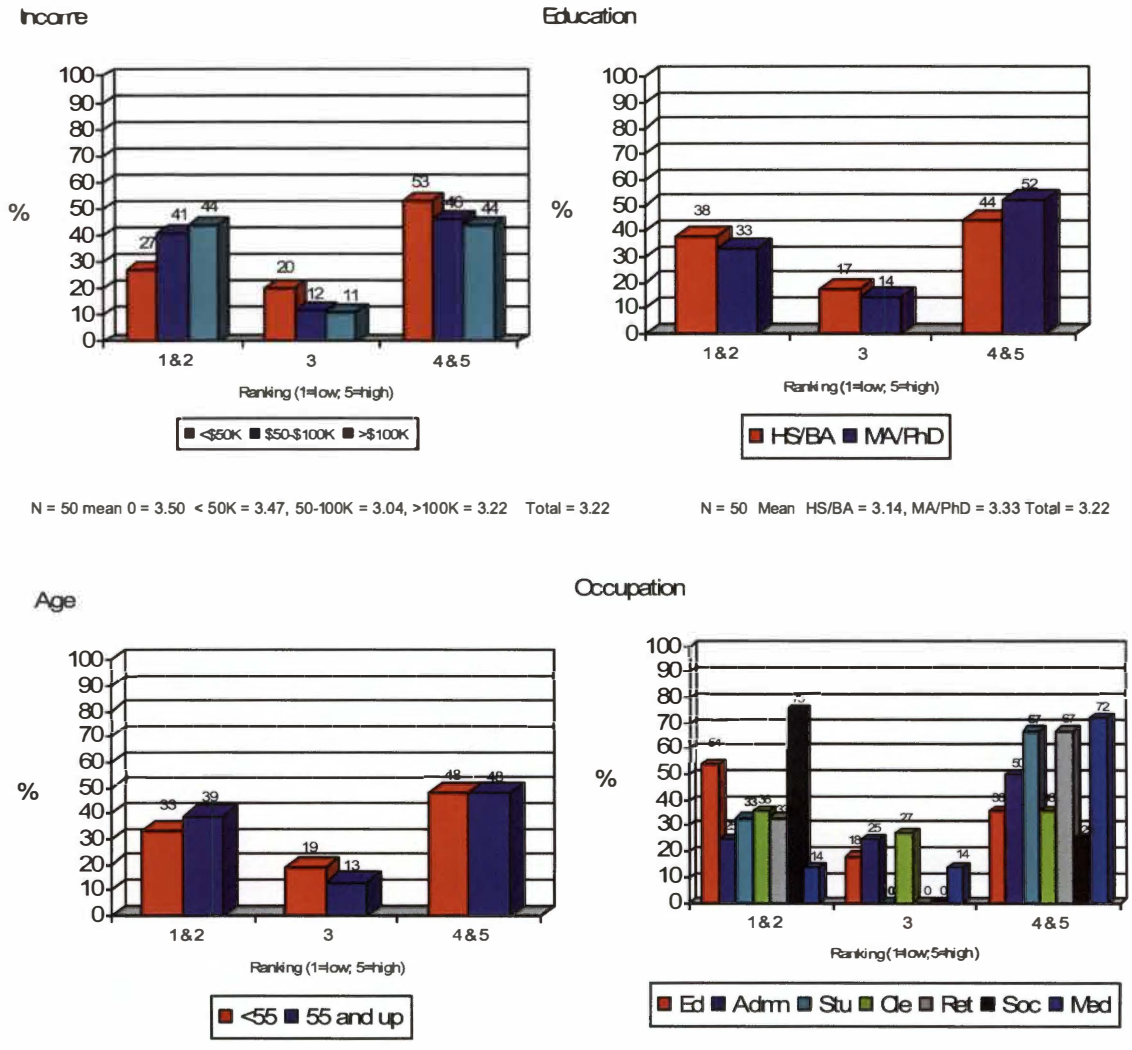


Figure A15. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations.
Crosstabulation 9C. Education @ 25.

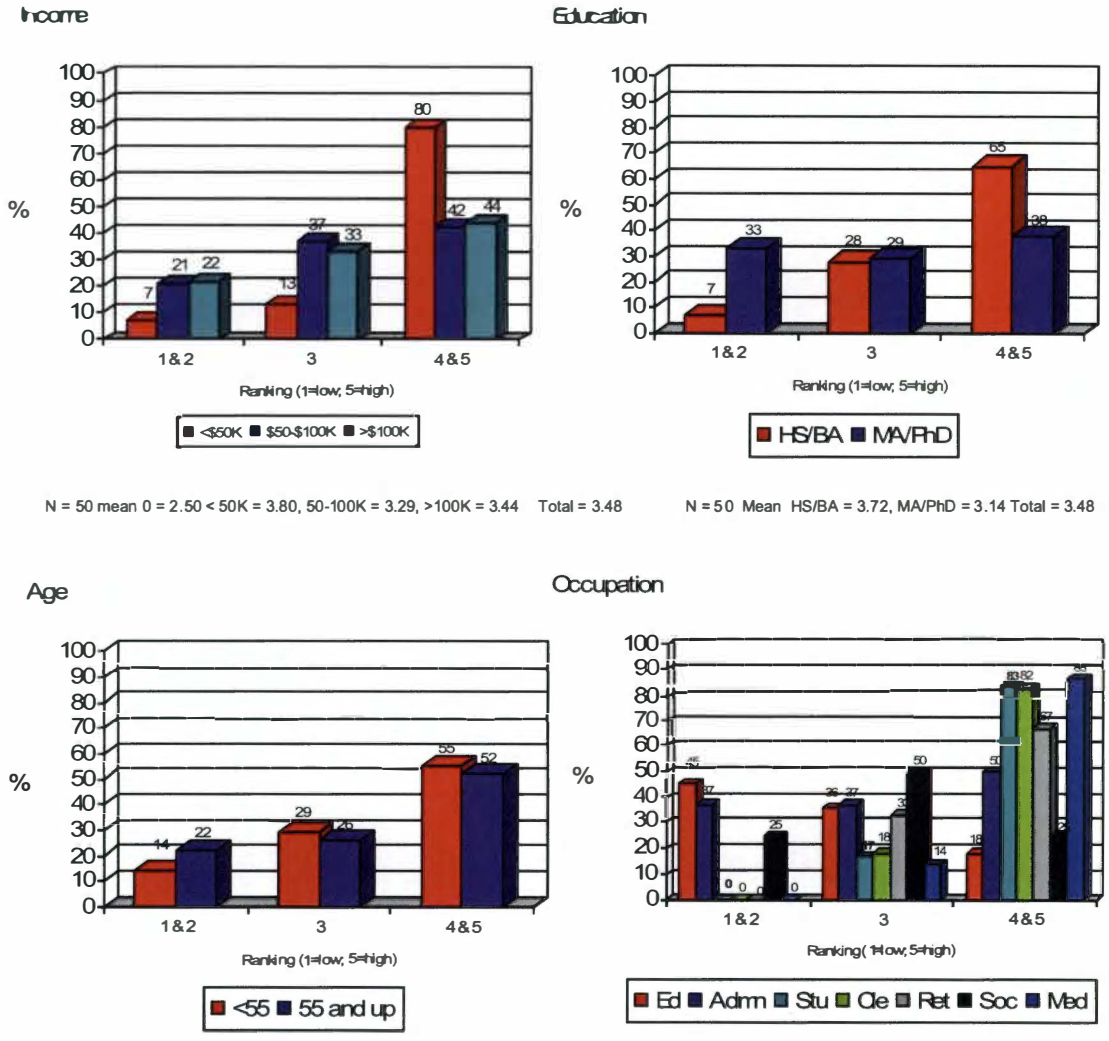


Figure A16. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations.
Crosstabulation 8D. Personal Time.

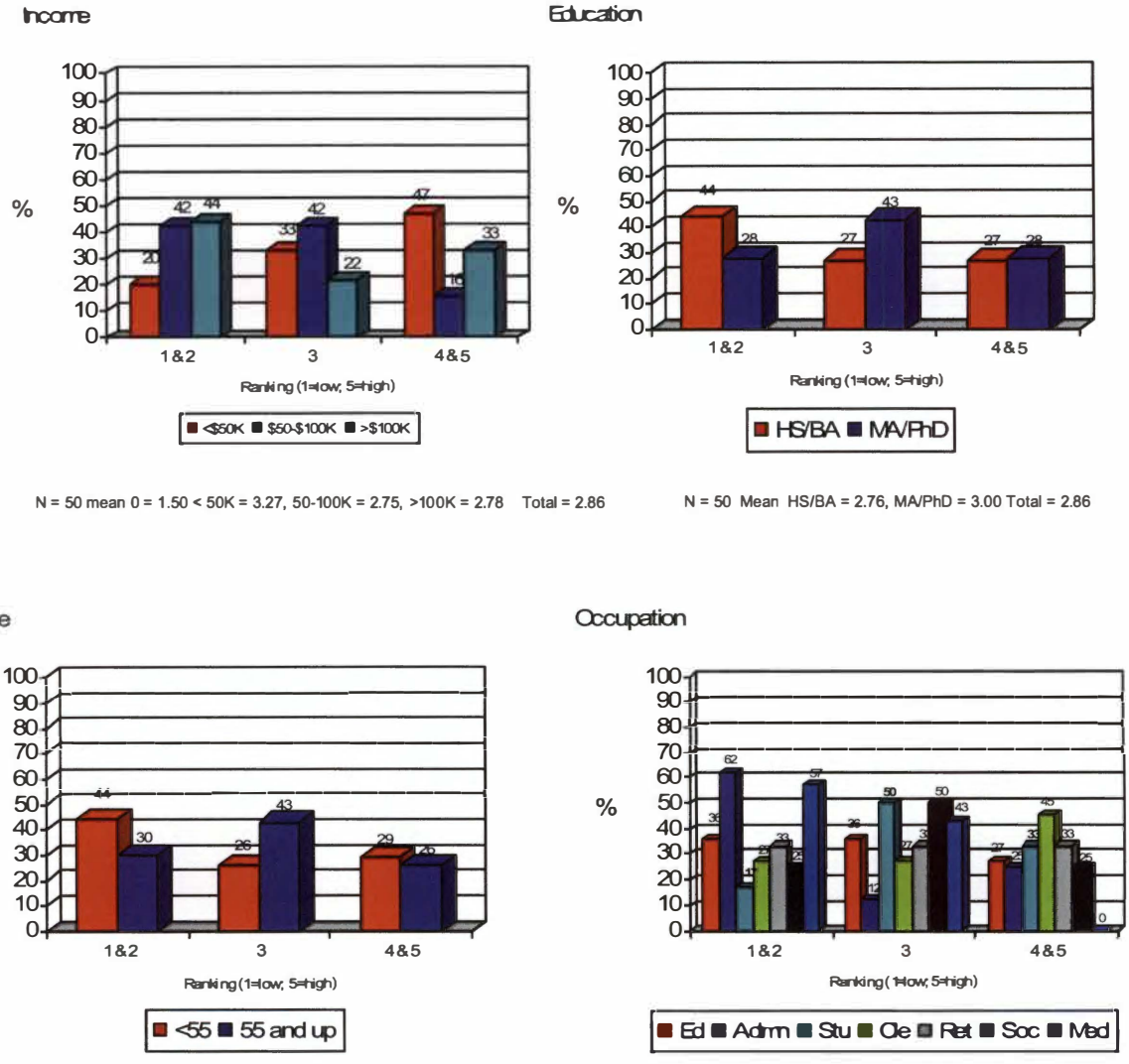


Figure A17. Questions 8 & 9 Crosstabulations.
Crosstabulation 9D. Personal Time @25.

Question 10. List five items you have purchased in the last week.

The purpose of this question was to begin prompting respondents to think about brand names for subsequent questions. The answers are highly varied, and I felt there was not a need to list generic answers (e.g. "coffee"). Specific brands mentioned in this question are included in the appropriate listings for subsequent questions.

Table A3. Question 11. Can you name five items you have purchased *just for yourself* in the last two weeks?

Category	Item
Food and Beverages	Food – 4
	Chocolate - 3
	Bottled water – 2
	Bananas – 1
	Ice-cream from Ben and Jerry's factory - 1
	Mayfield rocky road ice-cream - 1
	Mayfield ice-cream (flavor not mentioned) - 1
	Kraft - 1
	Apples – 1
	Velveeta Mac & Cheese - 1
	Lean Cuisine dinners - 1
	Weightwatcher's 10 week package – 1
	Slimfast – 1
	Chewing gum - 1
	Jif peanut butter -1
	Milky Way candy bar - 1
	Hershey's chocolate bar - 1
	Cheesecake – 1
	Hormel hotdogs - 1
	Gualtney hotdogs
	Oranges – 1
	Watermelon – 1
	Whipped cream cheese – 1
	Yogurt – 1
	Vinegar and salt soy chips - 1
	Organic rice cheese - 1
	Pretzels – 1
	Frito Lay pretzels – 1
	Lay's potato chips - 1
	Wine - 1
	2% milk – 1
	Organic soy milk – 1
	Minute Maid drinks – 1
	Diet Dr. Pepper – 1
	Murry's sugarless chocolate chip cookies - 1
	Vanilla diet Coke – 1
	Coke with Splenda – 1

Table A3. Continued	
Category	**Item**
Dining	Lunch – 2
	Dinner out – 1
	Sub sandwich – 1
	Take-out – 1
	Pastry from Atlanta Bread Company – 1
Clothing	Clothing – 6
	t-shirt – 4
	tops – 3
	Skirt – 2
	Jewelry – 2
	Bra – 2 (one participant referred to this as a brassiere)
	Soft Surrounds – 1
	Carol Little – 1
	Jones of New York – 1
	Talbott's – 1
	Levis – 1
	Fleece tops – 1
	sweater – 1
	blouse – 1
	Christmas pin – 1
	Stockings – 1
	Gloves – 1
	Macy's lounging pants – 1
	Liz Claiborne robe – 1
	Macy's silky pink gown and robe - 1
	Pajamas – 1
	Sweat suit – 1
	Shorts - 1
	Black jeans from Walmart – 1
	Casual slacks – 1
	Liz Claiborne top – 1
	shirt – 1
Toiletries and Cosmetics:	Cosmetics – 6 Foundation – 1
	Oil of Olay – 3
	Nail polish – 3
	Hair color – 2
	Face lotion or crème – 2
	Revlon – 2
	Mary Kay – 2
	Contact lens solution - 1
	Sally Hansen facial hair remover – 1
	Eye shadow – 1
	Revlon lipstick – 1
	Max Factor pancake makeup – 1
	Merle Norman powder base – 1

Table A3. Continued	
Category	**Item**
Toiletries and Cosmetics (cont.)	Bath and Body products – 1
	Sunscreen – 1
	Deodorant – 1
	Hair gel – 1
	Hairspray – 1
	Color Vive – 1
	Pantene – 1
	Color Vive – 1
	Tresemme – 1
	Specifically for highlighted hair – 1
	Head and Shoulders – 1
	Body soap – 1
	Skin Simple – 1
	Luberiderm – 1
	Suave – 1
	Body Essence – 1
	Secret deodorant – 1
Drugs/Medication	Medication – 5
	Tums – 1
	Fosomax – 1
	Enbrel (entanercept) arthritis medication – 1
	Prescription drugs – 1
Household Items:	Fresh flowers – 3
	Plants – 2
	Stamps – 1
	Picture frame – 1
	Scott toilet paper – 1
	Silk flowers – 1
	Daylilies – 1
	Batteries – 1
	Hose for sink to wash hair – 1
	Clock – 1
	Paper shredder – 1
	Gas trimmer – 1
	Material to make stepping stones – 1
	Tide – 1
	Gain – 1
	Omelet maker – 1
	Coffee maker – 1
	Warming tile for breadbasket – 1
	Facial washing cloths – 1
	1000 count sheets and down comforter (participant noted that only women past "mental pause" are brave enough for white sheets) – 1

Table A3. Continued	
Category	**Item**
Entertainment:	Books – 6 (Borders, Grand Rapids Art Museum)
	Magazines – 3
	CDs – 2
	Novel – 1
	Puzzle – 1
Auto	Gas – 5 (one participant mention buying gas at Kroger's)
	Sun visor - 1
Other	None – 3
	Plane ticket - 3
	Paragon glass fusion 6 kiln – 1
	Wacom Intuos 3 – 1
	Pedicure – 1

Table A4. Question 12. Please list magazines you read regularly.

Category	Magazine Title
Nature	*Wild Bird* – 2
	Bird and Blooms – 1
	Tennessee Wildlife – 1
Museums and Science	*National Geographic* – 1
	Smithsonian – 1
	Ode – 1
News	*Time* – 5
	Newsweek – 5
	U. S. News and World Report – 2
	Kiplinger's – 2
	Wired – 1
	Salon – 1
Business	*Consumer Reports* – 5
	Money – 2
	Harvard Business Review – 1
	Bottom Line – 1
Health and Fitness	*Spirituality and Health* – 2
	Self – 1
	Yoga Journal – 1
	Cooking Light – 1
	Health – 1
	Prevention – 1
	Weight Watchers' Magazine – 1
Religion and Spirituality	*Christianity Today* – 1
	Shamala Sun – 1
	Decision – 1
	Guidepost – 1
	Radio Bible Hour – 1
	Ensign - 1
Sports	*Sporting News* – 1

Table A4. Continued	
Category	**Magazine Title**
Women's Interest	*Women's Day* – 5
	Family Circle – 4
	Oprah - 4
	Good Housekeeping – 3
	More – 1
	Vanity Fair – 1
	Ladies Home Journal – 1
	Essence - 1
	Women's World – 1 (participant said she reads this magazine only for the recipes)
Home and Lifestyle	*Southern Living* – 6
	Martha Stewart Living – 3
	New York Times Magazine – 2
	Better Homes and Gardens – 2
	House and Garden – 2
	Southern Accents – 1
	This Old House – 1
	Building – 1
	Organic Style – 1
	Country Living – 1
	Traditional Home – 1
	Midwest Living – 1
	Country Home – 1
	Taste of Home – 1
	Rose – 1
	Family Handy Man – 1
	Blue Ridge Magazine – 1
	Ebony - 1
Human Interest	*Reader's Digest* – 4
	People – 3
	City View – 1
	Parade – 1
	Best Friends Animal Sanctuary Magazine - 1
History	*American Legacy* - 1
Entertainment	*TV Guide* – 1
	Lifetime – 1
Craft	*Art Jewelry* - 1
Mature	*AARP* - 5

Table A4. Continued	
Category	**Magazine Title**
Computer	*Computer World* – 1
	Searcher – 1
	Document – 1
Literary	*Shift* – 1
Shopping	*Domino* – 1
Travel	*AAA Magazine* – 1
Professional Journals	*Architecture Record* – 1
	Archaeology – 1
	Communications of the ACM – 1
	American Libraries – 1
	Computers in Libraries – 1
	Tennessee Librarian – 1
	Image (Journal of Nursing Scholarship) – 1
	Nursing Made Easy – 1
	Nursing Journals – 1
	Journal of Nursing Education – 1
	Nursing Scholarship – 1
	Journal of Christian Nursing – 1
	Home Health Care Nursing – 1
None	10 (reasons listed – too busy, student)

Comments: One participant stated that due to visual impairment, she read articles on-line. She found articles at the websites for news sources, such as the *New York Times, Washington Post*, *Guardian*, and *Salon.*

Table A5. Question 13. When you shop for clothes, do you prefer any particular designers or brands? List as few or as many as you like:

No Preference*	28
Liz Claiborne	6
Coldwater Creek	4
Sag Harbor	4
L.L. Bean	3
Talbott's	3
Jones New York	2
Petite Sophisticate	2
Clark's shoes	2
Ralph Lauren	2
Chicos	2
Storybook Knits	1
Nordstom's	1
J. Jill	1
Lands End	1
Soft Surrounds	1
Eddie Bauer	1
Tommy Jeans	1
Bon Worth	1
Appleseed	1
Victoria's Secret underwear	1
Nike Air Kantaras	1
Birkenstocks	1
SAS	1
Easy Spirit	1
Christopher and Banks	1
Norton McNaughton	1
Essentials	1
Cherokee	1
Playtex	1
Casual Corner	1
Kohl's, Old Navy, and other low priced stores	1
Lane Bryant	1
St. John's Bay	1
Mountain Lake	1
Erika	1
Ann Klein	1
Faded Glory jeans (tight fit)	1
Kasper	1
Lee	1
Orvis	1
Croft and Barrel	1
Gloria Vanderbilt	1
Van Huesen	1
Levis	1

*In addition to no preference listed this also includes those who stated that their preference depends on what they are shopping for but generally not preference, shops for price not brand, mostly wears what has been given to her, the best bargain, what ever is on sale and looks like good quality, whatever fits and looks good, and second-hand whenever possible).

Table A6. Question 14. What is your favorite:

TV Show

Category	Show
TV Show--Drama:	CSI – 6
	Law and Order – 2
	Law and Order CI – 2
	24
	Monk
Political:	West Wing – 2
	West Wing (seasons 1-4) – 1
	West Wing (currently) – 1
	Commander in Chief – 1
Medical:	ER – 2
	Gray's Anatomy – 1
Mystery:	Lost – 3
	PBS Mystery Series – 1
Sci-Fi:	Stargate – 1
Comedy:	Gilmore Girls – 2
	Desperate Housewives – 2
	Northern Exposure – 1
	The Andy Griffith Show – 1
	Seinfeld – 1
	America's Funniest Animals – 1
Game Shows:	Jeopardy – 2
	Who Wants to be a Millionaire? – 1
Reality Shows:	The Apprentice – 2
	Judge Judy – 1
News Shows:	Evening News – 1
	Fox News – 1
	In Touch with Charles Stanley on TBN – 1
	McNeil Leherer News Hour – 1
	CNN – 1
	Today – 1
	60 Minutes – 1
	Primetime – 1
	20/20 – 1
Talk Shows:	Lifetime with Carol Duval - 1
	Dr. Phil - 1
Other:	Doesn't regularly watch TV – 2
	No real favorites but tends to like comedies – 1
	Anything on HGTV or the History Channel - 1

Favorite Movie

Table A6. Continued	
Category	**Movie**
Classics (25 years or older)	Gone With The Wind - 7
	Sound of Music – 3
	Angry Men - 1
	Seven Brides for Seven Brothers – 1
	Singing in the Rain – 1
	Gigi – 1
	The Godfather – 1
	Wizard of Oz – 1
	Citizen Kane – 1
	It's a Wonderful Life – 1
	The Russians are Coming – 1
	Somewhere in Time - 1
Comedy	American Dreamer - 1
Drama	With Honor – 1
	Angels in America – 1
	Forest Gump – 1
	On Golden Pond – 1
	Steele Magnolias – 1
	Babette's Feast – 1
	The Shawshank Redemption – 1
	Tuesdays With Morrie - 1
Adventure	Pirates of the Caribbean – 1
	Oh Brother Where Art Thou - 1
	GI Jane – 1
	Lord of the Ring – 1
	Constant Gardner – 1
Historical	Amadeus - 1
Romance	While You Were Sleeping – 1
	The Notebook - 1
	Body Guard – 1
	Bridget Jones Diary – 1
	Diary of a Mad Black Woman – 1
	Out of Africa – 1
Sci-fi	Dream Catcher – 1
	Star Trek – 1
	Contact - 1
Mystery	Frequency - 1
Horror	Harvey – 1 Bettlejuice – 1 Evil Dead II – 1
Musical	Chicago - 1

Musical Artist

Table A6. Continued	
Category	**Artist**
Vocal/Easy Listening	Bette Midler - 1
	Dean Martin – 1
	Josh Groban – 3
	Frank Sinatra - 1
Pop Metal	Def Leppard - 1
Country	Shania Twain – 1
	Billy Dean – 1
	Phil Vassar – 1
	Vince Gill - 1
Americana	Dave Bromberg – 1
	Nickel Creek – 1
	John Denver – 1
	The Lone Tones - 1
World	John Trudell – 1
	Kivi Te Danawa - 1
Pop	Cher – 2
	Mariah Carey - 1
	Bee Gees – 1
	Rod Stewart – 4
	Neil Diamond – 2
Rap	None
Rock	Bruce Springsteen – 1
	Paul McCartney - 1
50s Rock	Elvis Pressley - 1
R&B	Brian McKnight – 1
	India Arie - 1
60s Rock	Beach Boys - 1
Classical	Cambridge Singers – 1
	Evgeny Kissin – 1
	Back – 2
	Beethoven - 1
Christian Contemporary	Amy Grant – 1
	Sandy Patty – 1
	Steve Green - 1
Jazz	Harry Connick Jr – 1
	Winston Marcellis - 1
	Dave Grusin – 1
	Nora Jones – 2

Table A6. Continued	
Category	**Artist**
New Age	David Lanz – 1
	Laura Powers - 1
Blues	Aaron Neville – 1
None -	3
Too Many to Name -	2

Actor

Table A6. Continued	
Category	**Actor**
Under 50:	Tom Hanks – 4
	John Cusack - 2
	George Clooney – 2
	Tom Cruse – 2
	Johnny Depp – 1
	Mathew McCaunahay – 1
	Nathan Lane – 1
	Drew Carey – 1
	Jeffrey Wright – 1
	Russell Crowe – 1
	Ralph Fiennes – 1
	Hugh Grant – 1
50 or older:	Sean Connery – 7
	Mel Gibson – 3
	Robert Redford – 2
	Paul Newman – 2
	Richard Gere – 2
	Denzel Washington – 2
	Patrick Stewart – 1
	Gerard Depardieu – 1
	Dennis Quaid – 1
	Anthony Hopkins – 1
	Jack Nicholson – 1
	Dustin Hoffman – 1
	Michael Landon – 1
	Al Pacino – 1
	Cary Grant – 1
	Harrison Ford – 1
	Robert Duvall – 1
	Jimmy Stewart – 1
	Clint Eastwood – 1

Actress

Table A6. Continued	
Category	**Actress**
Under 50:	Julia Roberts – 4
	Sandra Bullock – 4
	Jodie Foster – 3
	Renee Zellwiger – 3
	Nicole Kidman – 2
	Jennifer Garner – 1
	Uma Thurman – 1
	Juliette Binocke – 1
	Joan Cusack – 1
50 or Older:	Meryl Streep – 8
	Susan Sarandon – 5
	Katherine Hepburn – 4
	Diane Keaton – 2
	Glen Close – 2
	Goldie Hawn – 1
	Audrey Hepburn – 1
	Joanne Woodward – 1
	Betty Davis – 1
	Lauren Hutton – 1
	Lucielle Ball – 1
	Doris Roberts - 1

Table A7. Question 15. In the last year, what has been your *least favorite:*

TV Show

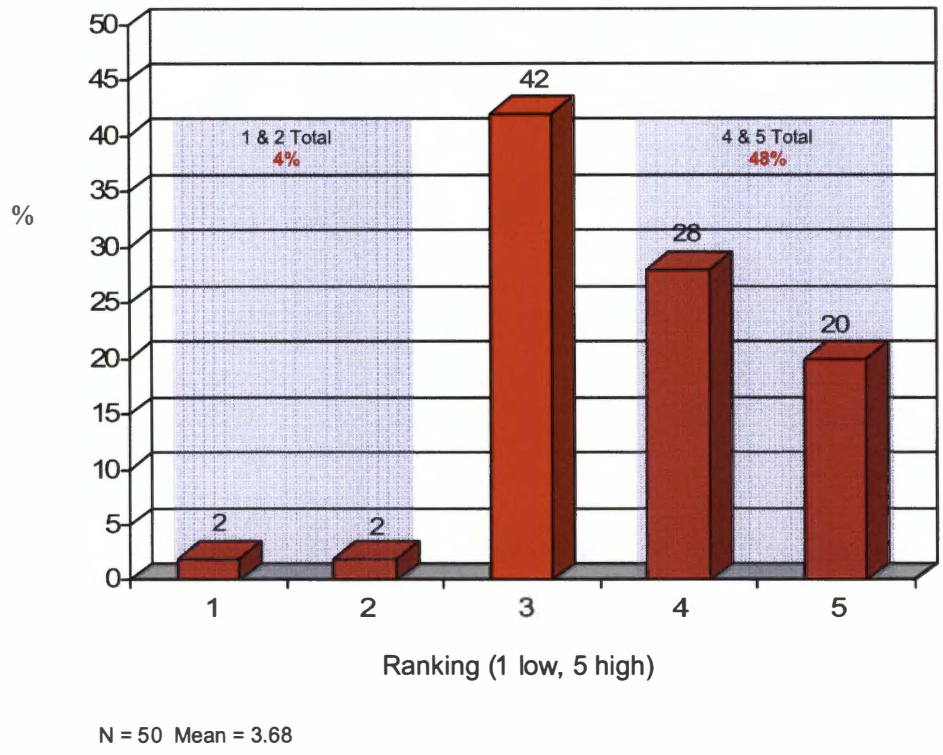
Category	Show
Drama	7th Heaven – 1
Police/Law	CSI Miami – 2
	Prison Break – 1
	The Medium – 1
Political	West Wing - 1
Science Fiction	Threshold - 1
Comedy	South Park – 1
	Everybody Loves Raymond - 1
	Sex in the City - 1
Game Shows	The Price is Right
Reality	Any reality show – 10
	Fear Factor – 8
	Survivor – 3
	Police Videos – 1
	Antique Road Show – 1
	The Bachelor Show – 1
	Cops – 1
	The Apprentice – 1
	Wife Swap – 1
	Big Brother – 1
News Shows	Fox News – 1
Talk Shows	Jerry Springer – 1
Sports	Hunting shows - 1
Other	No response or none – 5
	Don't watch much tv – 2
	Anything MTV – 1
	Most all of them – 1
	Hard to say – 1

Movie

Table A7. Continued	
Category	**Movie**
Classic (25 years or older)	None
Comedy	Sideways – 2
	Lost in Translation – 2
	The Royal Tannenbaums – 1
	Bad News Bears – 1
	Napoleon Dynamite – 1
	Jackass, The Movie – 1
	Cat in the Hat - 1
Drama	Gangs of New York - 1
Adventure	Bourne Identity – 1
	Lord of the Ring – 1
	XXX II – 1
Historical	None
Romance	Bridget Jones The Edge of Reason – 1
	The Terminal - 1
	Far From Heaven – 1
	Diary of a Mad Black Woman – 1
	Sweet Home Alabama – 1
Sci-Fi	Star Wars II Attack of the Clones – 1
	Star Wars III Revenge of the Sith – 1
	War of the Worlds – 1
	Star Wars (last one) - 1
Mystery	None
Horror	Any horror movie - 1
	Saw - 1
Musical	Fantasia - 1
Other comments:	Anything violent – 2
	Anything gross or sophomoric – 1

Musical Artist

Table A7. Continued	
Category	**Artist**
Vocal Easy Listening	Kenny G - 1
Pop Metal	None
Country	Lee Greenwood – 1
	Any country singer - 1
Americana	Pine Mountain Railroad - 1
World	None
Pop	Michael Jackson – 2
	Britney Spears – 2
	Cher – 1
	Most popular artists – 1
	Bjork - 1
Rap/Hip Hop	Rap – 13
	Rap or Hip Hop – 3
	Eminem – 3
	Snoop Dog – 2
	Fifty Cent - 1
	Hip Hop – 1
Rock	Anything hard rock – 1
	Kiss - 1
50s Rock	None
Jazz	None
60s Rock	None
R&B	John Legend - 1
Classical	None
Christian Contemporary	None
New Age	None
Blues	None
Other	Doesn't answer – 10
	Doesn't know – 2
	Careful to select so no big disappointments – 1
	Haven't listened too much lately – 1
	Too many to name - 1
Metal	Ozzie Osbourne - 1



On a scale of 1 to 5, with one being "disagree strongly" and 5 being "agree strongly," how do you feel about the following statements:

Figure A18. Question 16A. Today's society is too youth oriented.

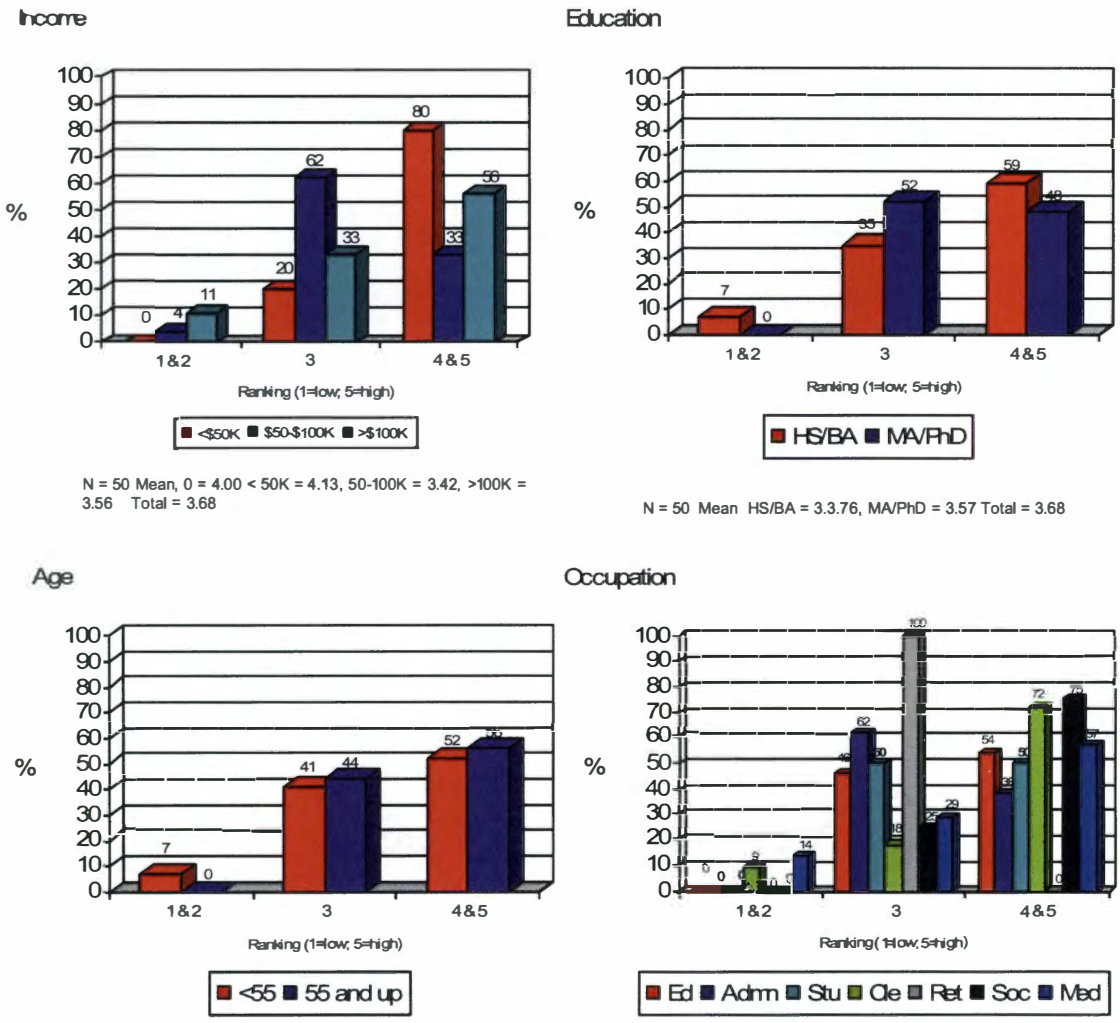


Figure A19. Crosstabulation Question 16A. Today's society is too youth oriented.

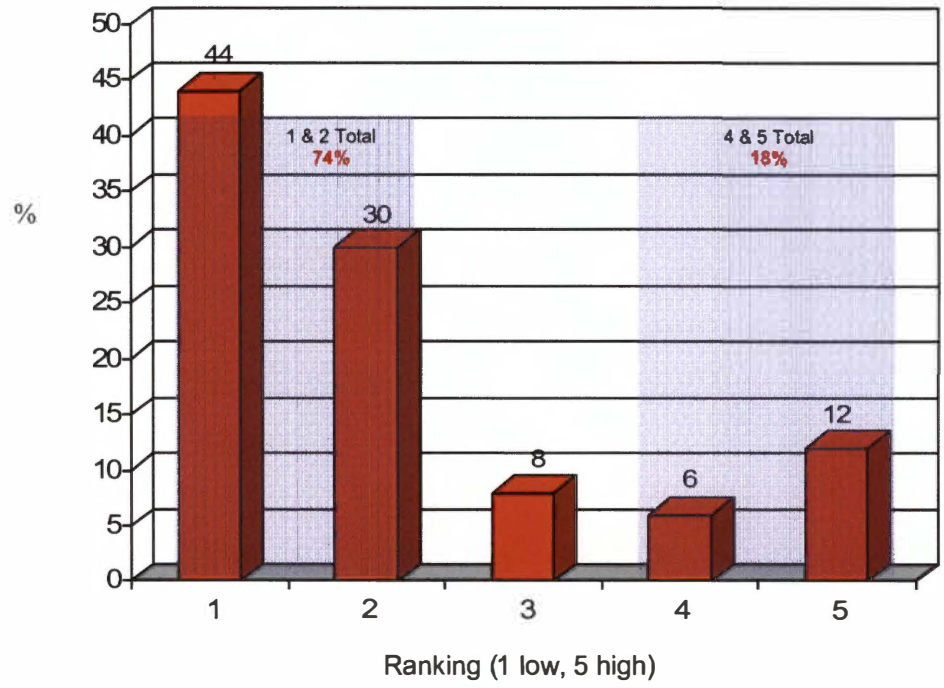


Figure A20. Question 16B. Women are less affected by aging than men.

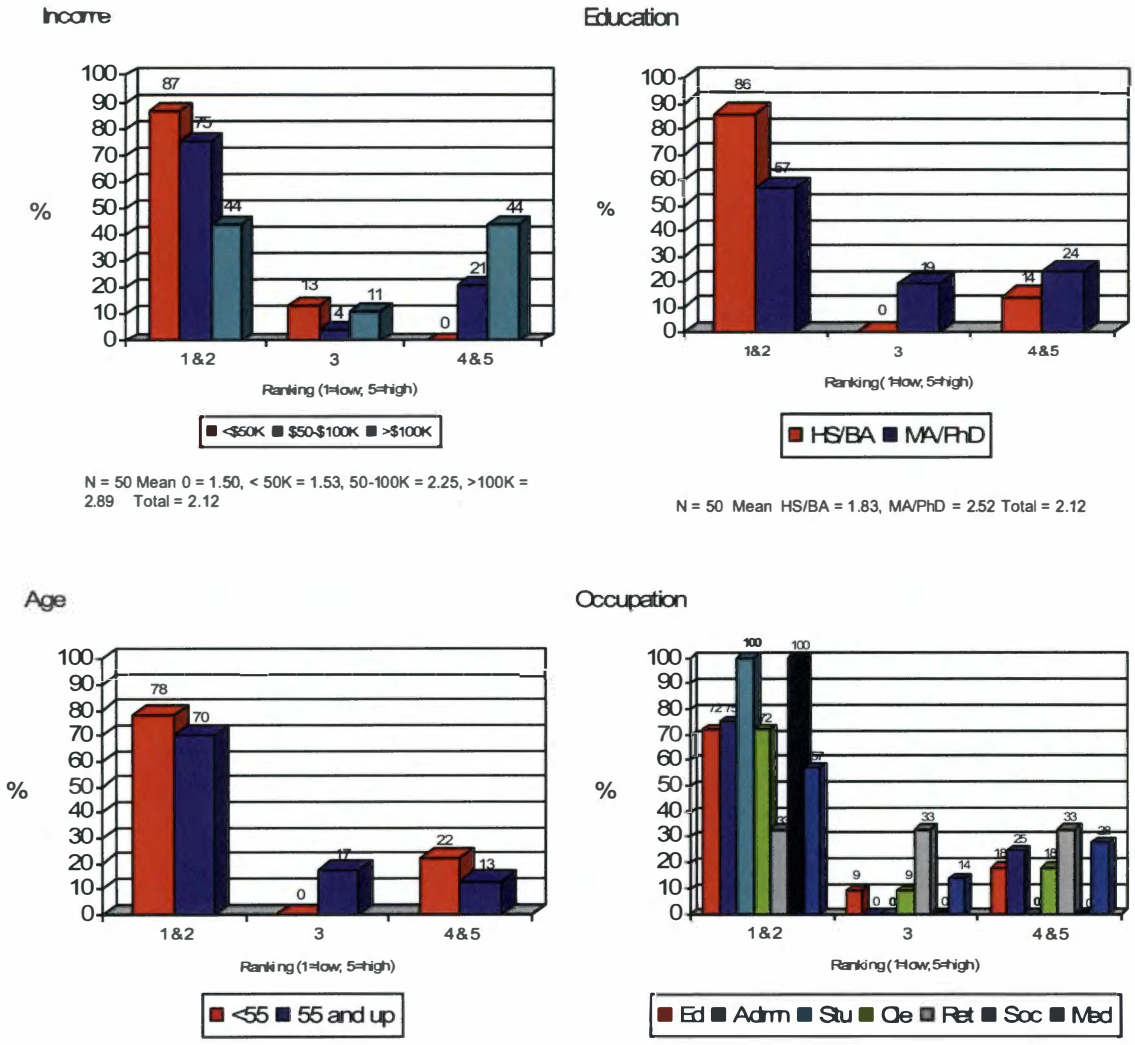


Figure A21. Crosstabulation Question 16B. Women are less affected by aging than men.

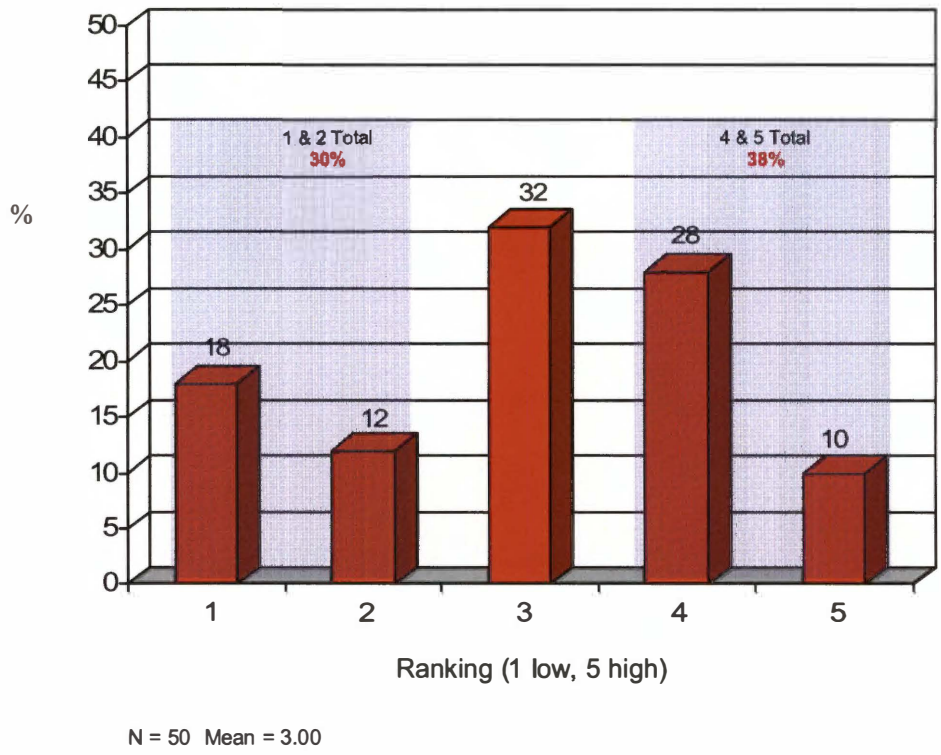


Figure A22. Question 16C. When I see women my own age in advertising, I am more likely to believe the message.

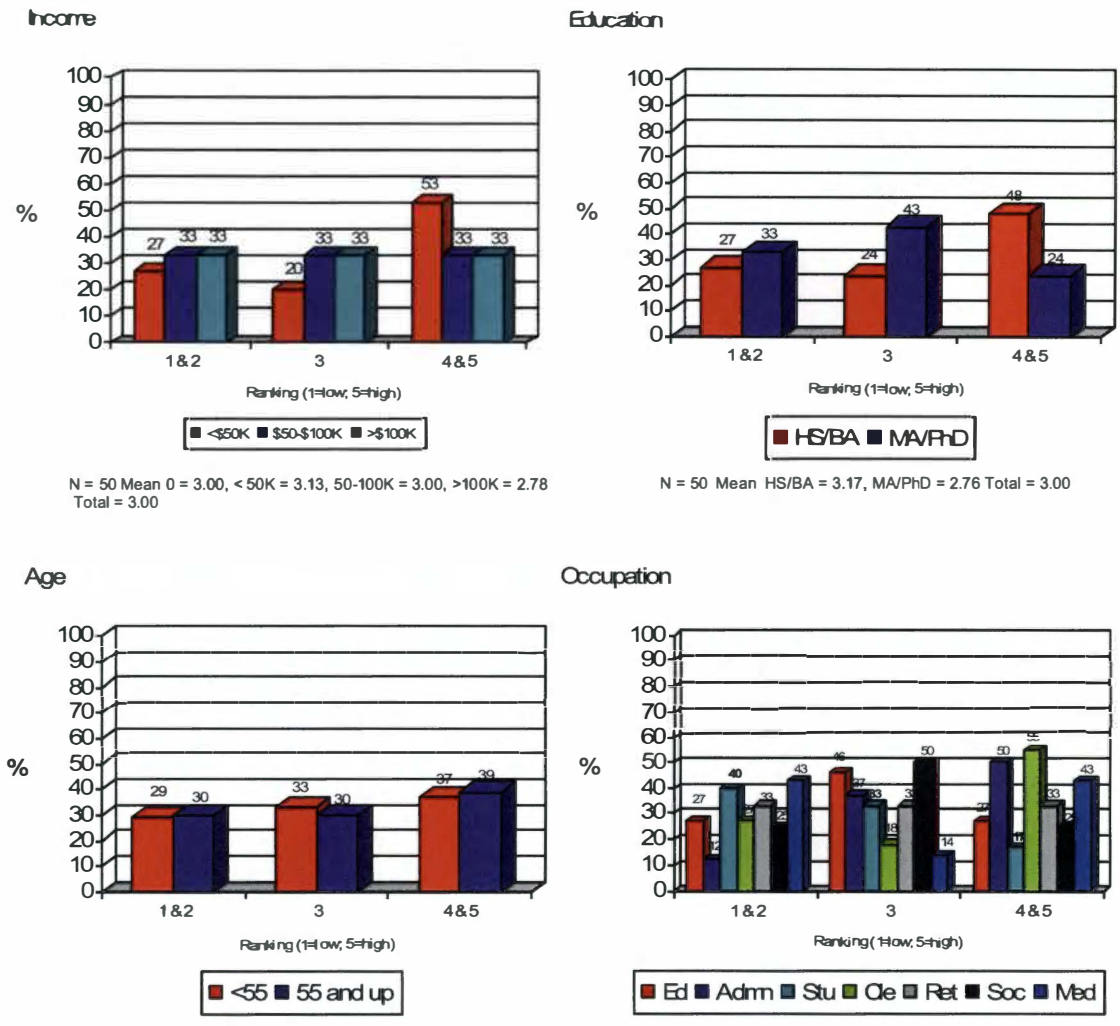


Figure A23. Crosstabulation Question 16C. When I see women my own age in advertising, I am more likely to believe the message.

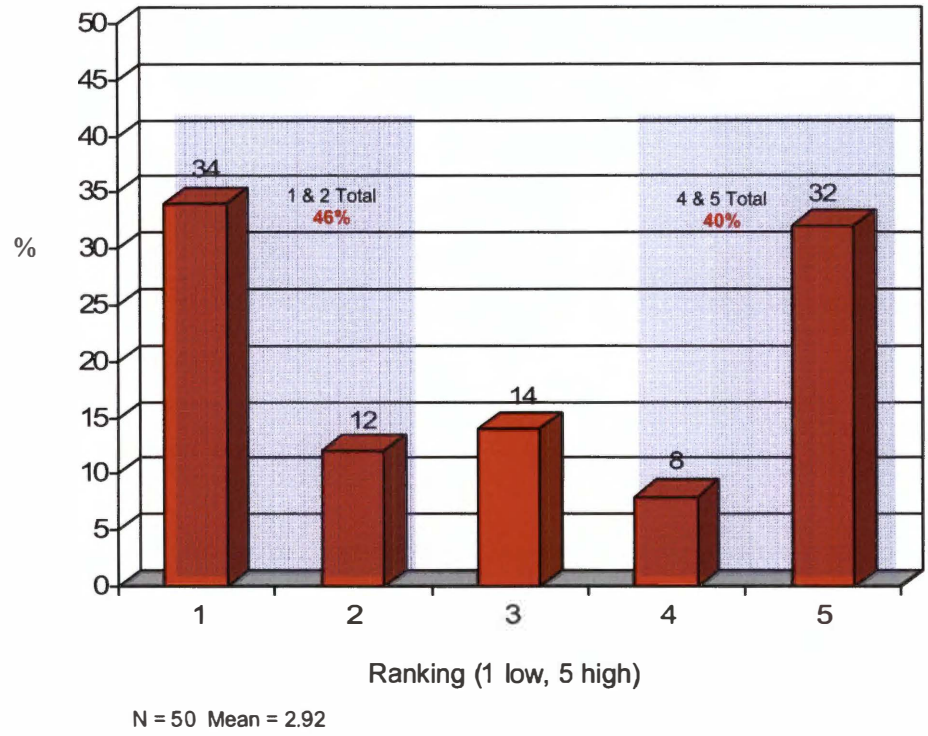
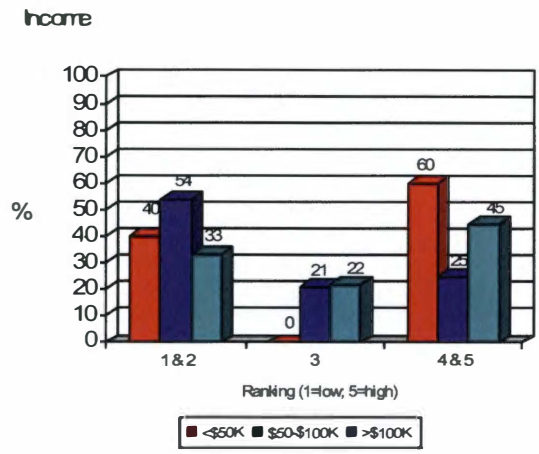
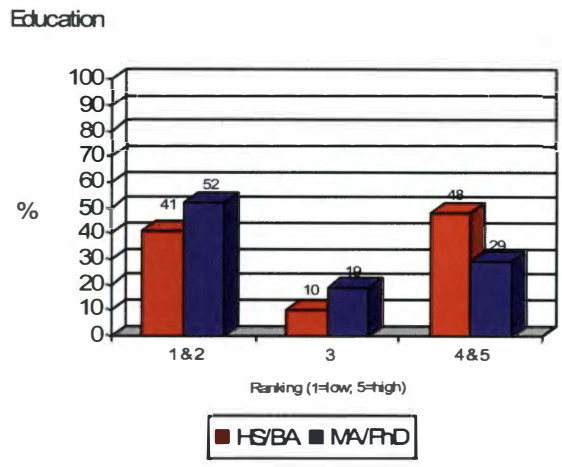


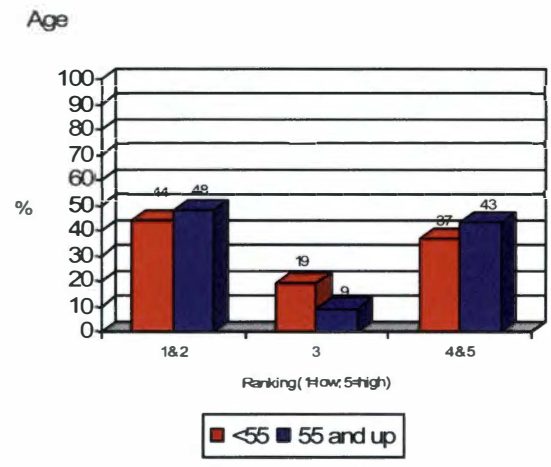
Figure A24. Question 16D. I enjoy changing my hair color occasionally.

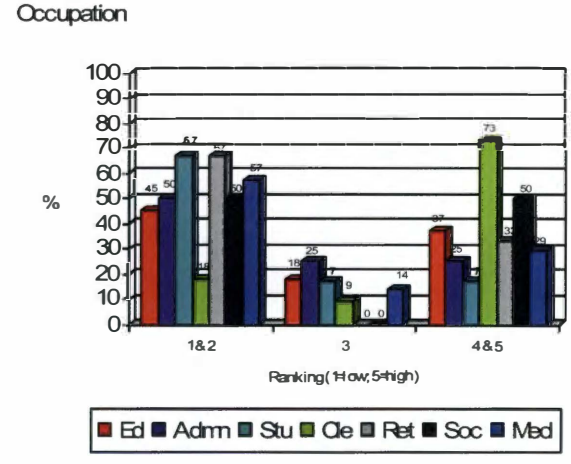




N = 50 Mean 0 = 3.50, < 50K = 3.33, 50-100K = 2.42, >100K = 3.44 Total = 2.92

N = 50 Mean HS/BA = 3.14, MA/PhD = 2.62 Total = 2.92





N = 50 Mean <55 = 2.85, 55 and up = 3.00 Total = 2.92

N = 50 Mean Ed = 2.91, Admn = 2.63, Stu = 2.71, Cle = 4.00, Ret = 2.00, Soc = 3.00, Med = 2.57 Total = 2.92

Figure A25. Crosstabulation Question 16D. I enjoy changing my hair color occasionally.

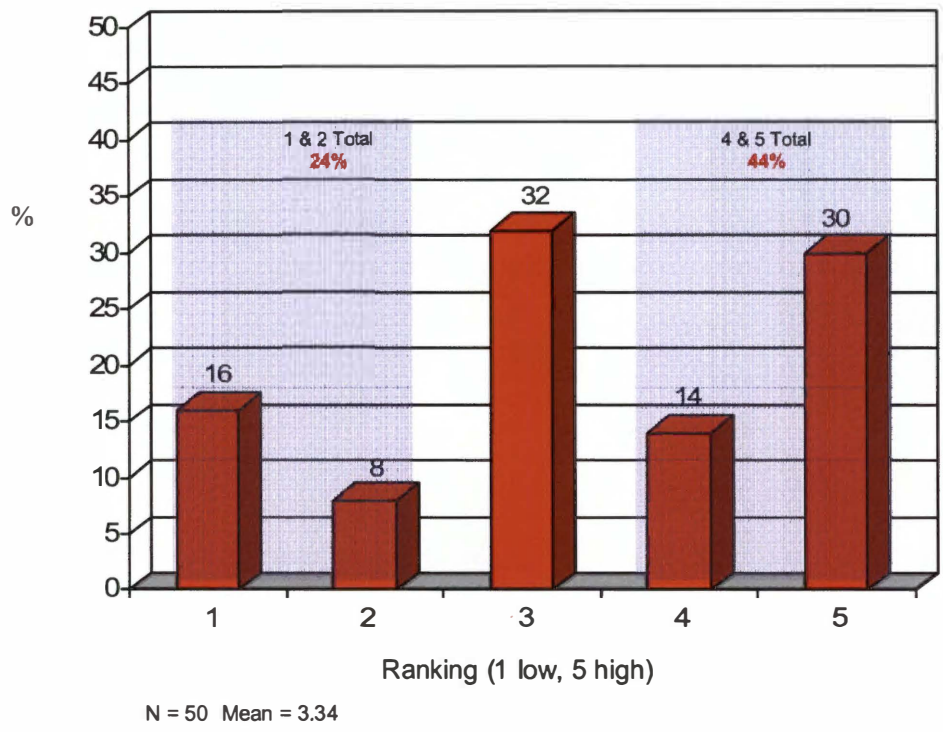
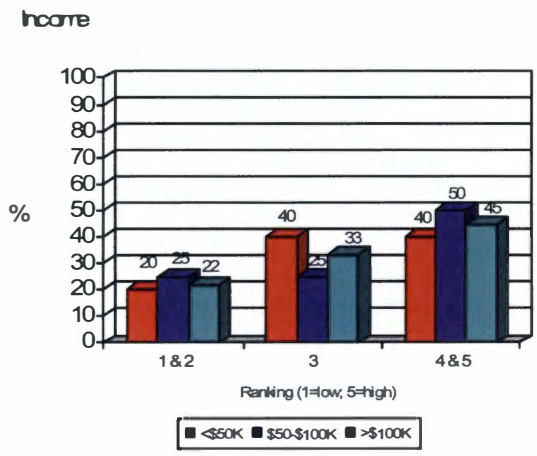
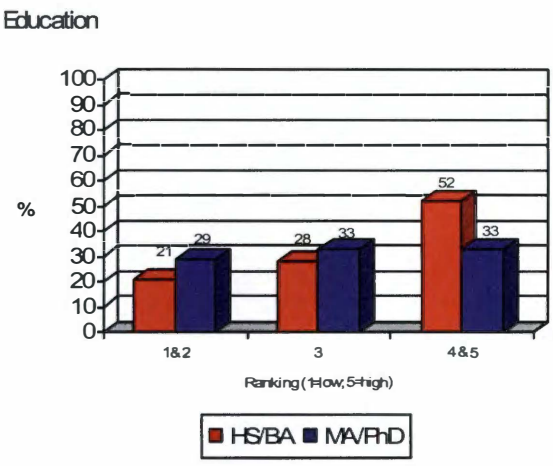


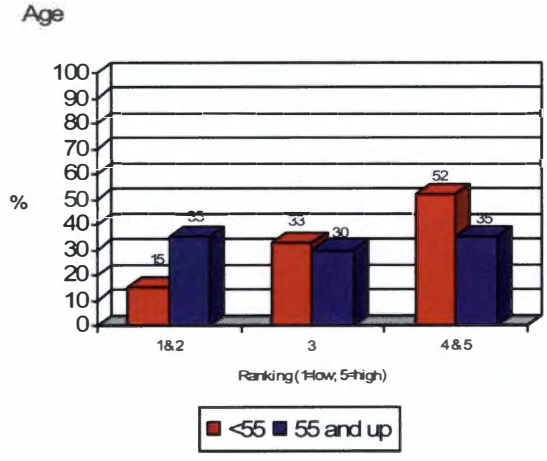
Figure A26. Question 16E. If I were offered a makeover, I would take advantage of it.



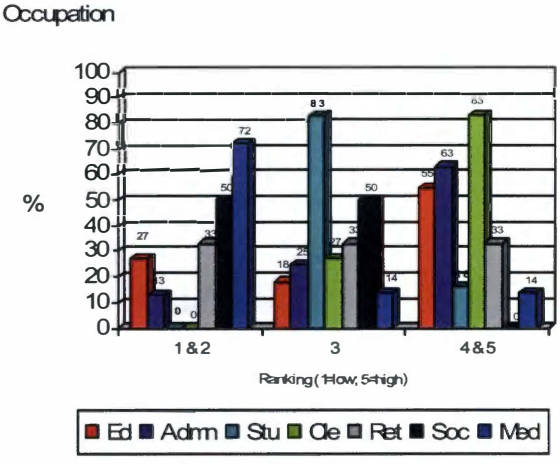
N = 50 Mean 0 = 2.00, < 50K = 3.40, 50-100K = 3.38, >100K = 3.44 Total = 3.34



N = 50 Mean HS/BA = 3.55, MA/PhD = 3.05 Total = 3.34



N = 50 Mean <55 = 3.59, 55 and up = 3.04 Total = 3.34



N = 50 Mean Ed = 3.27, Admn = 4.13, Stu = 3.33, Cle = 4.36, Ret = 2.67, Soc = 2.00, Med = 2.00 Total = 3.34

Figure A27. Crosstabulation Question 16E. If I were offered a makeover, I would take advantage of it.

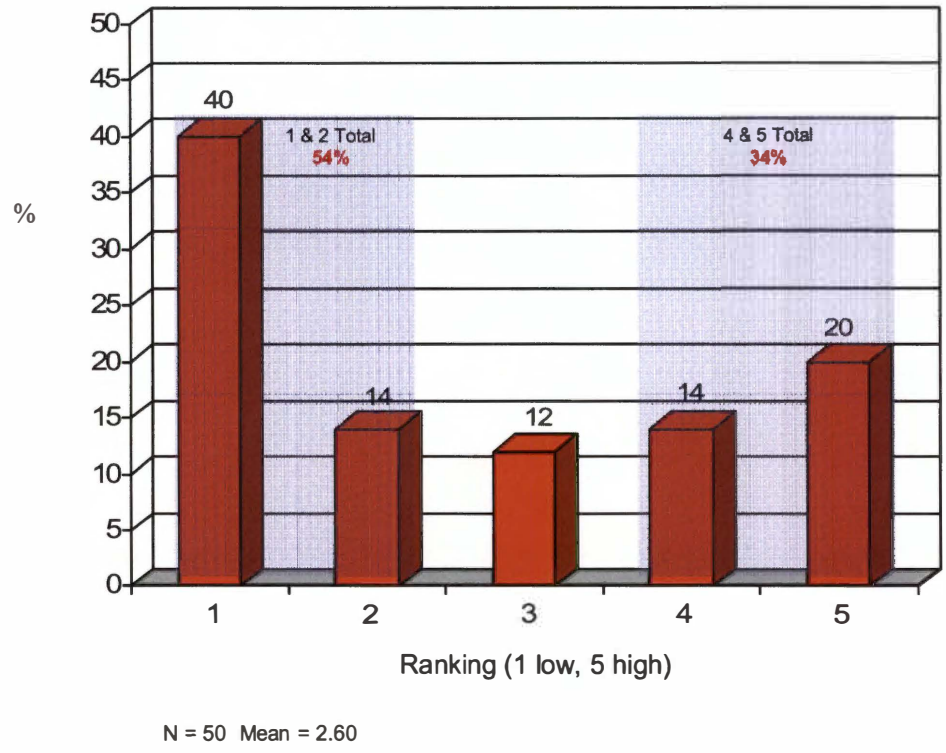


Figure A28: Question 16F. I would consider cosmetic surgery if my insurance would cover the procedure.

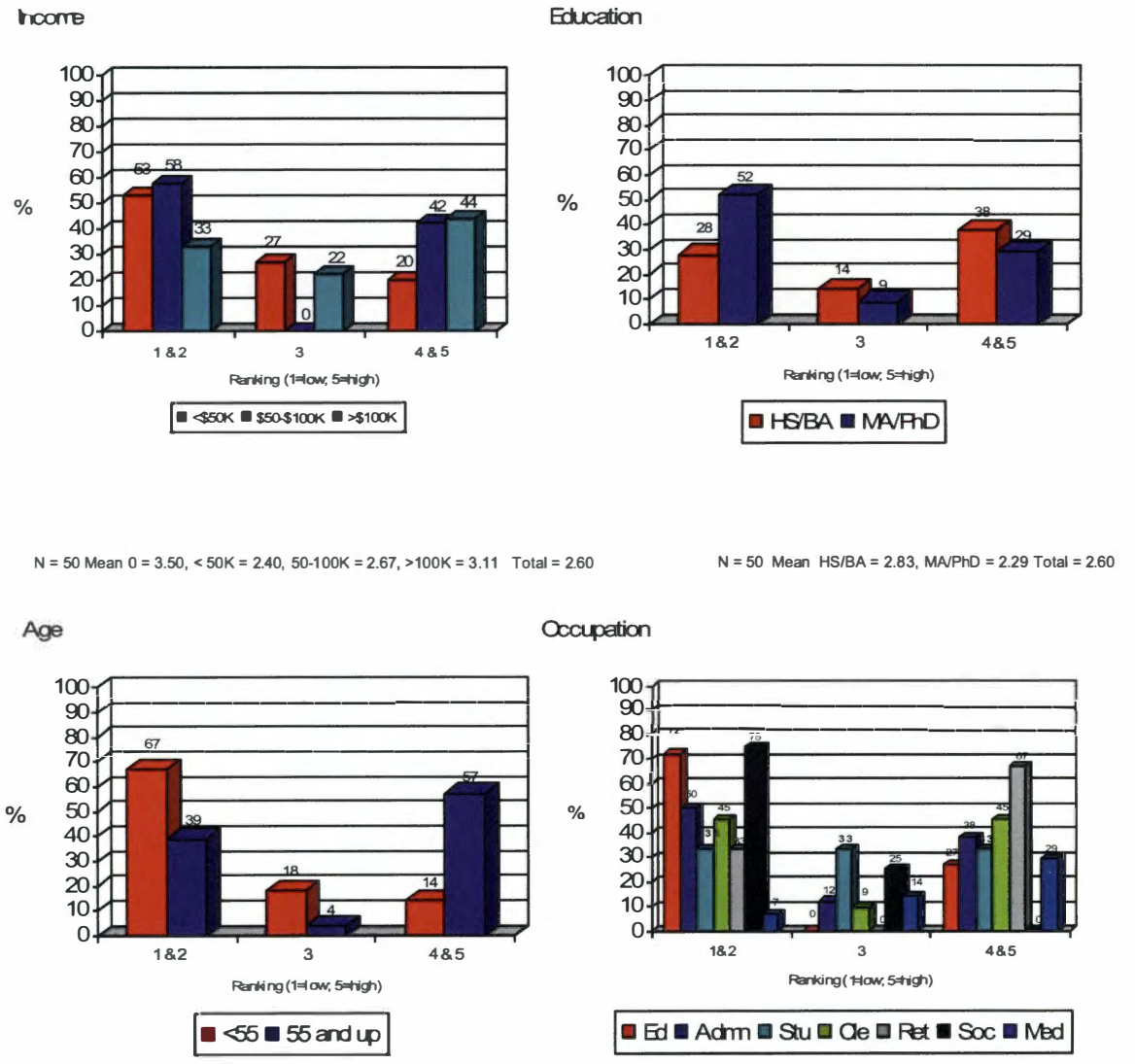


Figure A29. Crosstabulation Question 16F. I would consider cosmetic surgery if my insurance would cover the procedure.

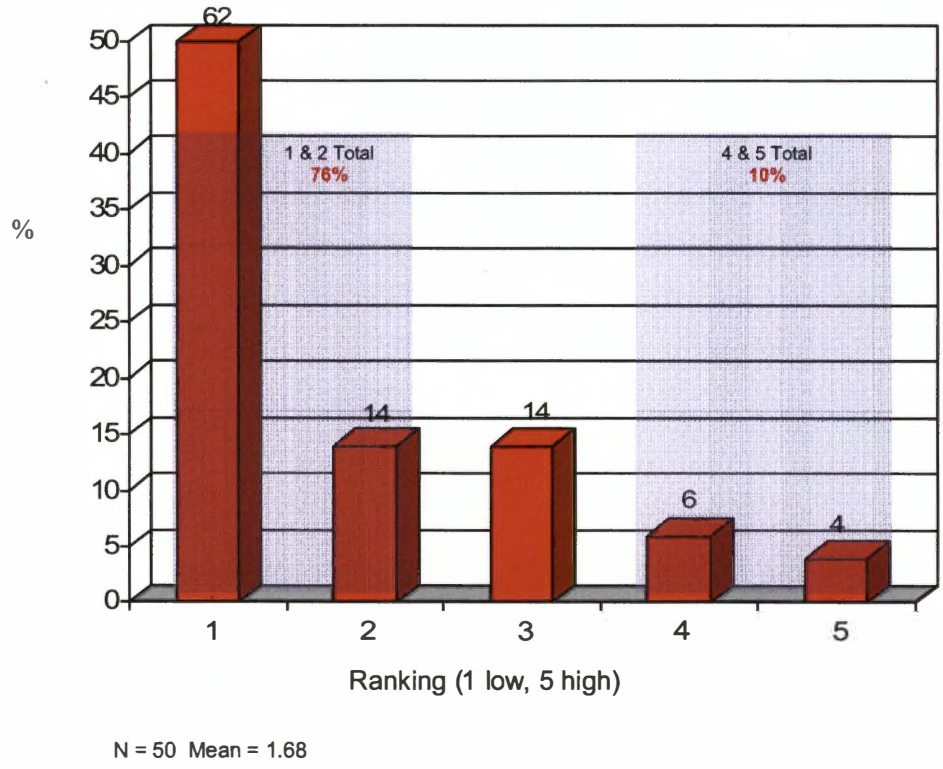


Figure A30. Question 16G. Advertising has more influence on me now than when I was a teenager.

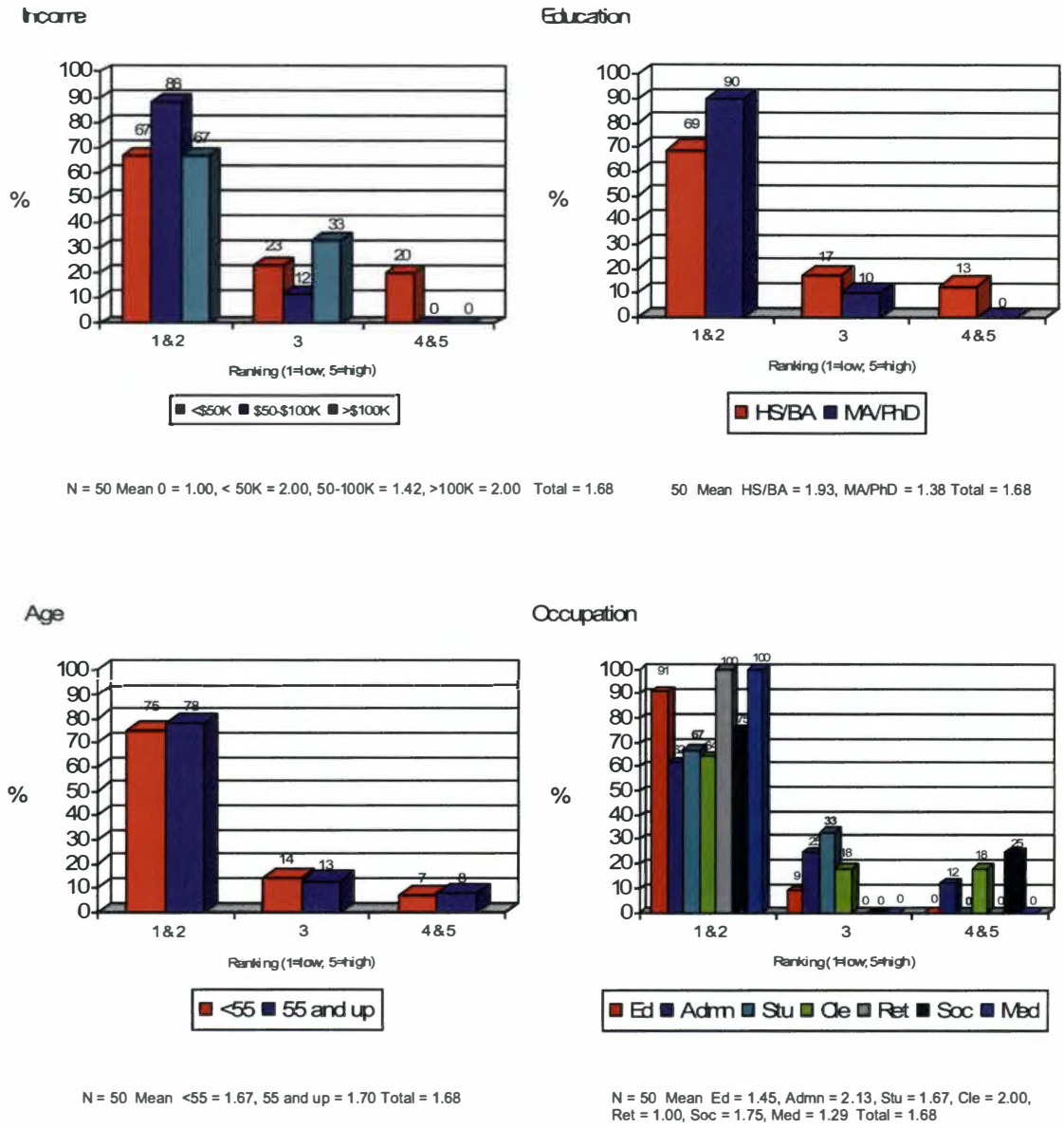


Figure A31. Crosstabulation Question 16G. Advertising has more influence on me now than when I was a teenager.

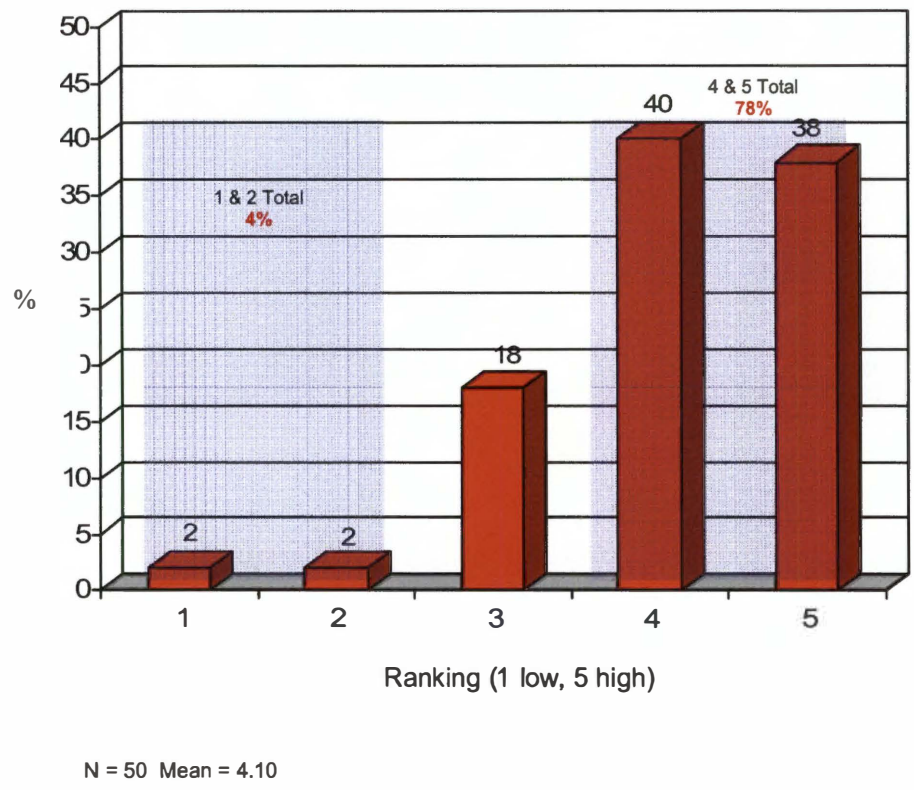
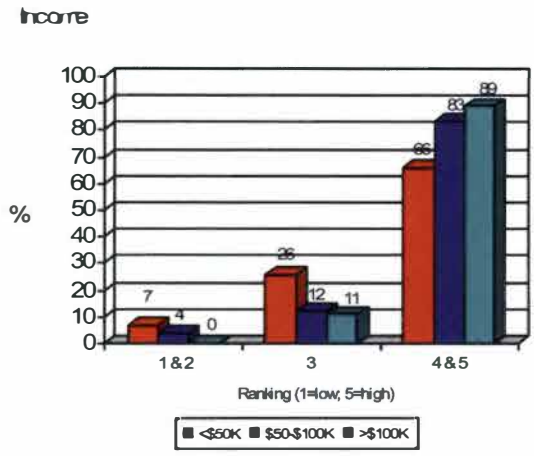
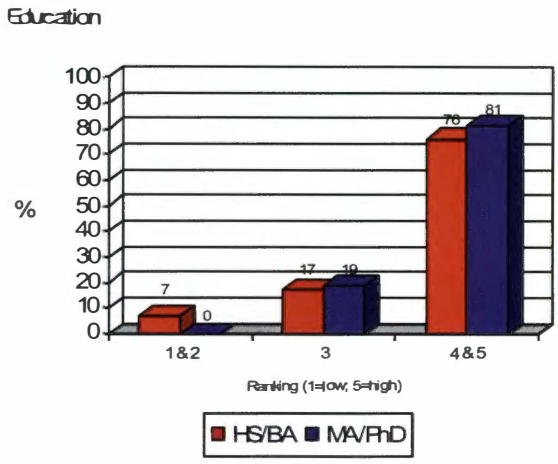


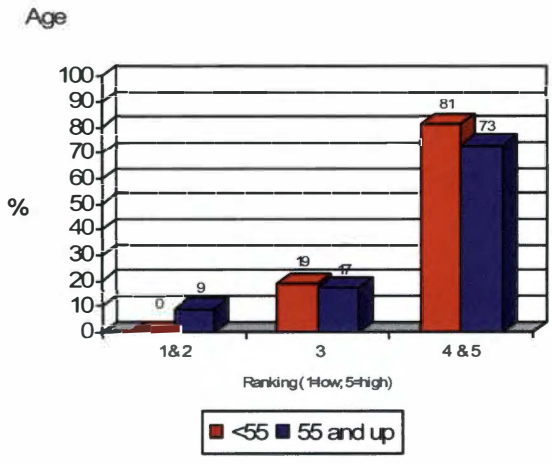
Figure A32. Question 16H. I am more likely to believe an article than an ad.



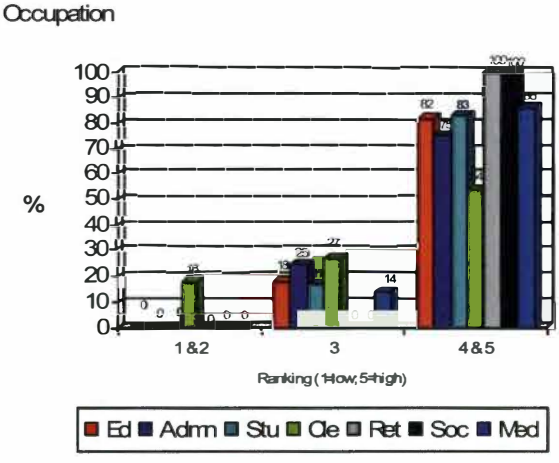
N = 50 Mean 0 = 4.00, < 50K = 3.87, 50-100K = 4.21, >100K = 4.22 Total = 4.10



N = 50 Mean HS/BA = 4.07 MA/PhD = 4.14 Total = 4.10

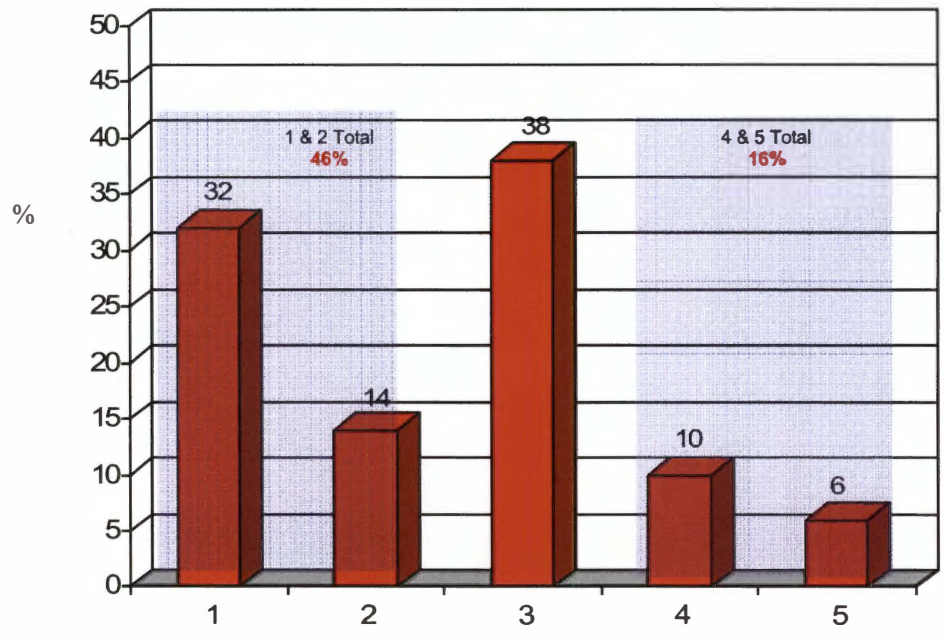


N = 50 Mean <55 = 4.22, 55 and up = 3.3.96 Total = 4.10



N = 50 Mean Ed = 4.18, Admn = 4.25, Stu = 4.00, Cle = 3.73, Ret = 4.33, Soc = 4.50, Med = 4.14 Total = 4.10

Figure A33. Crosstabulation Question 16H. I am more likely to believe an article than an ad.



On a scale of 1 to 5, with one being "disagree strongly" and 5 being "agree strongly," how do you feel about the following statements.

How has getting older affected your life:

Figure A34. Question 17A. I have a more active social life.

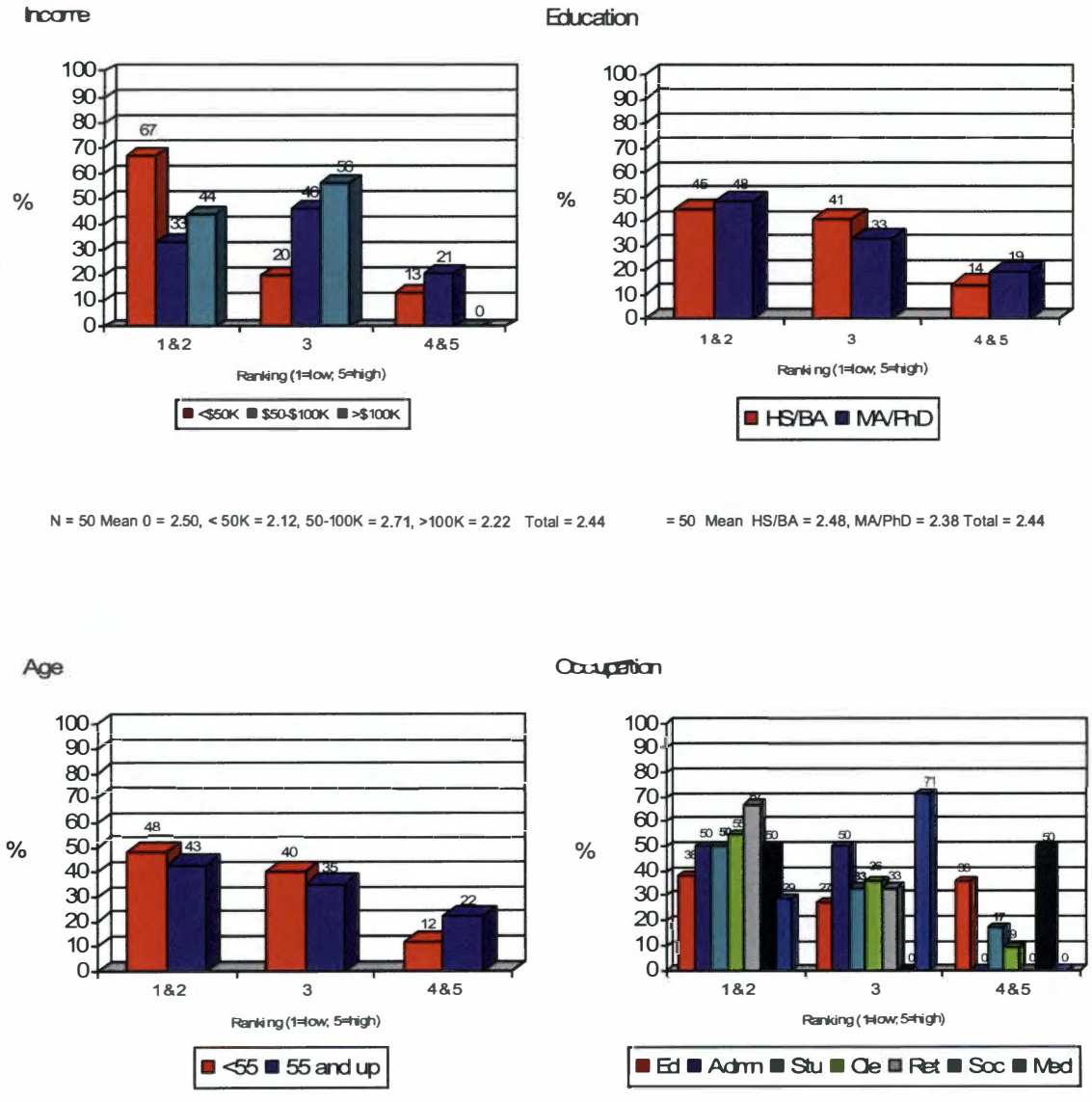


Figure A35. Crosstabulation Question 17A. I have a more active social life.

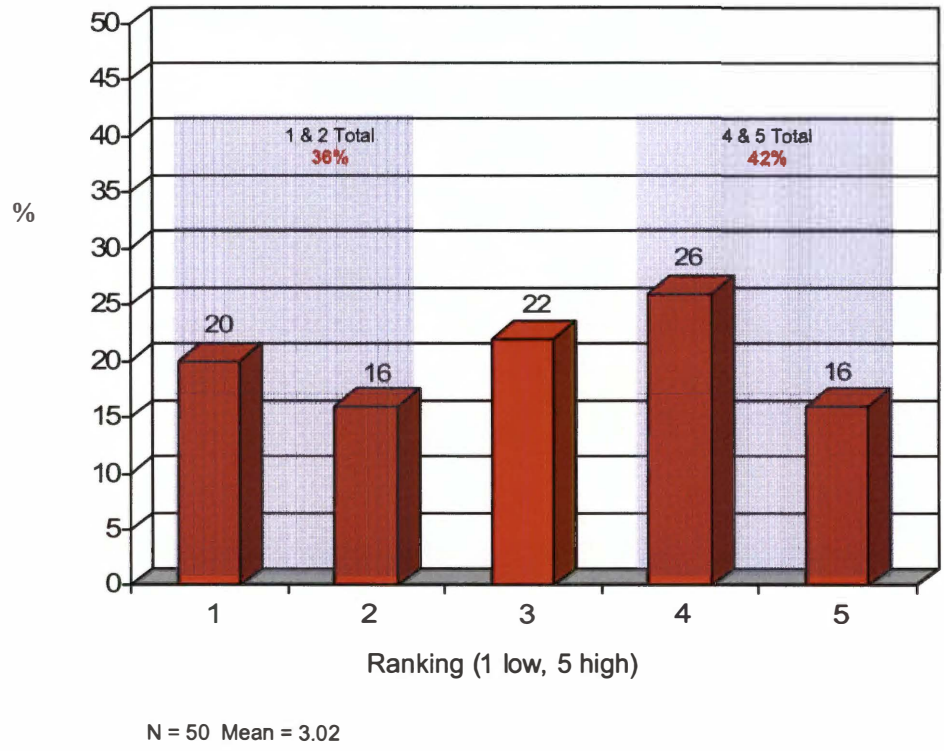


Figure A36. Question 17B. I have a more satisfying social life.

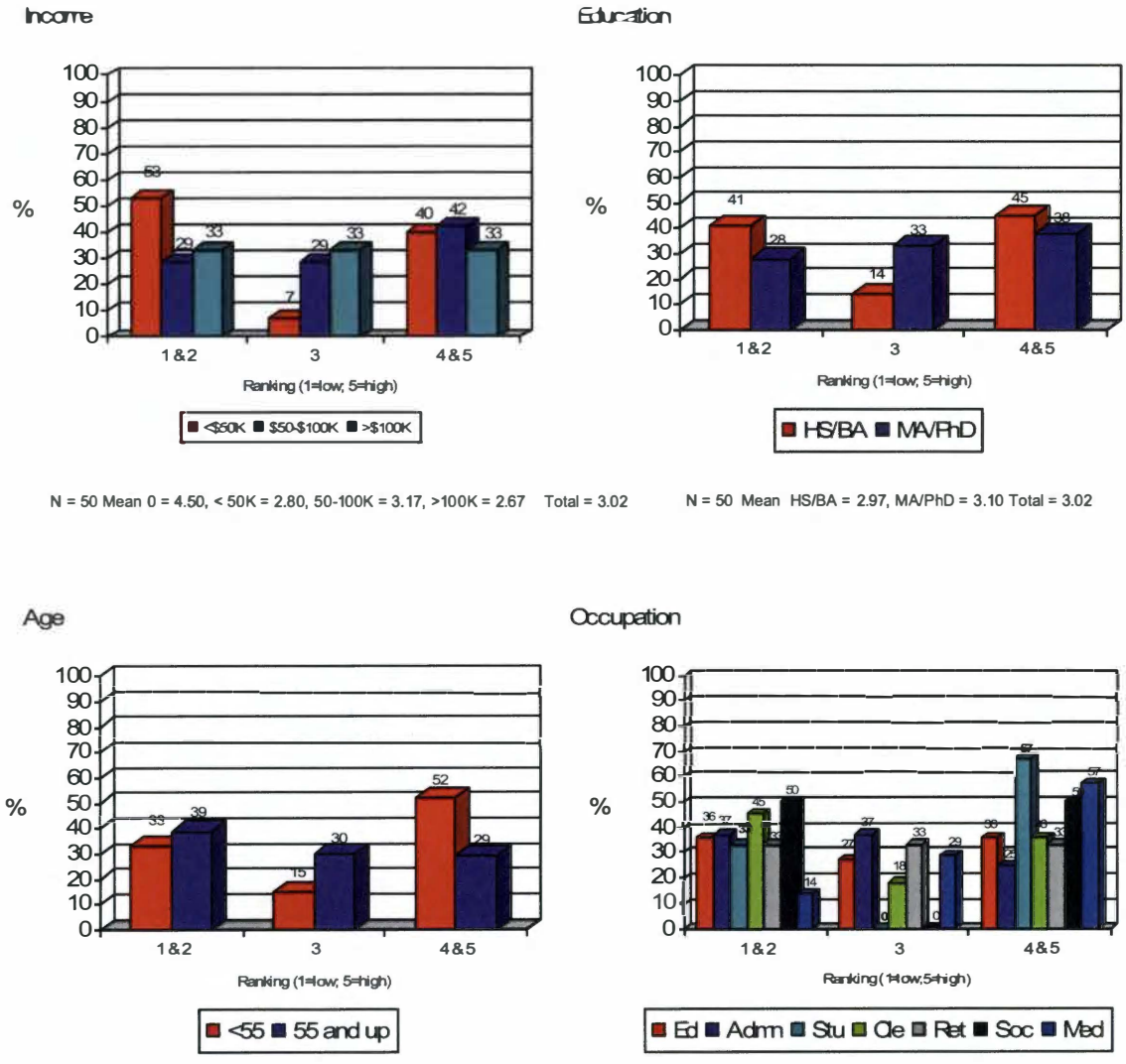


Figure A37. Crosstabulation Question 17B. I have a more satisfying social life.

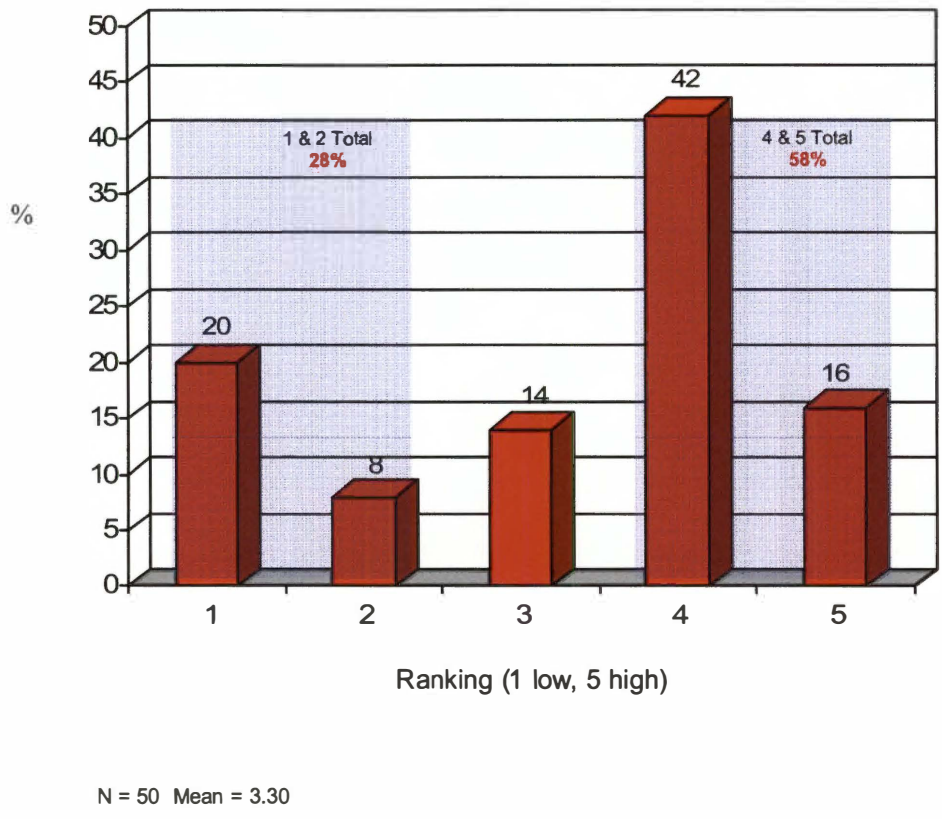


Figure A38. Question 17C. My professional relationships with men are better.

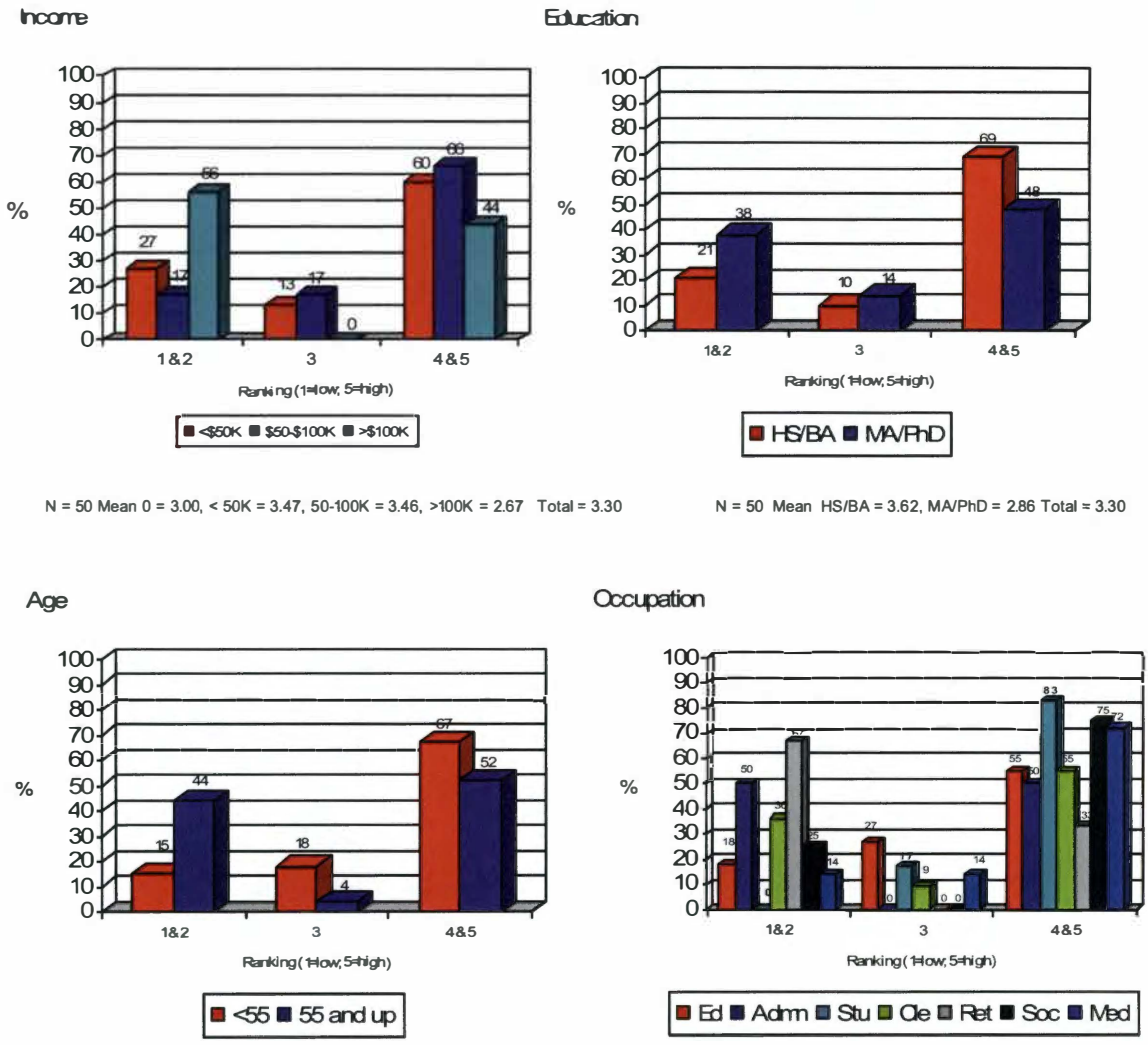


Figure A39. Crosstabulation Question 17C. My professional relationships with men are better.

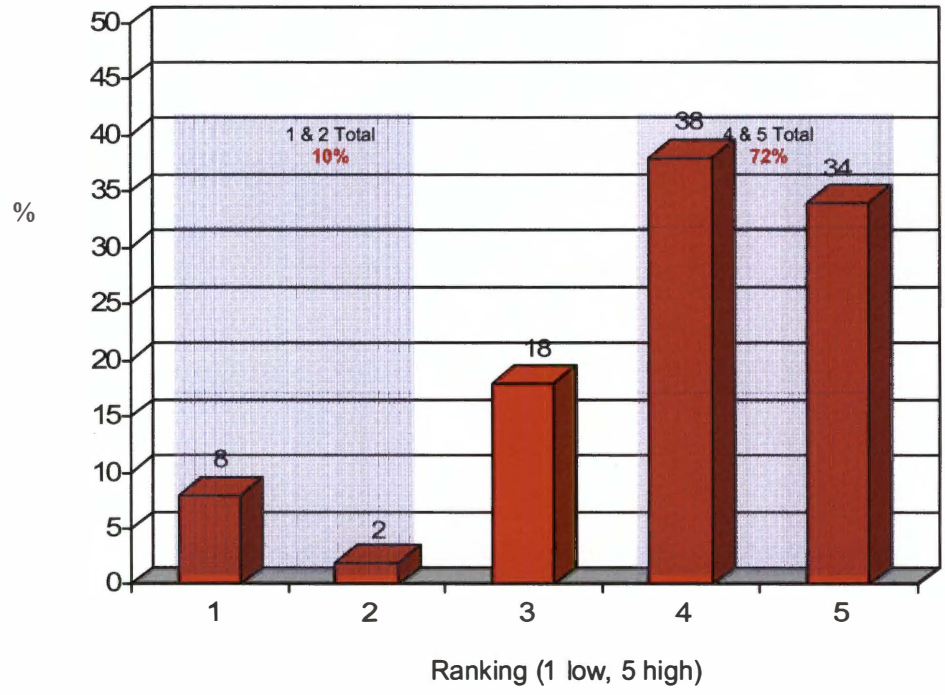


Figure A40. Question 17D. I feel more comfortable in social settings.

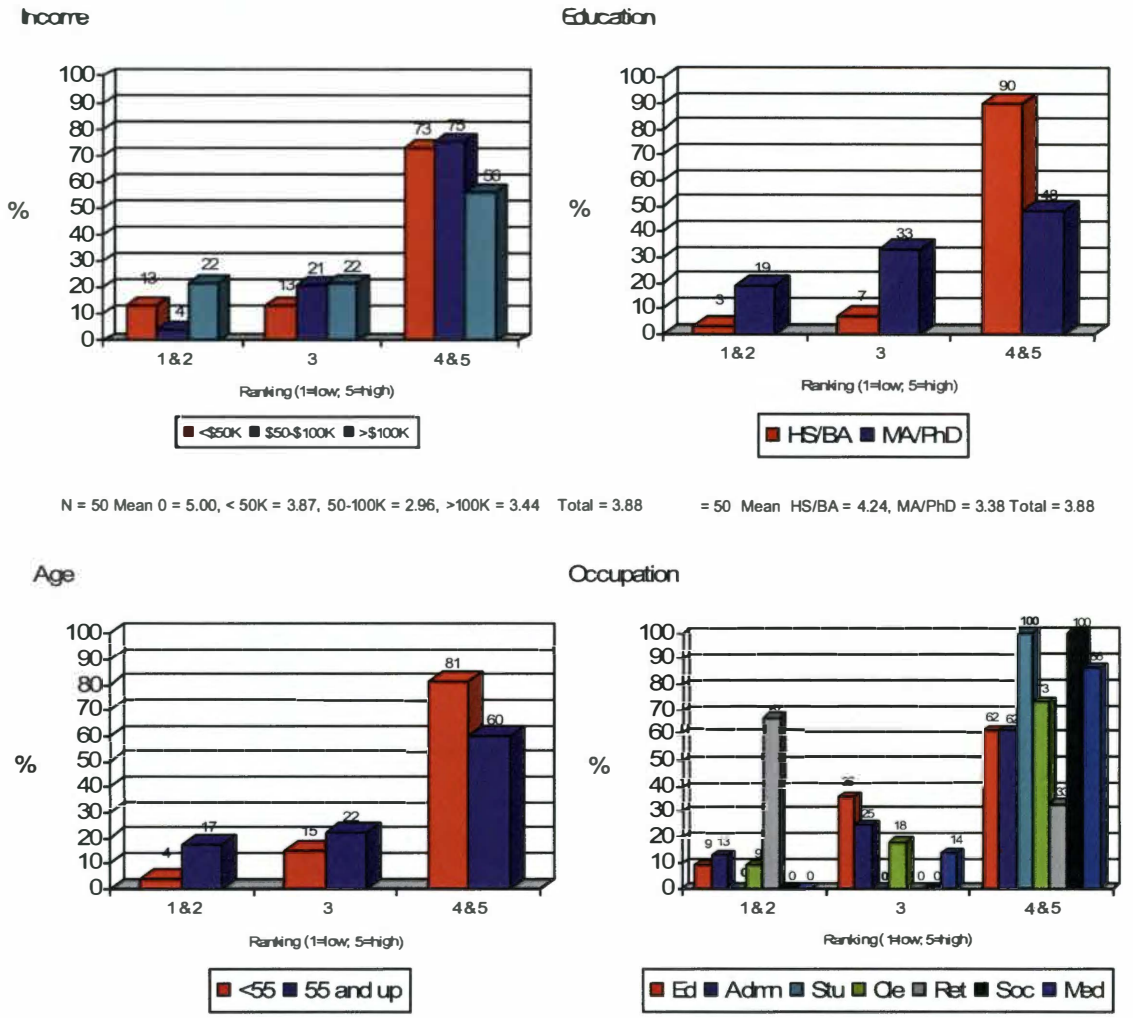


Figure A41. Crosstabulation Question 17D. I feel more comfortable in social settings.

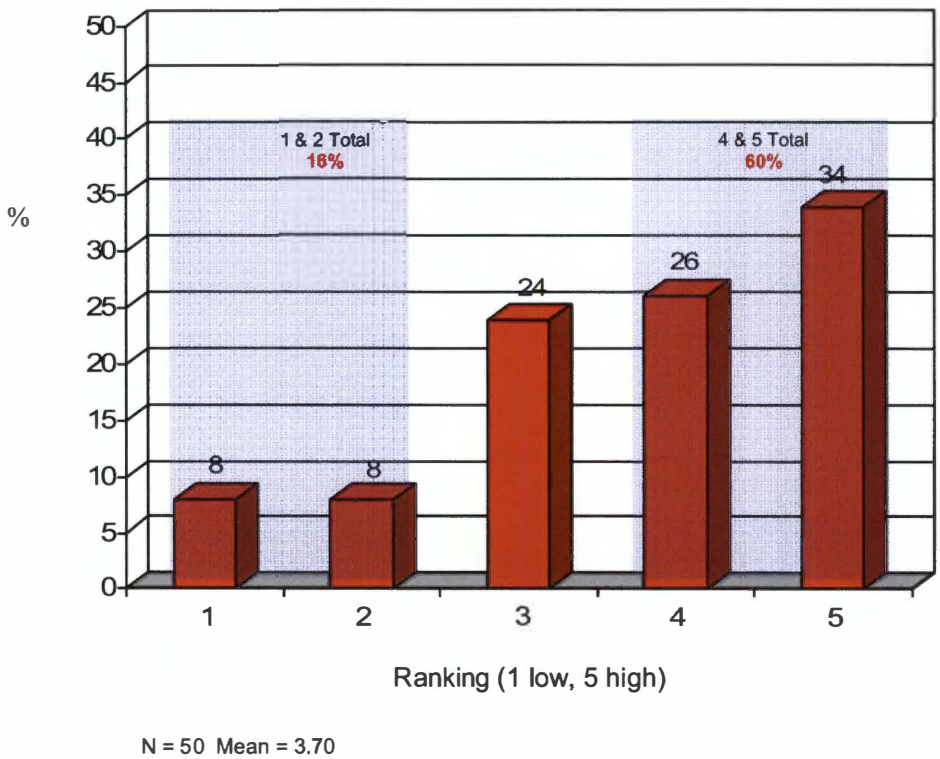
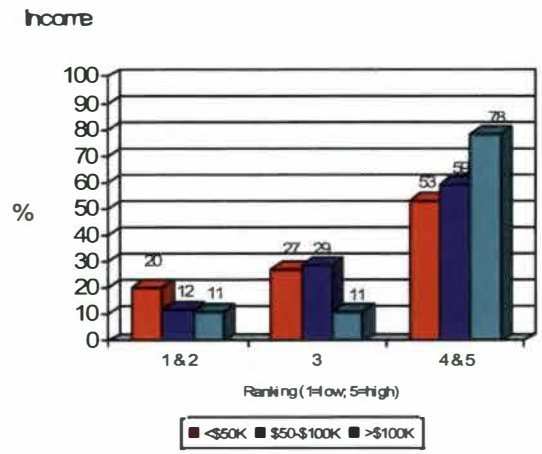
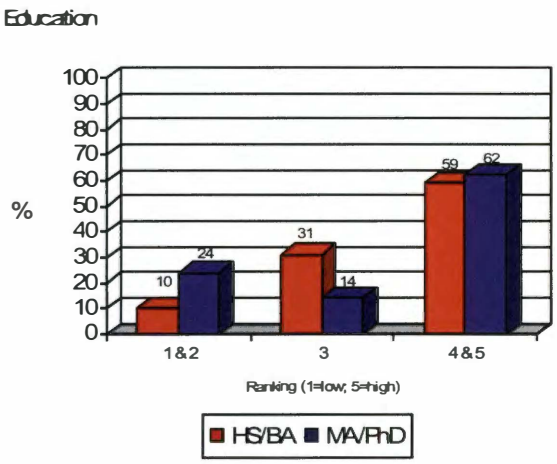


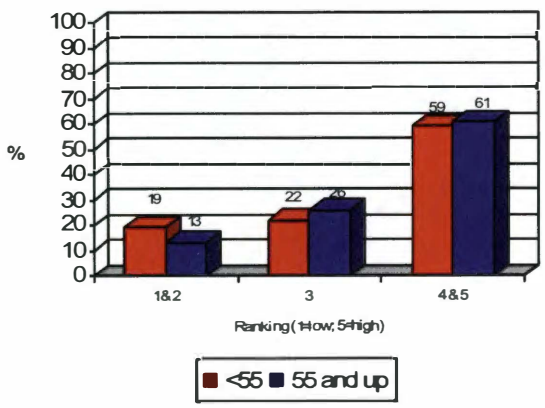
Figure A42. Question 17E. I feel more comfortable with personal image.



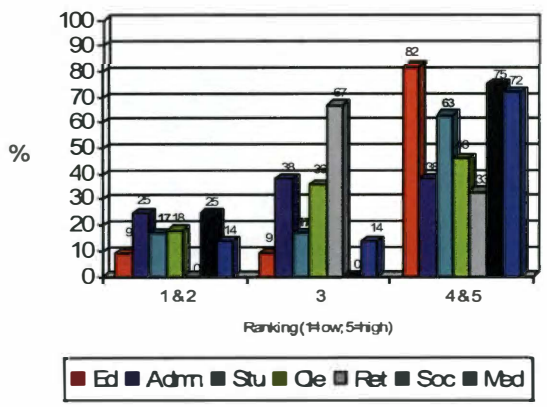
N = 50 Mean 0 = 3.00, < 50K = 3.47, 50-100K = 3.83, >100K = 3.89 Total = 3.70



N = 50 Mean HS/BA = 3.79, MA/PhD = 3.57 Total = 3.70



N = 50 Mean <55 = 3.52, 55 and up = 3.91 Total = 3.70



N = 50 Mean Ed = 4.27, Admn = 3.13, Stu = 3.50, Cle = 3.55, Ret = 3.83, Soc = 4.00, Med = 3.86 Total = 3.70

Figure A43. Crosstabulation Question 17E. I feel more comfortable with personal image.

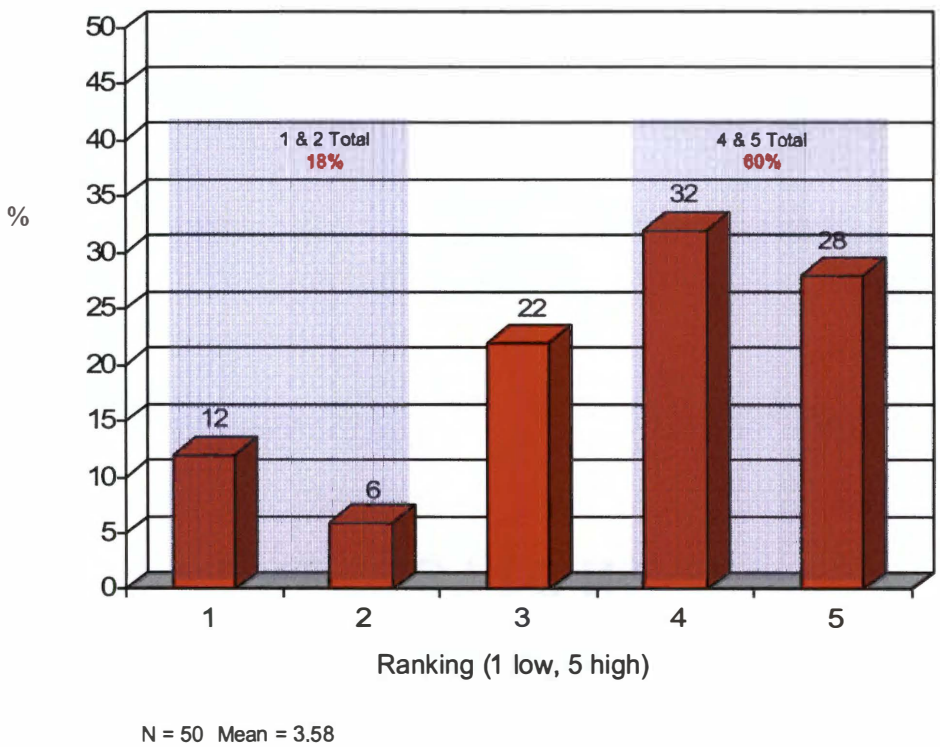


Figure A44. Questions 17F. Coworkers respect me more now than when I was first starting my career.

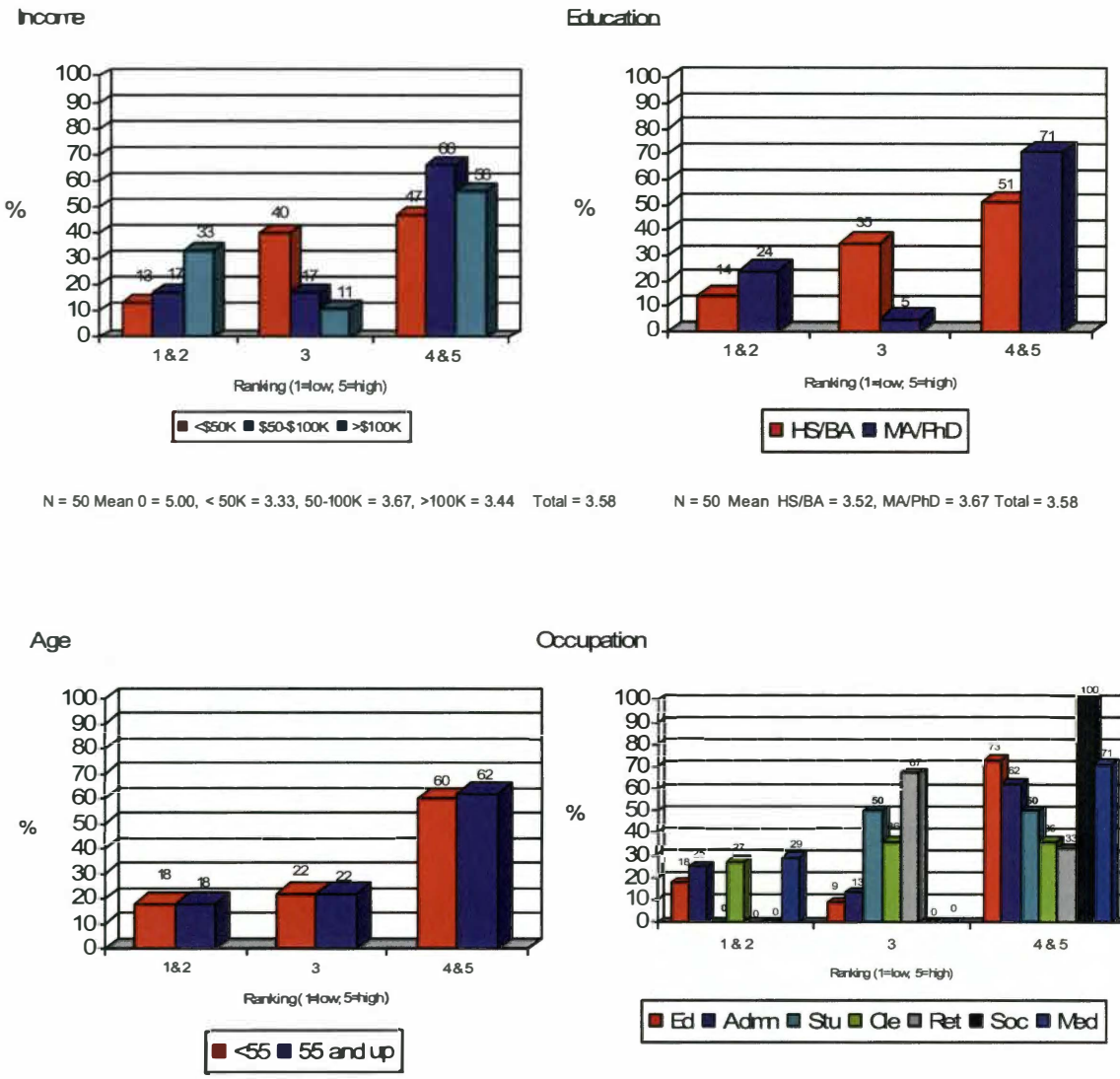


Figure A45. Crosstabulation Questions 17F. Coworkers respect me more now than when I was first starting my career.

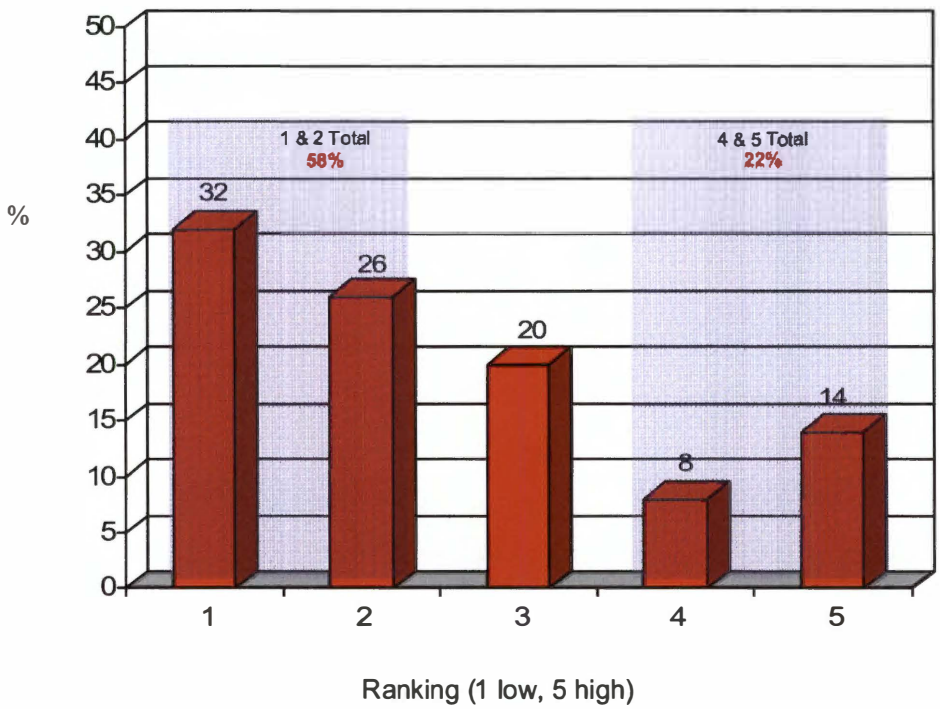


Figure A46. Question 17G. I am given as much respect professionally as men my same age.

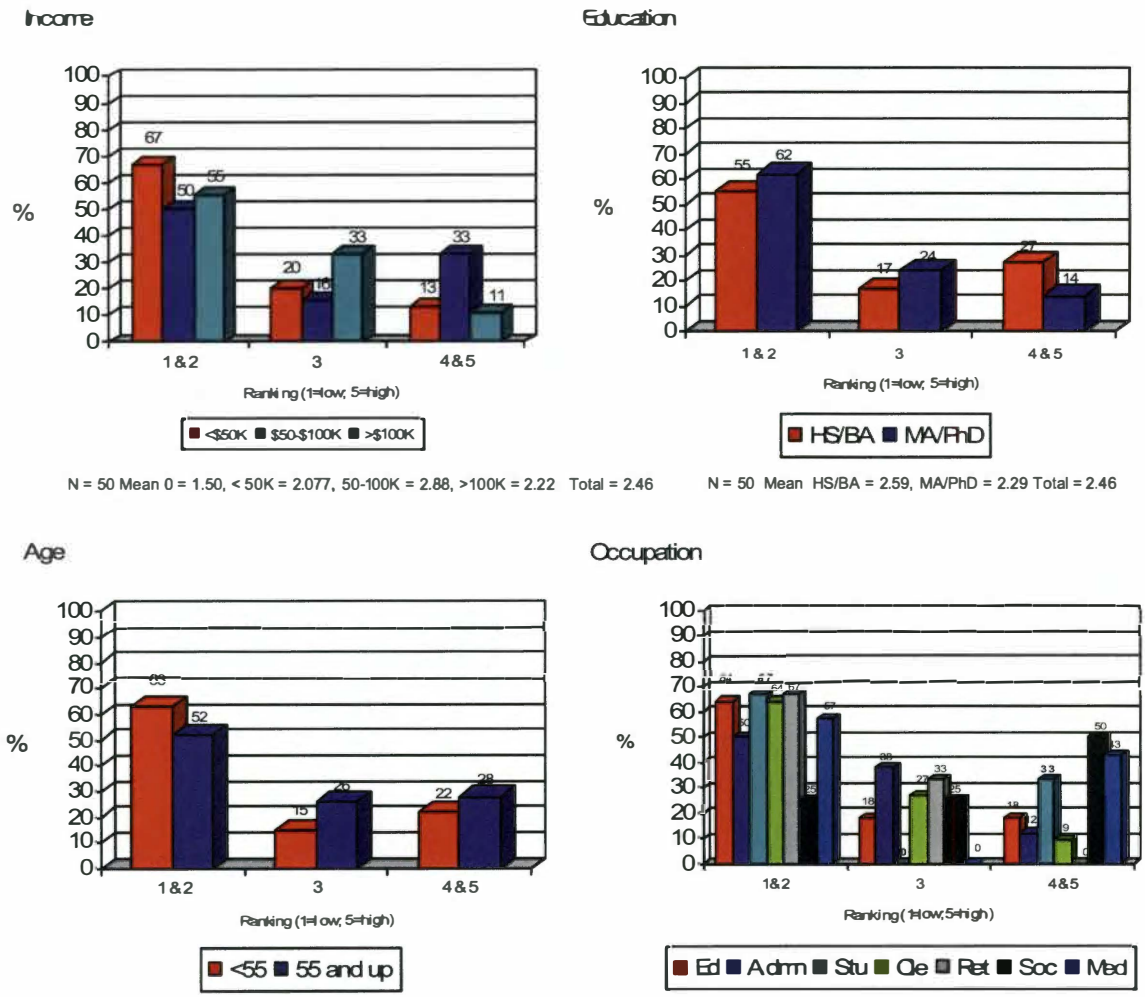


Figure A47. Crosstabulation Question 17G. I am given as much respect professionally as men my same age.

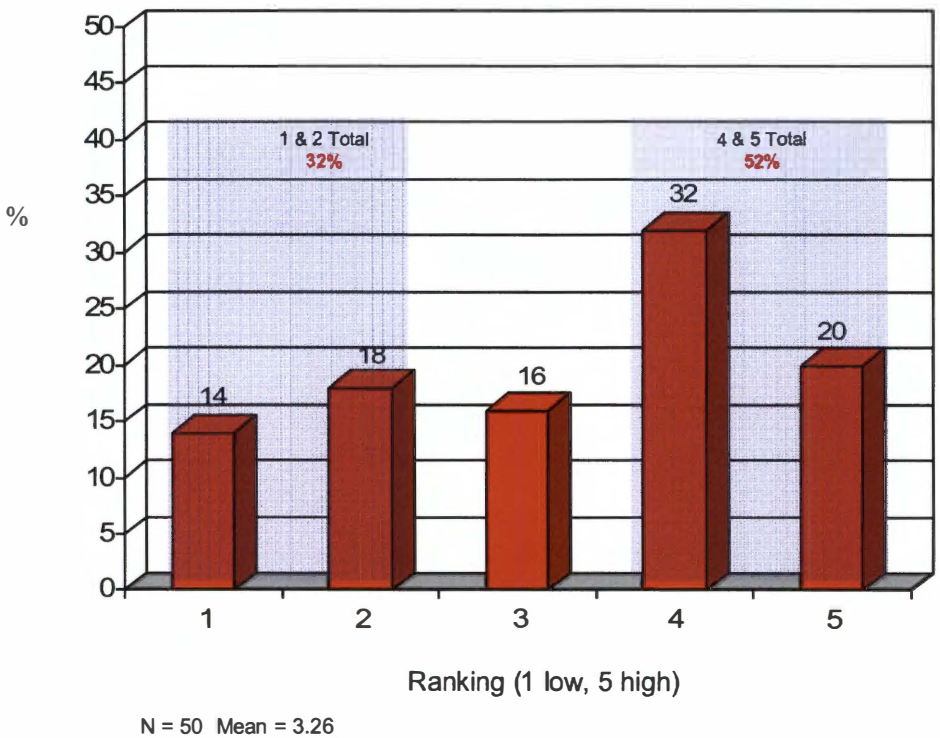


Figure A48. Question 17H. I worry less about my personal appearance.

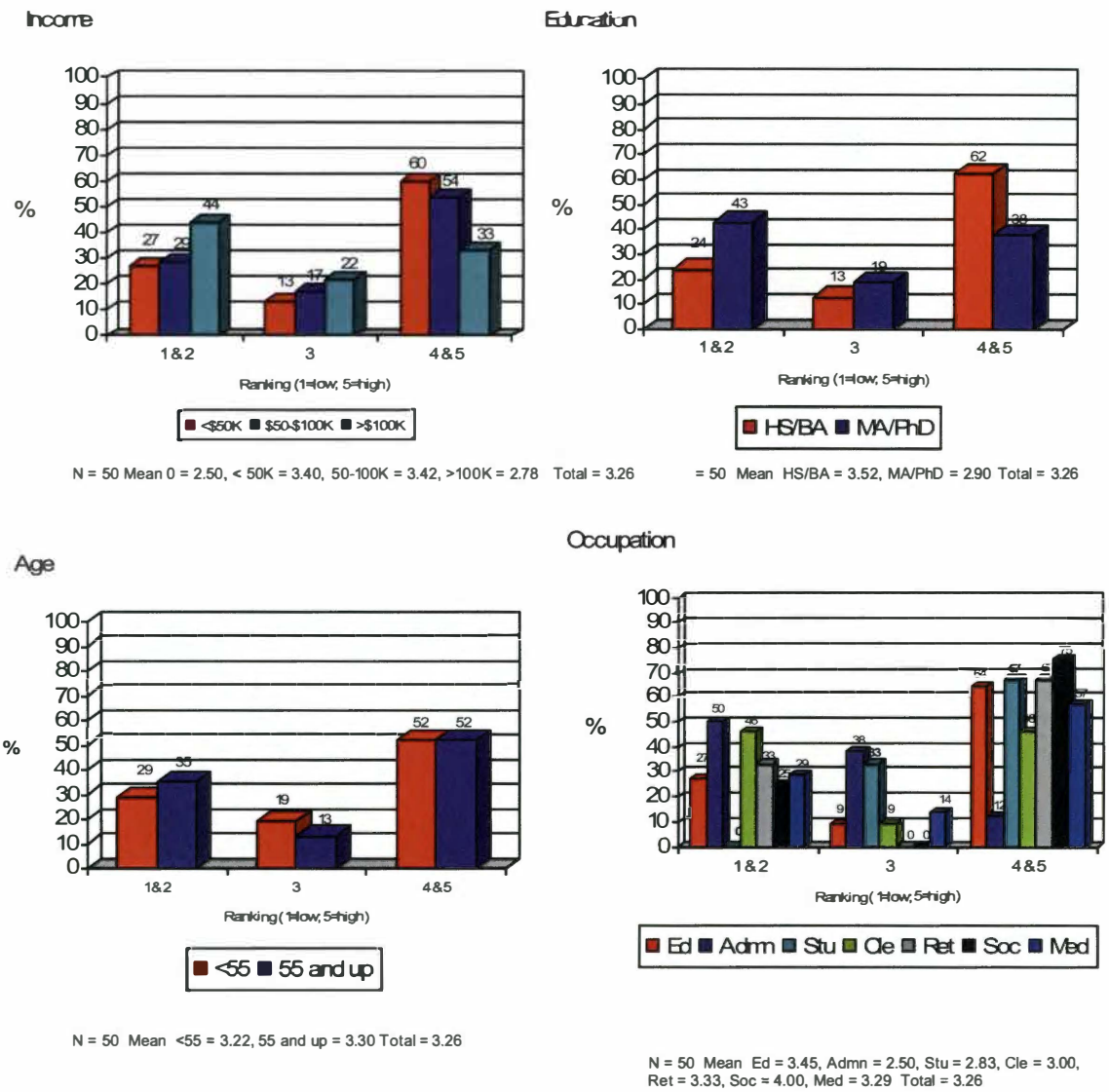


Figure A49. Crosstabulation Question 17H. I worry less about my personal appearance.

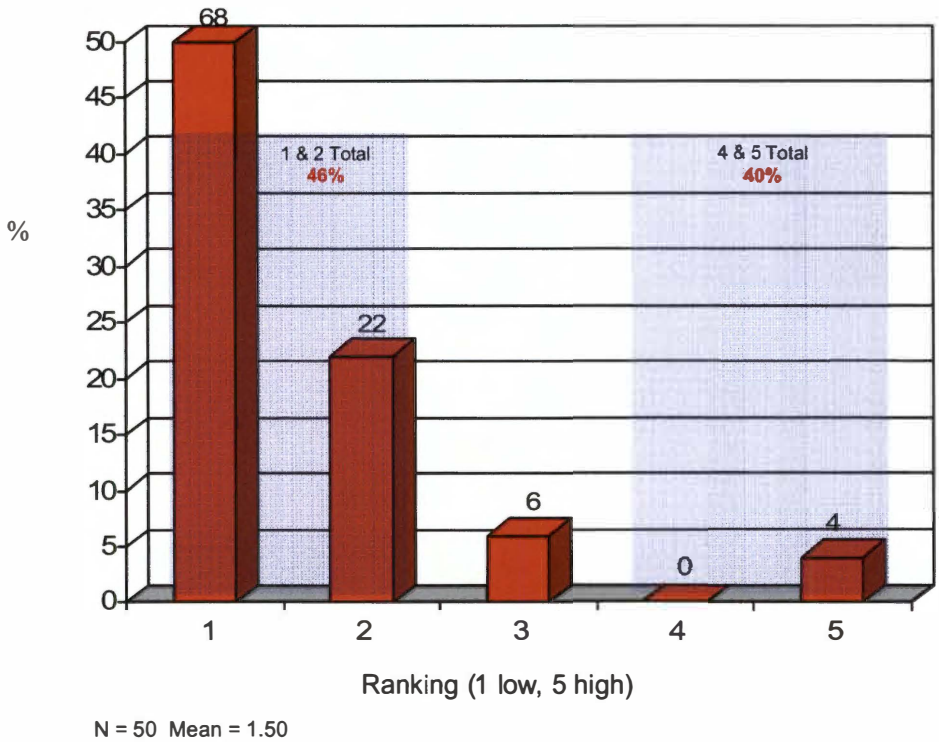
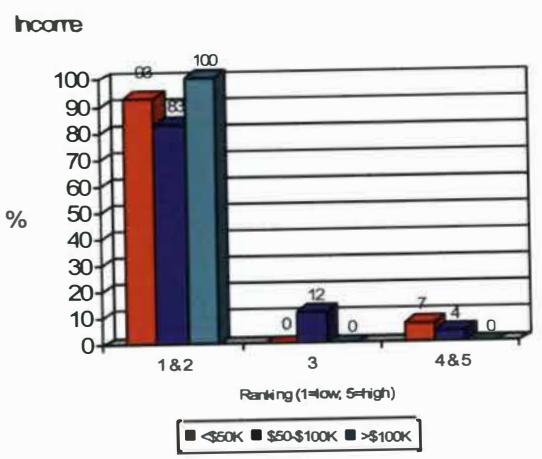
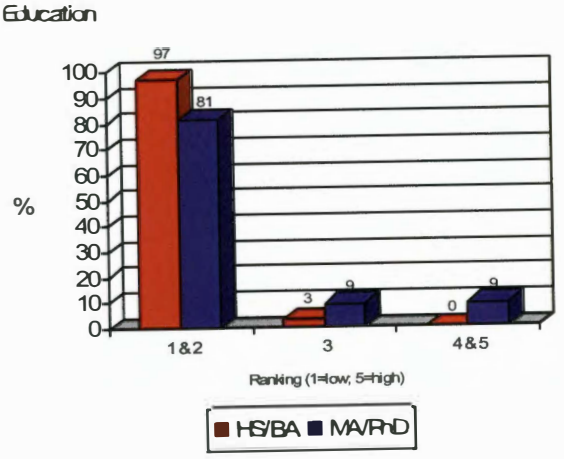


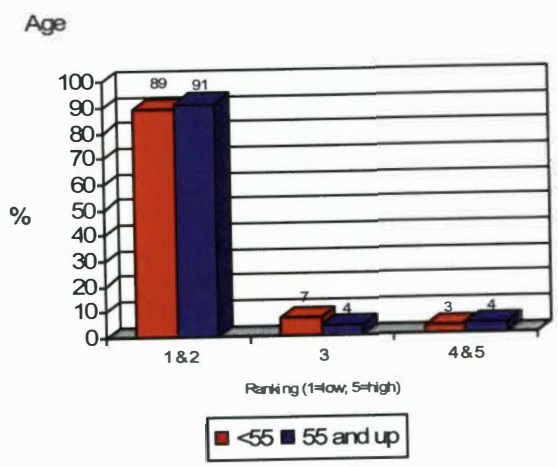
Figure A50. Question 17I. I make more New Year's resolutions.

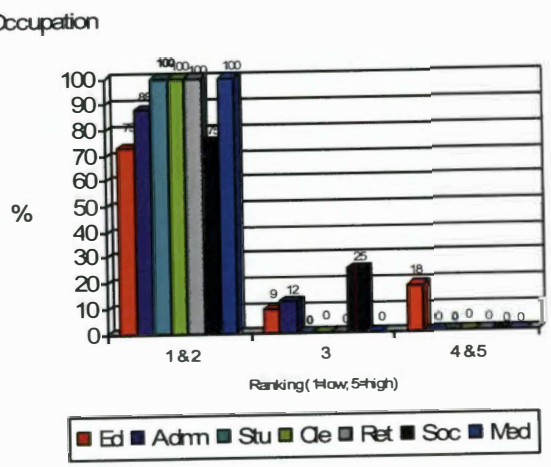




N = 50 Mean 0 = 1.00, < 50K = 1.53, 50-100K = 1.67, >100K = 1.11 Total = 1.50

N = 50 Mean HS/BA = 1.38, MA/PhD = 1.67 Total = 1.50





N = 50 Mean <55 = 1.63, 55 and up = 1.35 Total = 1.50

N = 50 Mean Ed = 2.09, Admn = 1.50, Stu = 1.17, Cle = 1.18, Ret = 1.00, Soc = 1.75, Med = 1.43 Total = 1.50

Figure A51. Crosstabulation Question 17I. I make more New Year's resolutions.

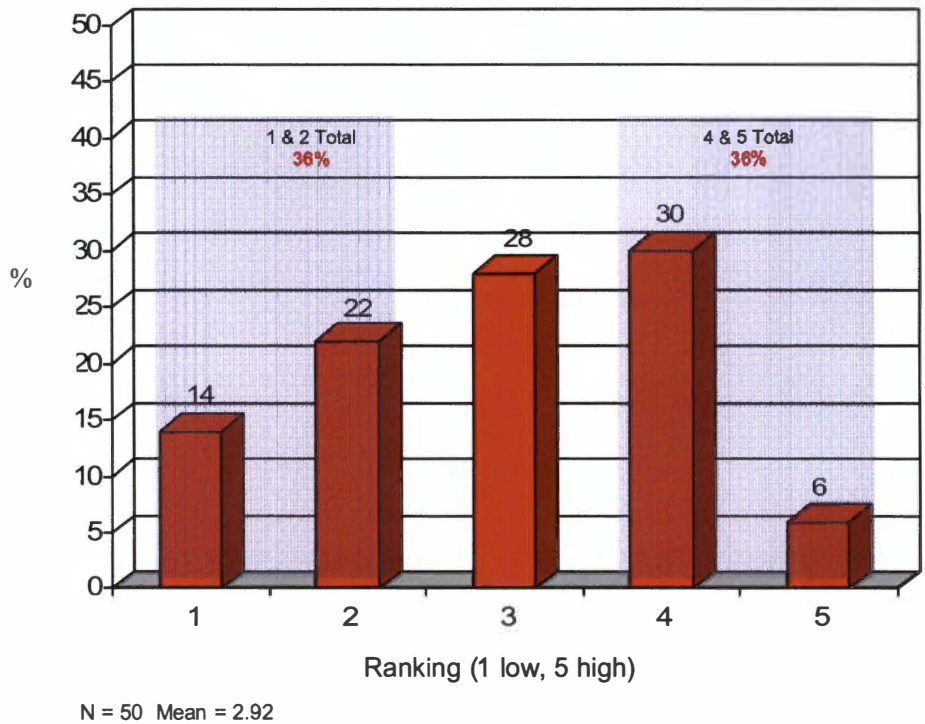


Figure A52. Question 17J. I am more aware of the ages of people around me.

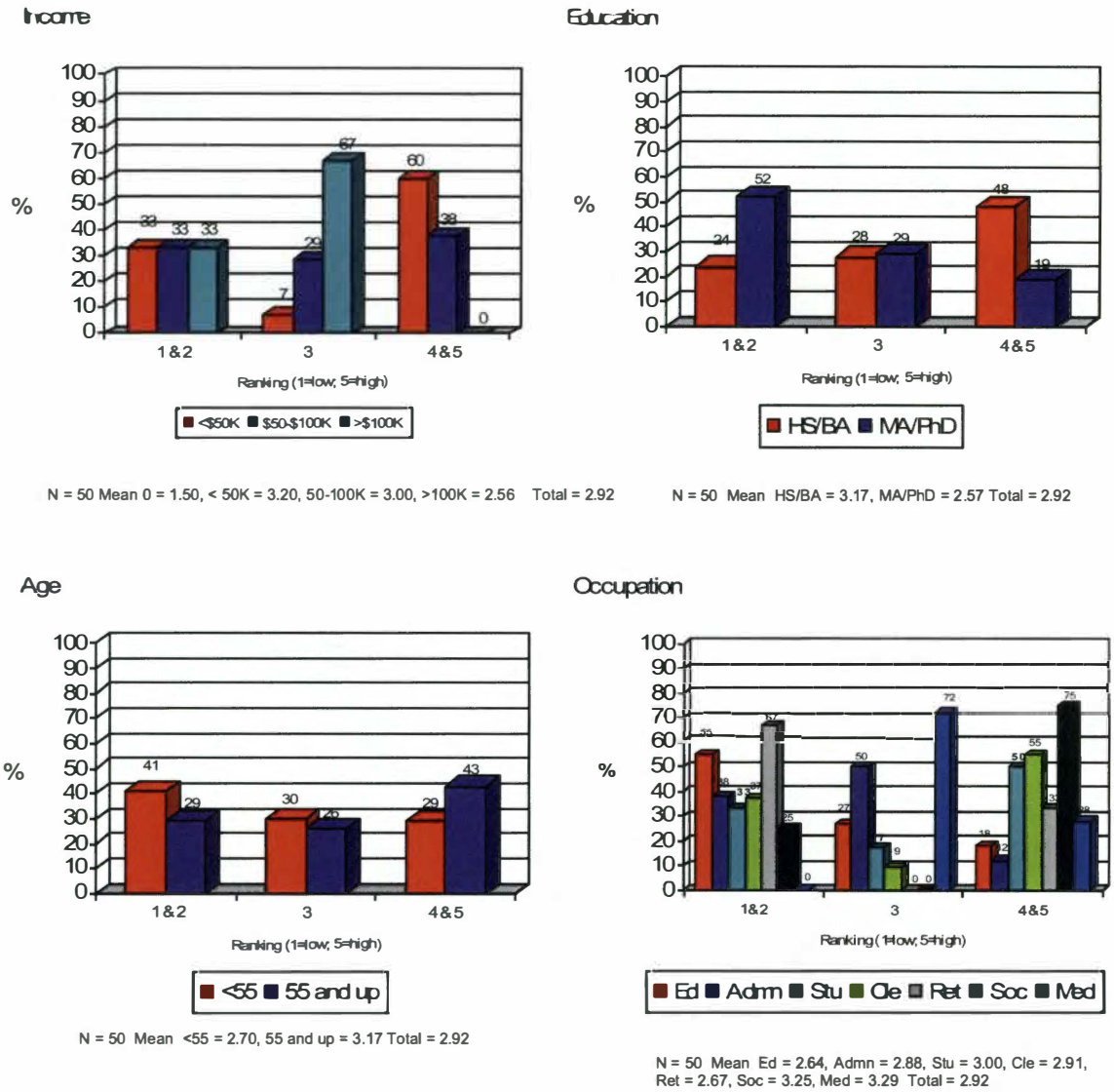


Figure A53. Crosstabulation Question 17J. I am more aware of the ages of people around me.

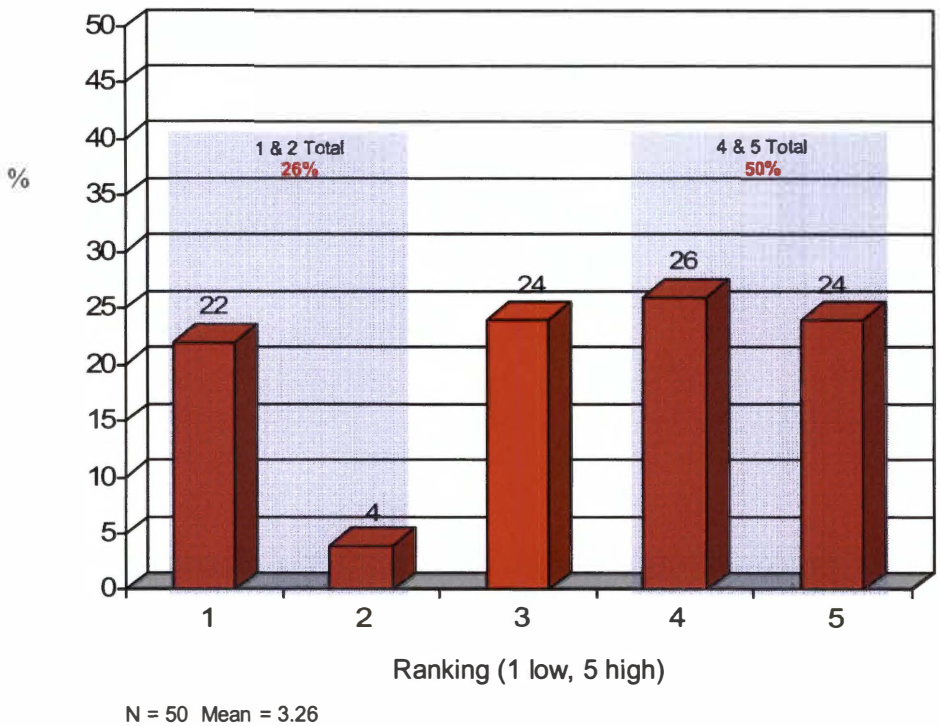


Figure A54. Question 17K. I pay more attention to advertising and articles about aging.

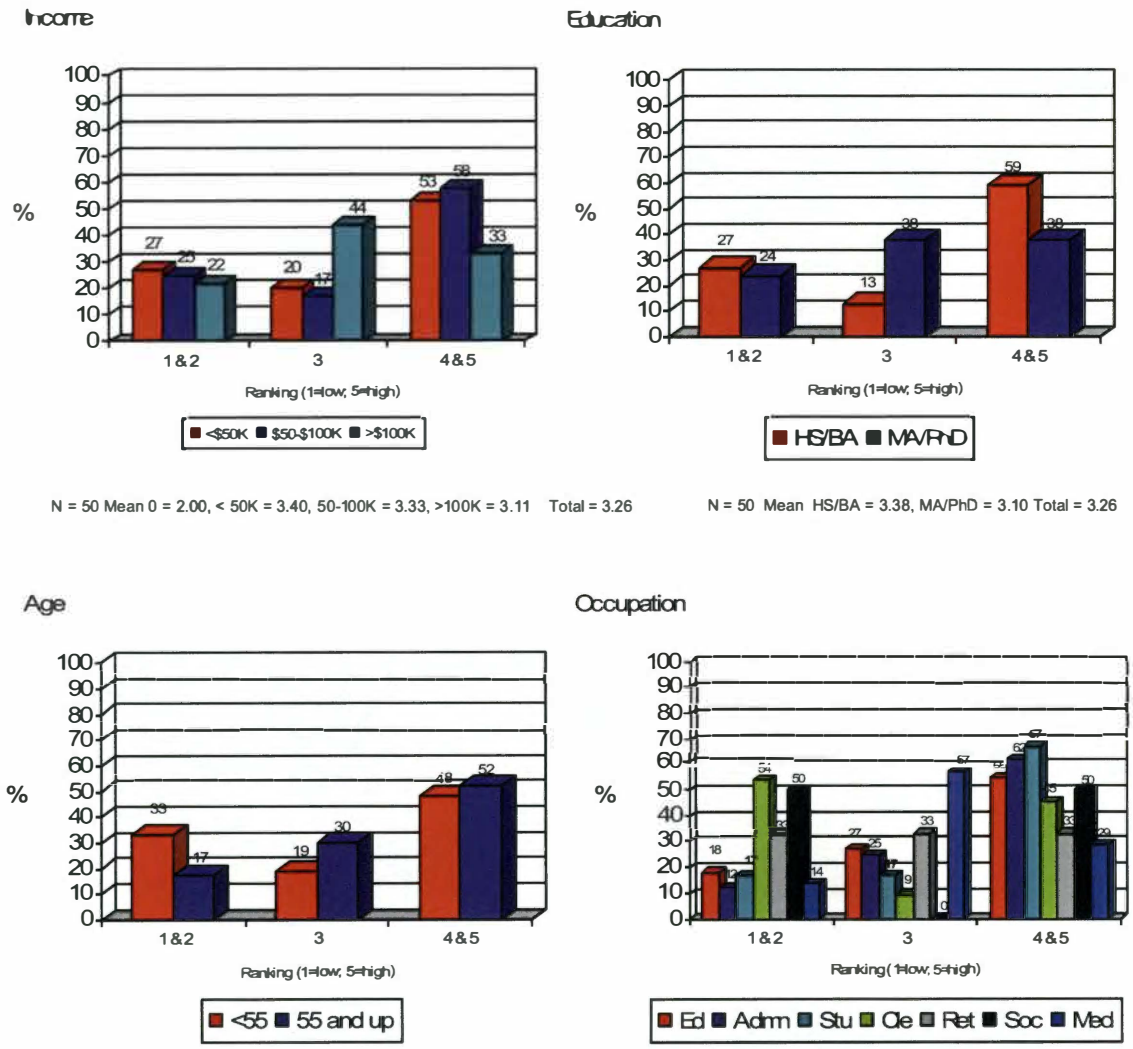


Figure A55. Crosstabulation Question 17K. I pay more attention to advertising and articles about aging.

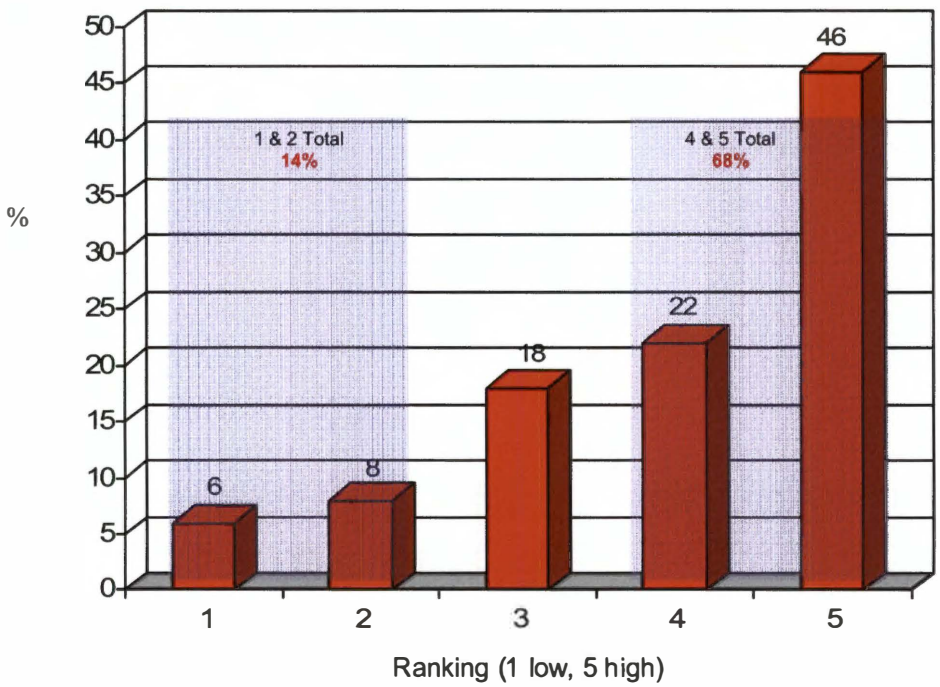
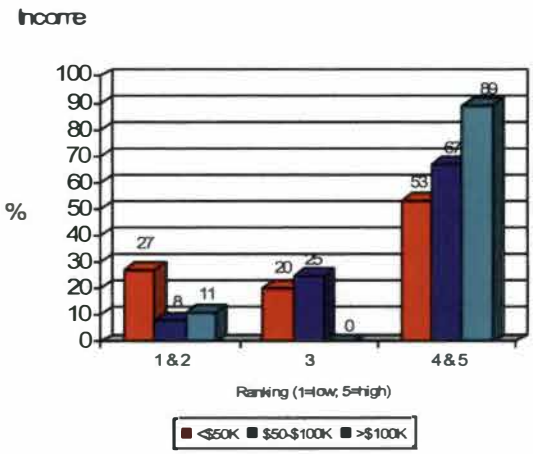
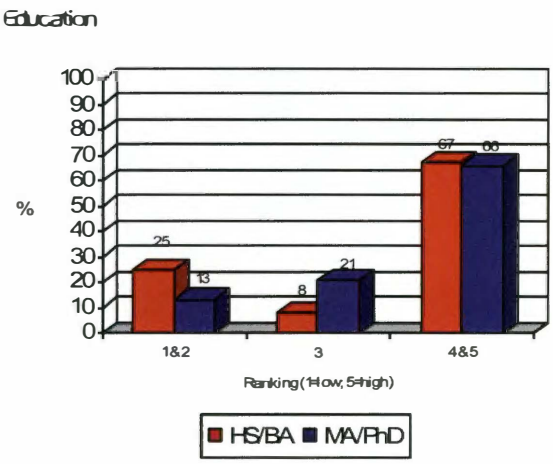


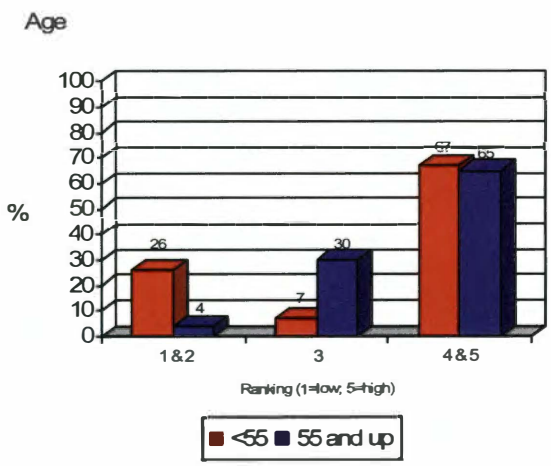
Figure A56. Question 17L. I look forward to retirement.



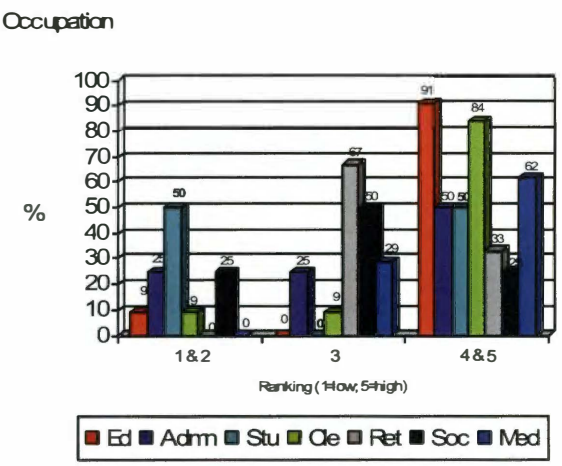
N = 50 Mean 0 = 3.00, < 50K = 3.40, 50-100K = 4.00, >100K = 4.44 Total = 3.86



N = 50 Mean HS/BA = 3.97, MA/PhD = 3.71 Total = 3.86



N = 50 Mean <55 = 3.59, 55 and up = 4.17 Total = 3.86



N = 50 Mean Ed = 4.27, Admn = 3.63, Stu = 3.17, Cle = 4.18, Ret = 3.67, Soc = 3.00, Med = 4.14 Total = 3.86

Figure A57. Crosstabulation Question 17L. I look forward to retirement.

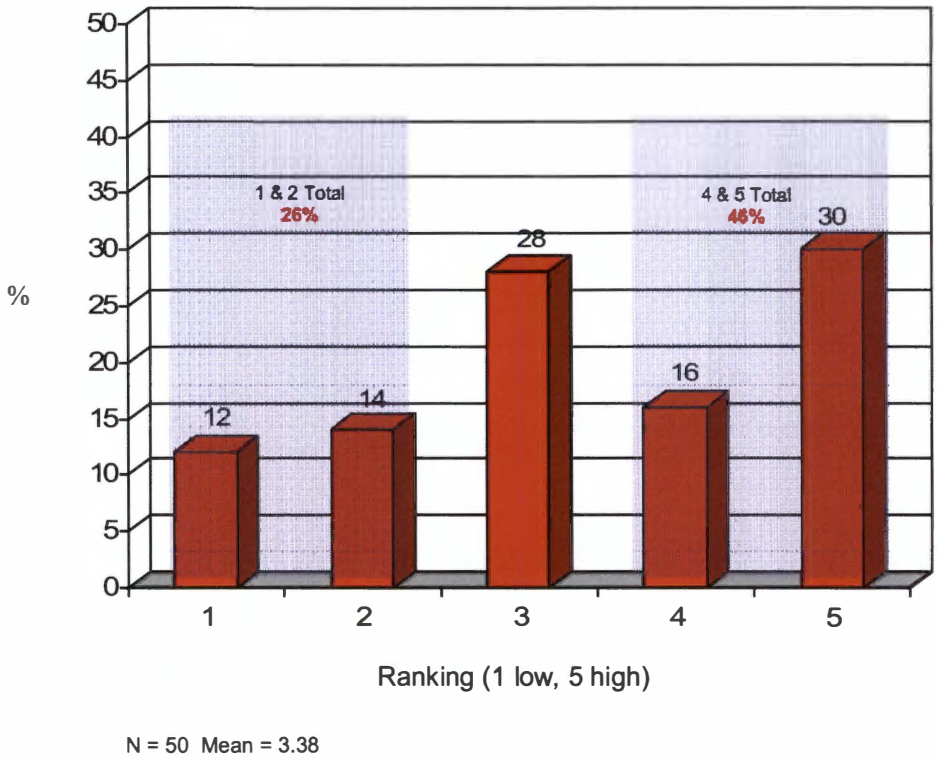


Figure A58. Question 17M. I am happier now than when I was 25.

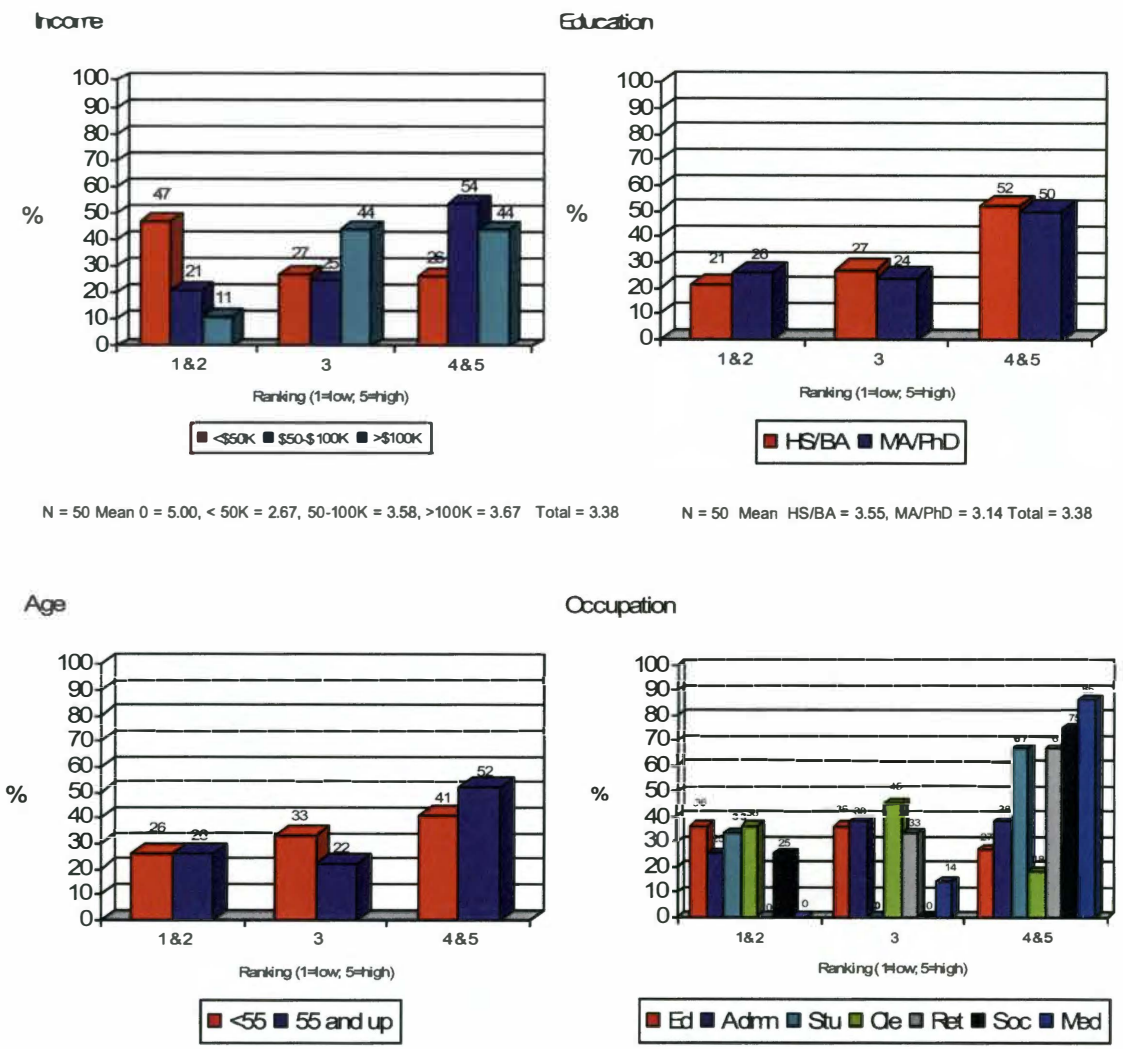


Figure A59. Crosstabulation Question 17M. I am happier now than when I was 25.

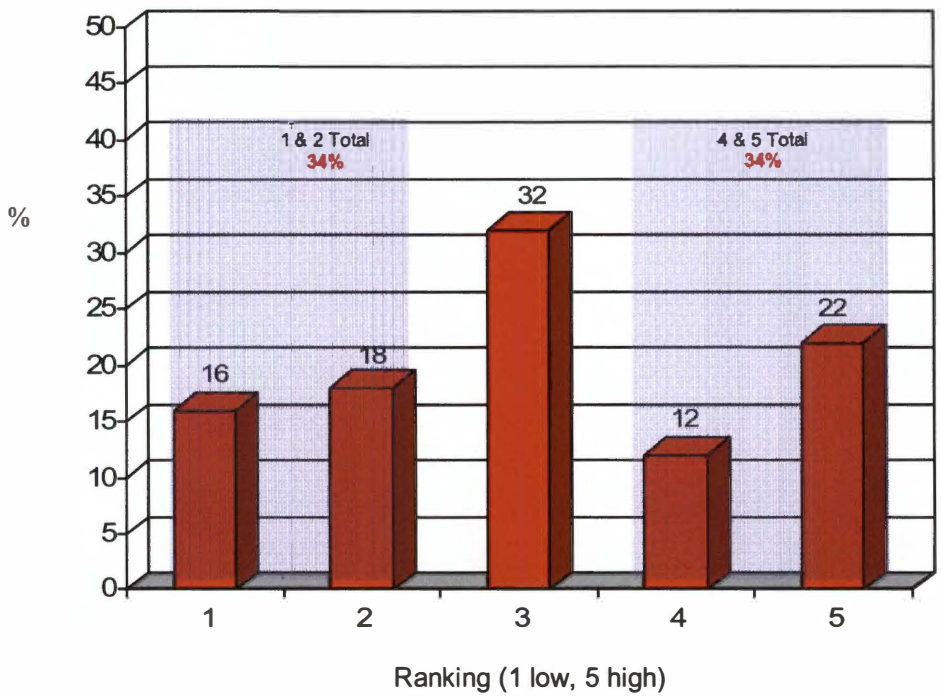


Figure A60. Question 17N. I am happier than my mother when she was my current age.

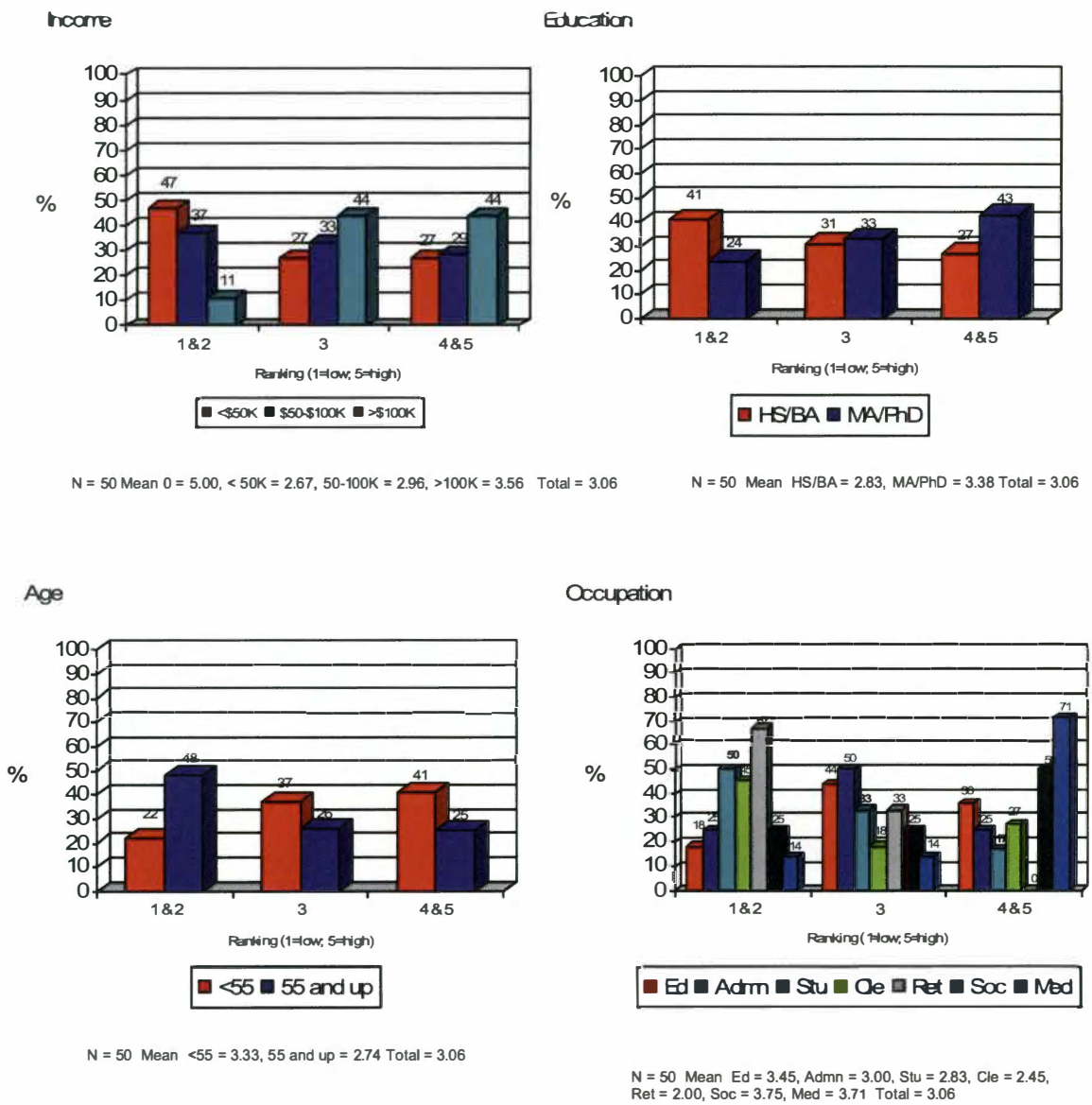


Figure A61. Crosstabulation Question 17N. I am happier than my mother when she was my current age.

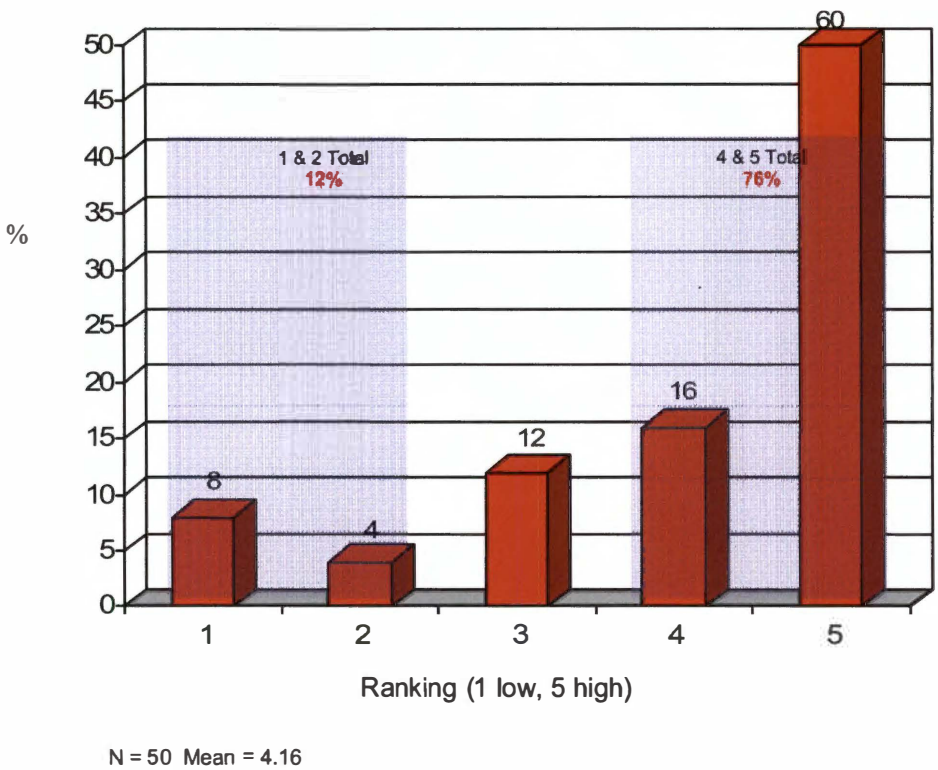


Figure A62. Question 17O. I have more control over my life than when I was 25.

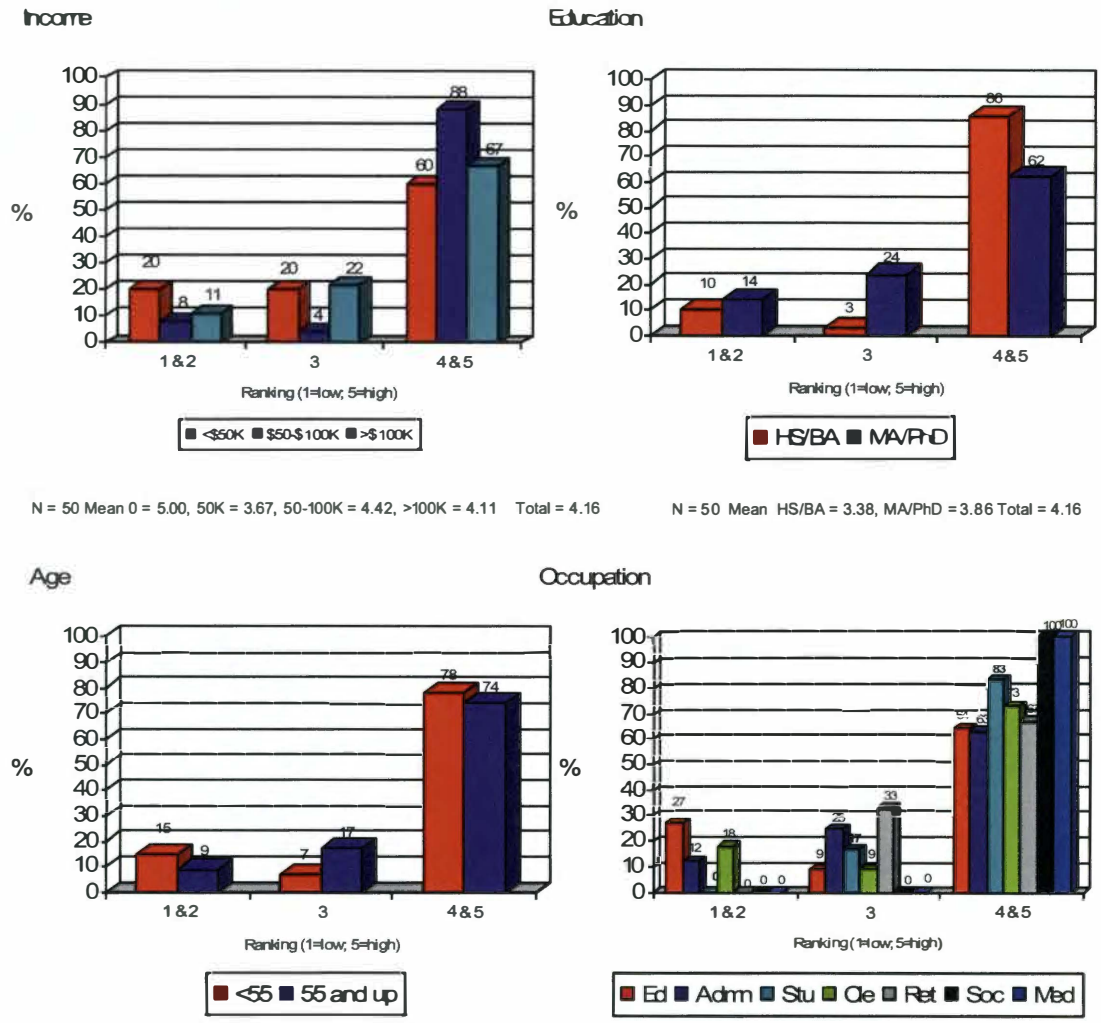


Figure A63. Crosstabulation Question 17O. I have more control over my life than when I was 25.

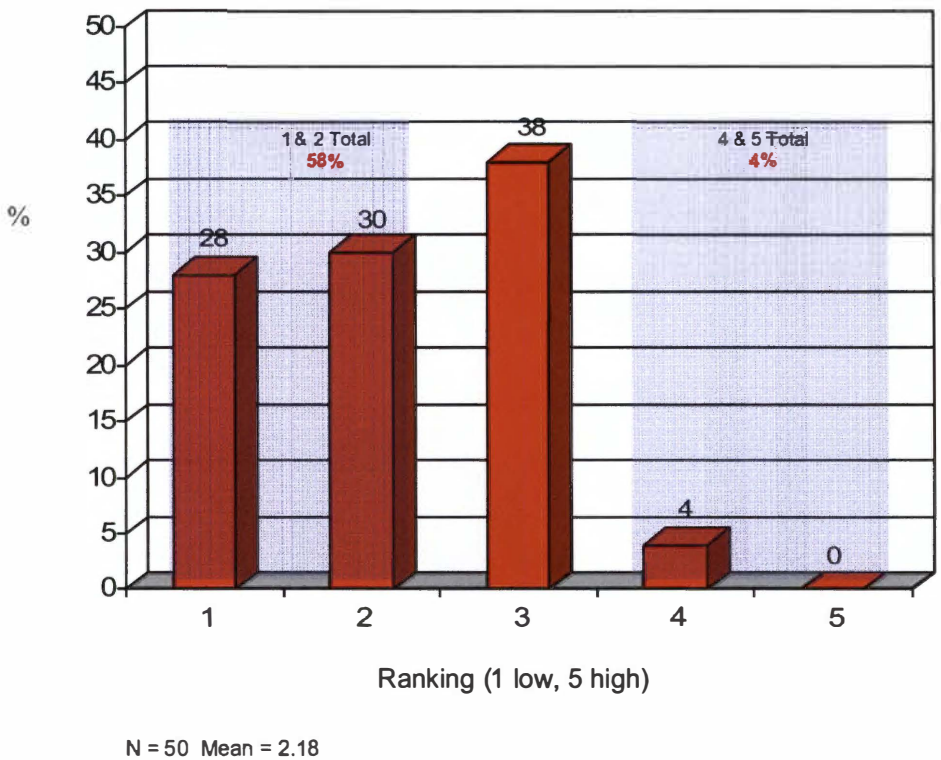
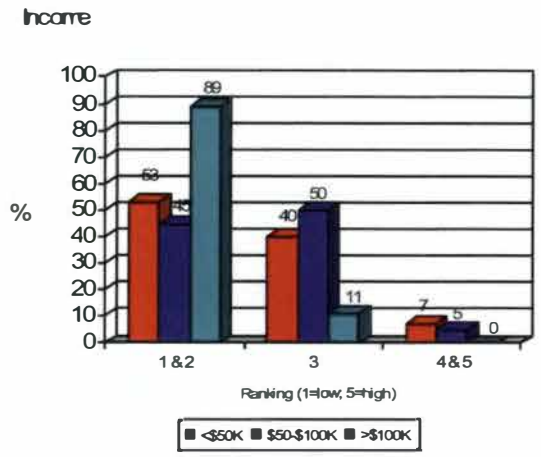
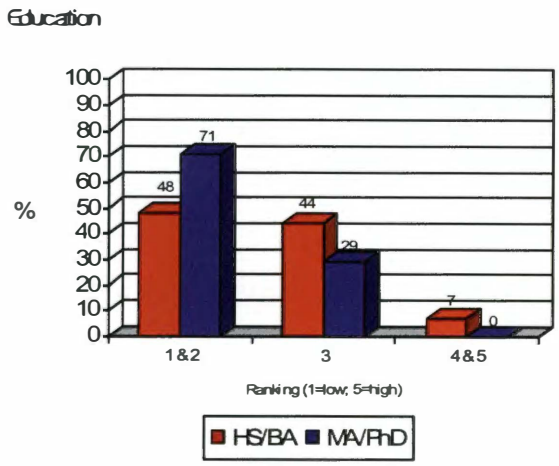


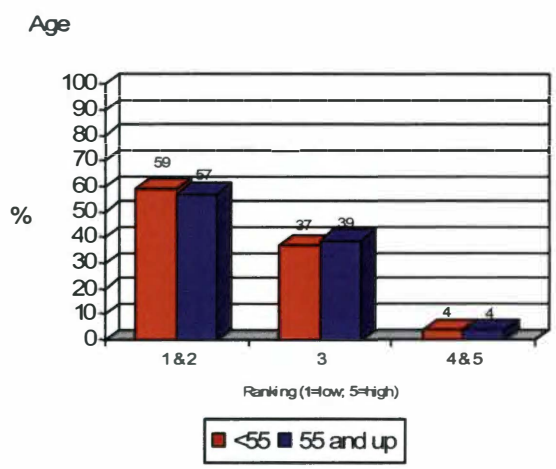
Figure A64. Question 17P. Women over 50 are accurately portrayed in popular media.



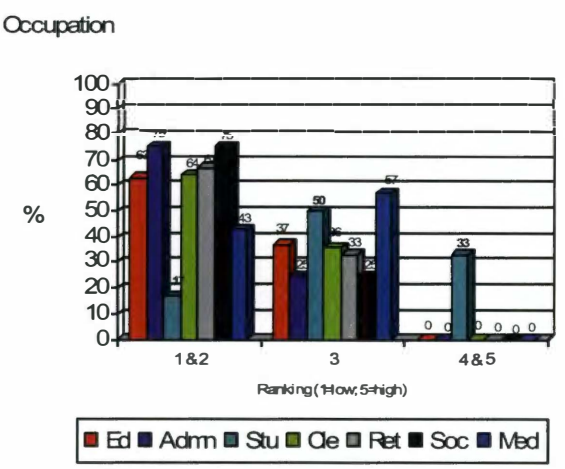
N = 50 Mean 0 = 1.50, 50K = 2.33, 50-100K = 2.38, >100K = 1.56 Total = 2.18



N = 50 Mean HS/BA = 2.38, MA/PhD = 1.90 Total = 2.18



N = 50 Mean <55 = 2.15, 55 and up = 2.22 Total = 2.18



N = 50 Mean Ed = 2.00, Admn = 2.00, Stu = 3.00, Cle = 2.09, Ret = 2.00, Soc = 1.75, Med = 2.43 Total = 2.18

Figure A65. Crosstabulation Question 17P. Women over 50 are accurately portrayed in popular media.

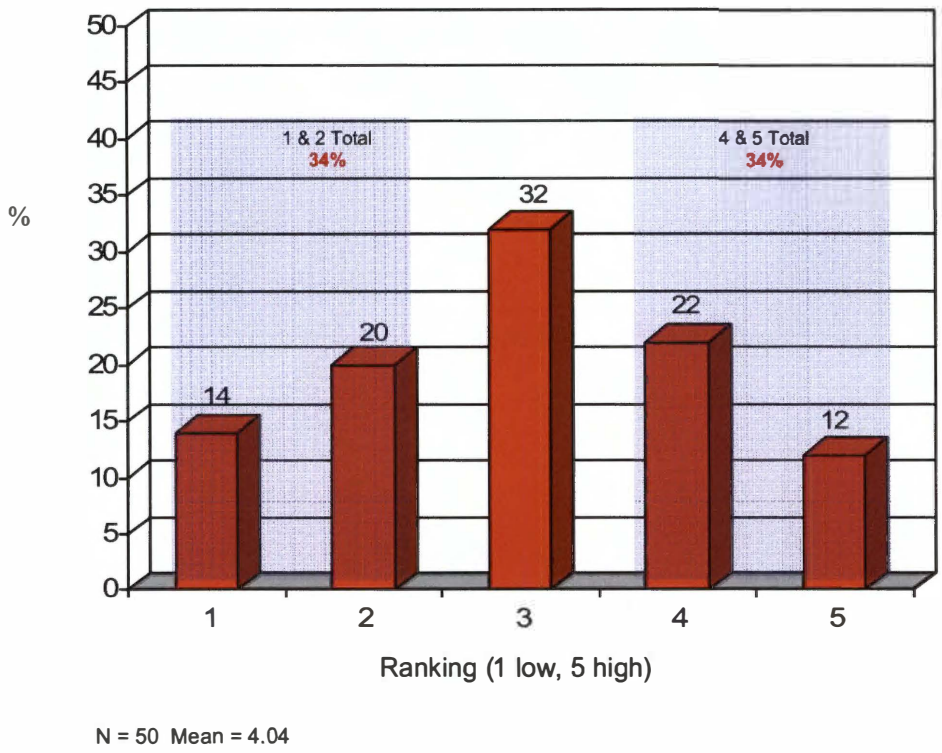


Figure A66. Question 17Q. Women over 50 are positive role models.

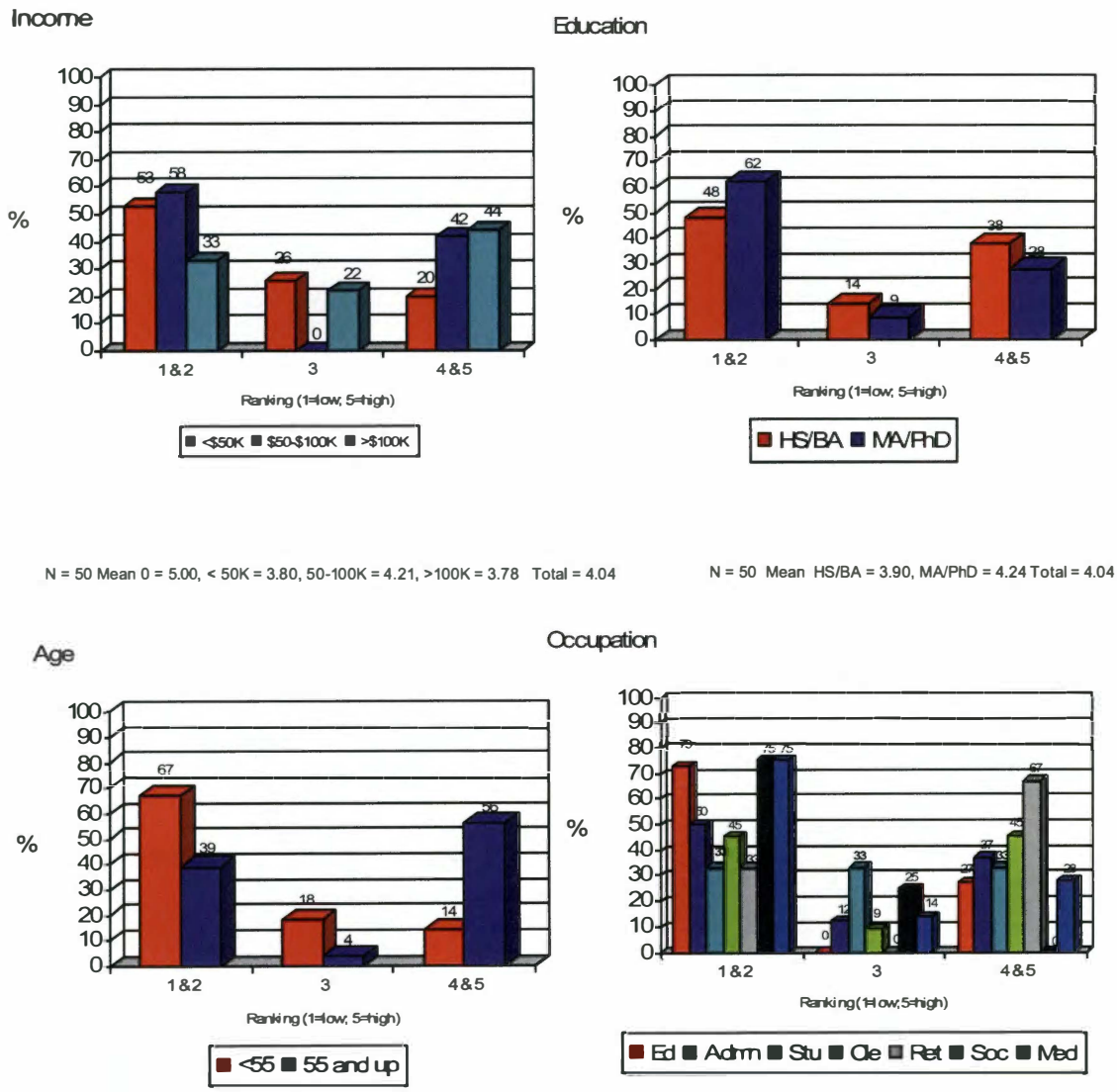


Figure A67. Crosstabulation Question 17Q. Women over 50 are positive role models.

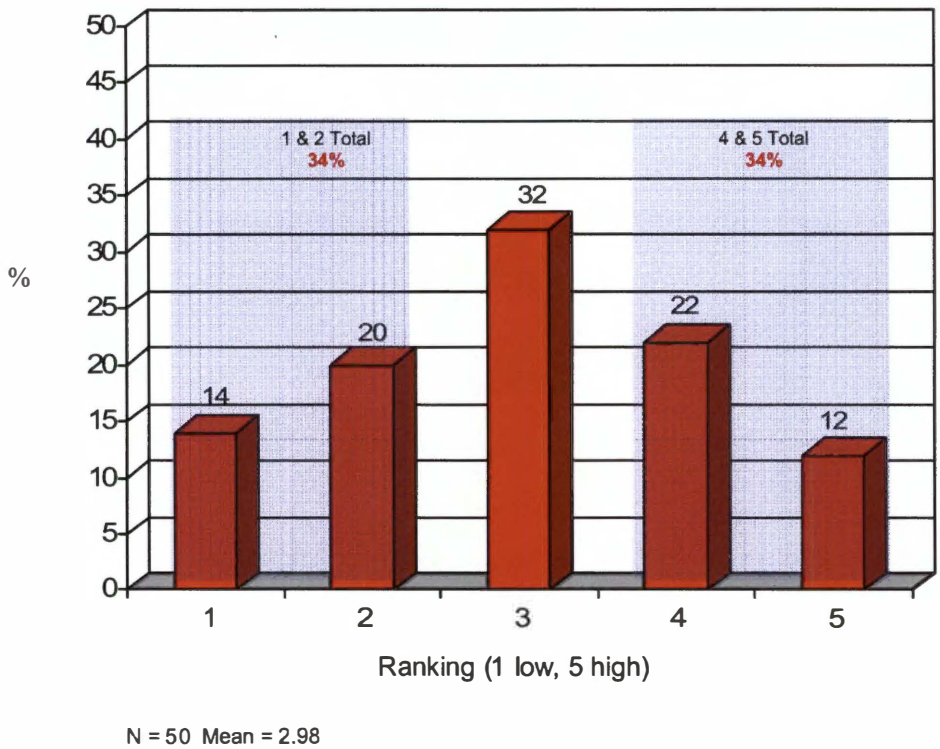
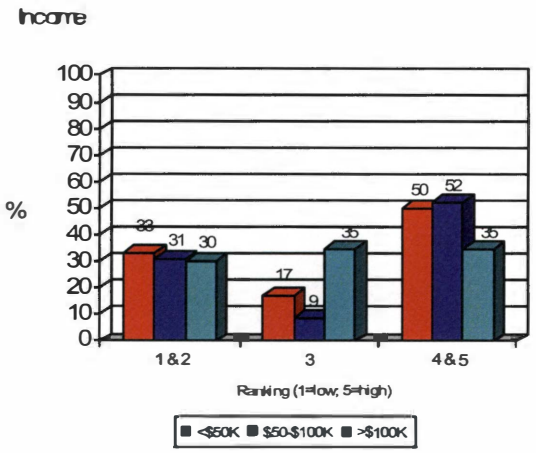
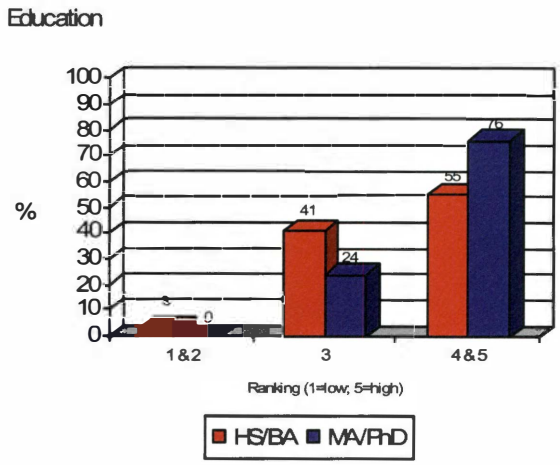


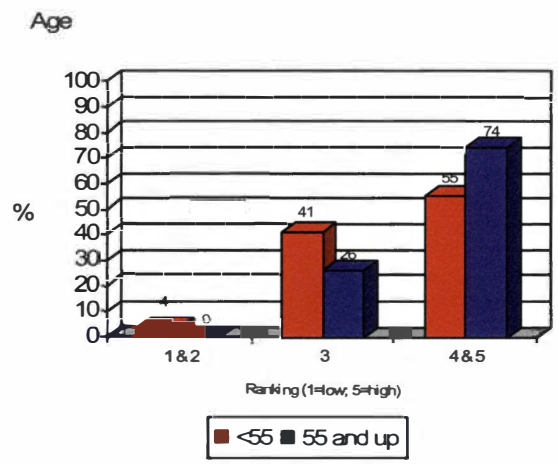
Figure A68. Question 17R. Women over 50 all seem the same in ads and on television.



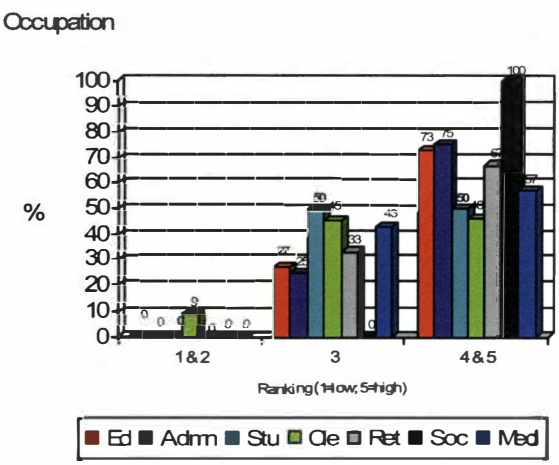
N = 50 Mean 0 = 3.00, < 50K = 3.13, 50-100K = 2.79, >100K = 3.22 Total = 2.98



N = 50 Mean HS/BA = 3.14, MA/PhD = 2.76 Total = 2.98



N = 50 Mean <55 = 2.96, 55 and up = 3.00 Total = 2.98



N = 50 Mean Ed = 3.00, Admn = 3.00, Stu = 3.00, Cle = 3.36, Ret = 3.33, Soc = 3.00, Med = 2.14 Total = 2.98

Figure A69. Crosstabulation Question 17R. Women over 50 all seem the same in ads and on television.

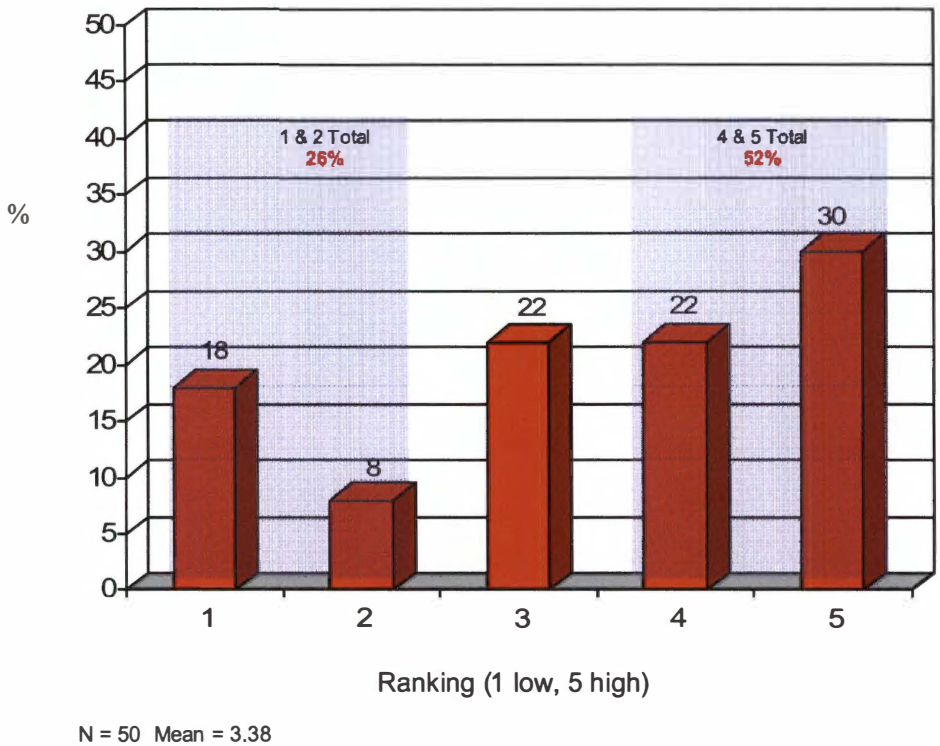
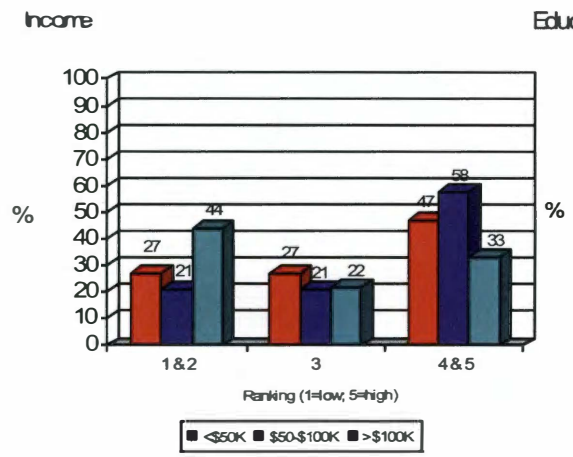
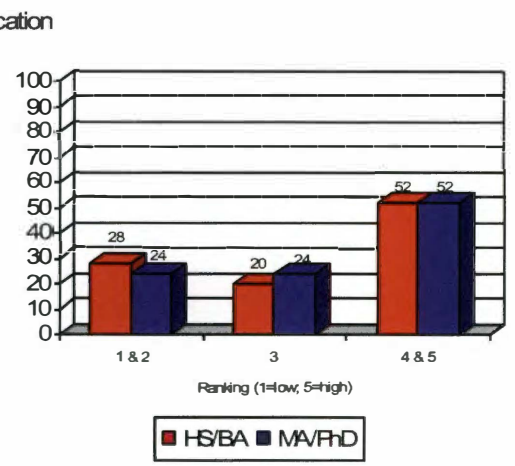


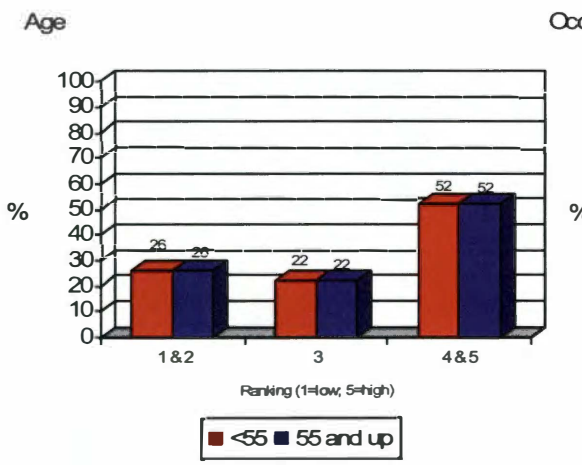
Figure A70. Question 17S. I feel a woman will be elected president in the next 20 years.

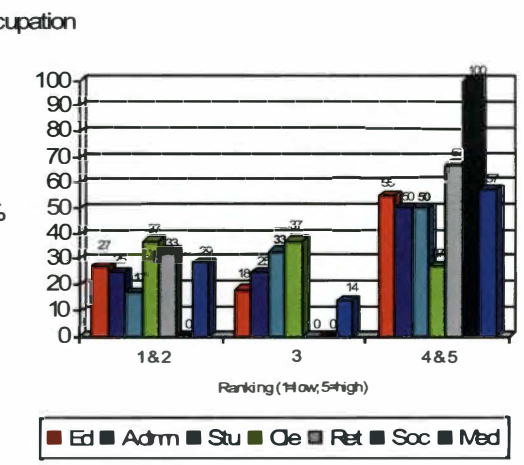




N = 50 Mean 0 = 4.50, < 50K = 3.27, 50-100K = 3.58, >100K = 2.78 Total = 3.38

N = 50 Mean HS/BA = 3.31, MA/PhD = 3.48 Total = 3.38





N = 50 Mean <55 = 3.26,, 55 and up = 3.35 Total = 3.38

N = 50 Mean Ed = 3.55, Admn = 3.38, Stu = 3.33, Cle = 2.82, Ret = 3.67, Soc = 4.50, Med = 3.29 Total = 3.38

Figure A71. Crosstabulation Question 17S. I feel a woman will be elected president in the next 20 years.

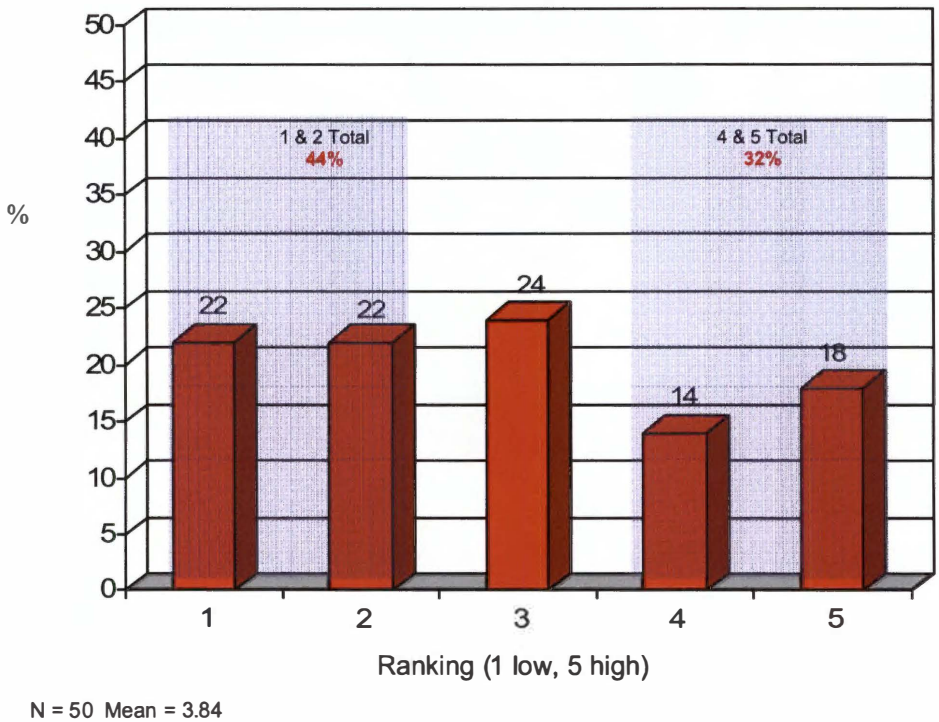


Figure A72. Question 17T. I feel more positive about the future than when I was 25.

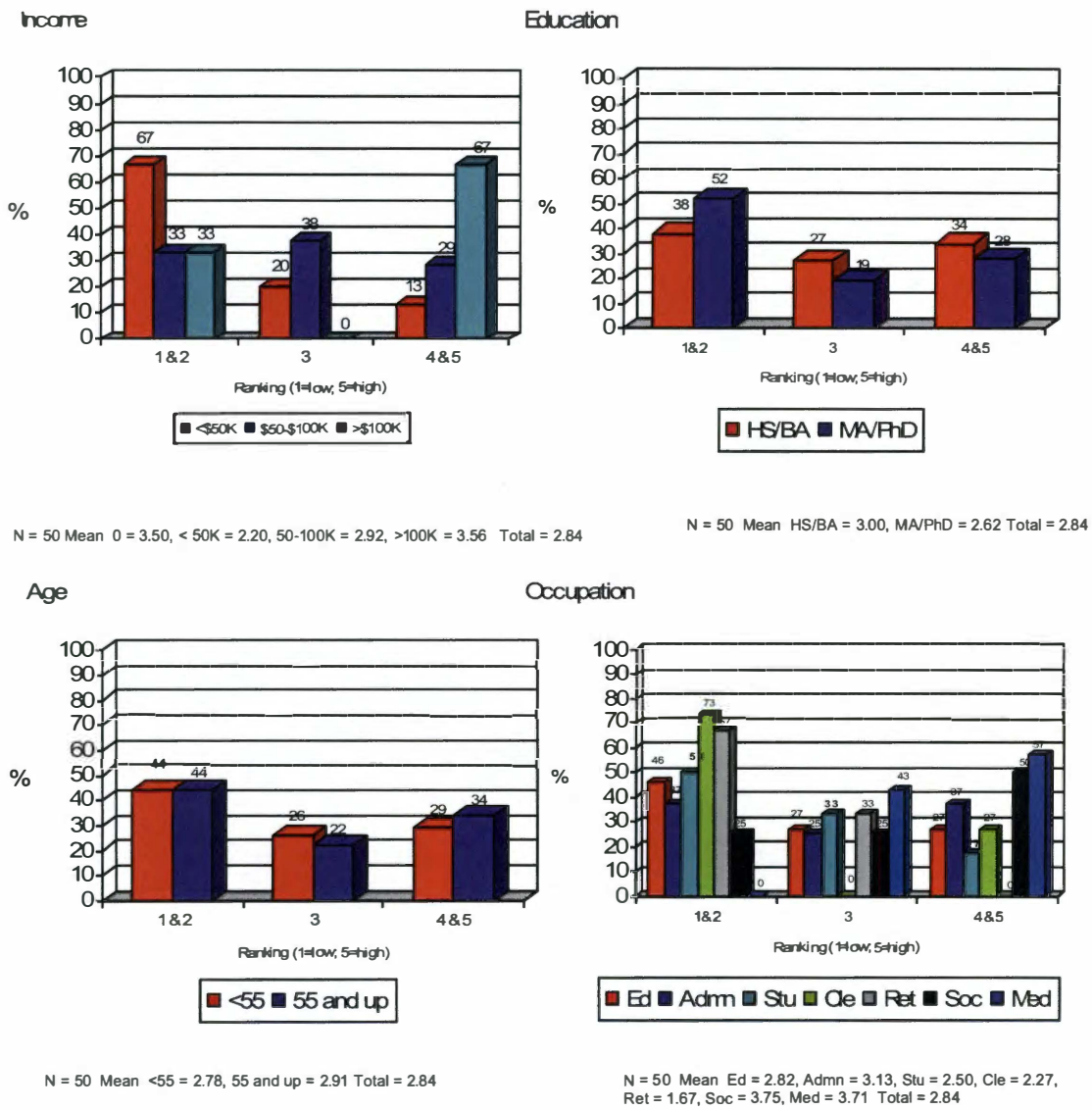
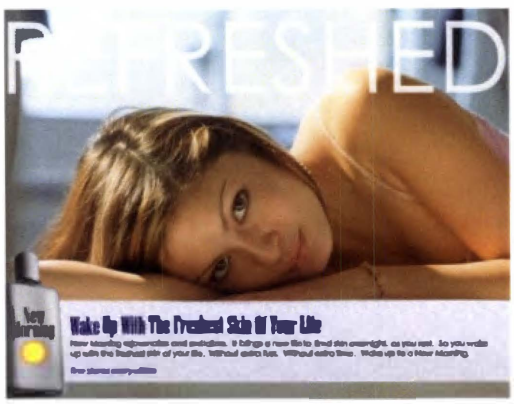


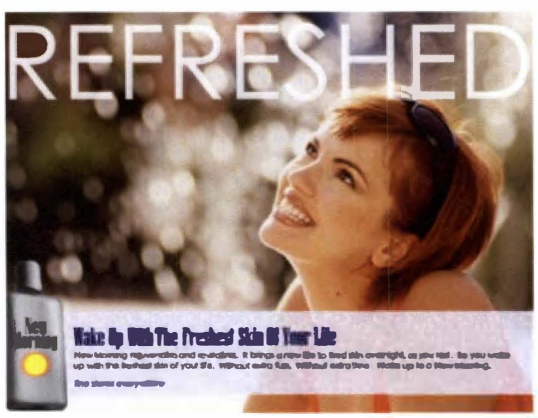
Figure A73. Crosstabulation Question 17T. I feel more positive about the future than when I was 25.



Ad 1



Ad 2



Ad 3

Figure A74. Question 18. As you look at them, tell me which ad has the greatest impact on you—either positive or negative.

Which ad has the greatest impact (indicate number). And why?

Responses to Question 18.
Which ad has the greatest impact (indicate number). And why?

Total Comments:

Positive	**40**
Negative	**32**
Neutral	**9**

Positive Responses: Ad 1 – 18

Ages

50	4
51	1
52	1
53	1
54	2
55	2
57	1
58	2
60	1
61	1
73	1
77	1

Median age 56.6

Income level: Less than $50K – 4; $50K - $100K – 9; More than $100K – 4

Positive Responses: Ad2 – 2

Ages:

53	1
55	1

Median age – 54

Income level: Less than $50K – 0; $50K - $100K – 2; More than $100K – 0

Positive Responses: Ad 3 – 20

50	2
51	4
52	1
53	1
55	3
56	2
57	1
58	3
59	1
62	1
77	1

Median age: 55.8

Income level: Less than $50K – 8; $50K - $100K – 10; More than $100K – 2

Negative responses:

Ad 1– 10

50	1
51	3
52	1
56	1
57	1
58	3

Median age – 54.7

Income Level: Less than $50K – 2; $50K - $100K – 4; More than $100K

Negative Responses: Ad 2 – 18

50	3
51	3
52	1
53	2
54	2
56	1
57	2
58	2
61	1
77	1

Median age – 55.2

Income level: Less than $50 – 5; $50K - $100K – 10; More than $100K – 4

Negative Responses Ad 3 – 4

52	1
54	1
56	1
57	1

Median age – 54.8

Income level: Less than $50K – 0; $50K - $100K – 1; More than $100K – 3

Positive Comments:

Participant can relate to model	9
Age appropriate model	5
Fits product	4
Realistic	4
Appealing to older readers	2
Positive image of aging	2
Attractive model	1

Negative Comments:

Does not fit product	3
Model too old looking	3
Too wrinkled	2
Staged	1
Model not healthy looking	1
Product not producing positive effect	1
Does not believe in make-up ads	1

Neutral:

Likes ad but not convinced to buy product	1
Ad has not impact	1

Themes: Ad 2

Positive:

Youthful	1
Likes setting	1
Beautiful skin	1

Negative:

Model too young	7
Does not fit product	4
Too sexy	4
Does not like setting	1
Not appealing	1
Does not believe in make-up ads	1
No positive effect	1
Staged	1

Neutral:

Likes ad but not convinced to buy product	1
Ad had no impact	1

Themes: Ad 3

Positive:

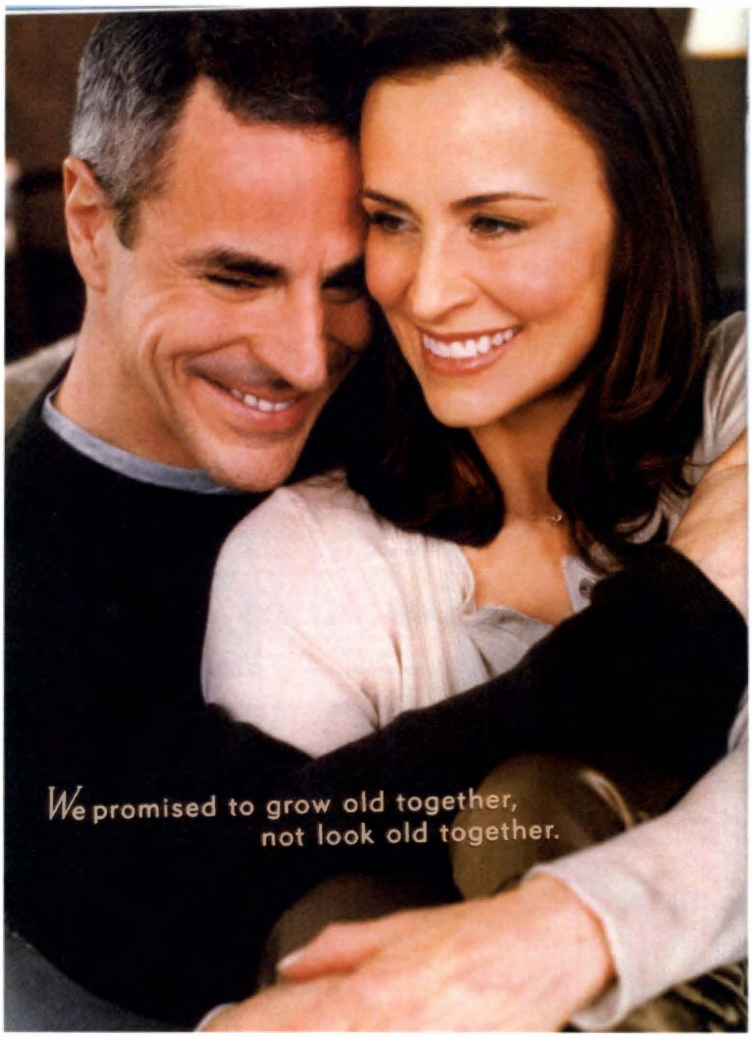
Age appropriate model	12
Ad fits product	6
Likes setting	5
Model looks happy	4
Appealing	2
Participant can relate to model	2
Model looks real	1
Model looks dynamic	1
Model is healthy looking	1
Model is youthful looking	1
Model has no wrinkles	1
Model has moist skin	1
Not too sexy	1

Negative:

Model too young	2
Product does not show positive effect	1
Does not believe make-up ads	1

Neutral:

Generic	1
Likes ad but not convinced to buy product	1
Ad had no impact	1



Take a look at the ad image.
Headline: "We promised to grow old together, not look old together"

Figure A75. Question 18A.
Do you think men and women should both consider anti-aging products in the same way?

Question 18A Responses. Do you think men and women should both consider anti-aging products in the same way?

Yes	20
No	24
Not sure/no opinion	6

They (men) should but they do not or would not	5
Different social perceptions and standards for men and women	3
Men and women age differently or men age more attractively than women	2
Should be consensus in a partnership	1
Should accept aging equally	1
Anti-aging product are not effective	1

Of the 24 participants who provided a negative answer to the question, 10 did not give a reason. Others suggested the following:

Men and women age differently or men age more attractively than women	6
Consideration of anti-aging products is a personal decision	5
Different social perceptions and standards for men and women	4
Men are not as sensitive to aging as women	2
Aging is almost like a disease for women	1
Women are more concerned with the appearance of aging	1



Model A



Model B

Figure A76. Question 18B. These two models are featured in ads for beauty products. Would you consider buying personal beauty products advertised by these women? Why or why not?

Question 18B Responses. These two models are featured in ads for beauty products. Would you consider buying personal beauty products advertised by these women? Why or why not?

Positive comments:

Model A

Different cultural concept of beauty	1
Would consider buying if it was an ad for skin protection	1
Wonderful smile	1
Earthy	1
Looks happy	1

Model B

Looks healthy	8
Has taken care of skin	4
Younger looking	2
Looks happy	2
Looks like product is working	2
Classy/Elegant	2
Contemporary looking	1
Positive image of aging	1
Age appropriate	1
Looks natural	1
Participant would like to look like	1
Good representative of our culture	1
Likes setting	1
Can relate to model	1
Looks like she is in control of her appearance	1
Confident	1
Interesting	1

Models A&B

Real looking	2
Beautiful	2
Something to offer	1

Negative comments:

Model A

Sun damaged/ wrinkled/aging skin	8
Looks ill	4
Product not working	3
Could not control appearance	1

Model B

Smug	1

Models A&B

Not real looking	3
Wrinkled skin	2
Too old	1
Off putting	1
Does not sell product	1

Neutral comments for Models A&B

Depends on product	4
Dies not use this type of product	2
Does not believe make-up ads	1

Table A8. Question 19. What do you envision yourself doing five years from now?

Travel	13
Same thing	11
Retirement	9
Begin a second career	5
Write	5
More time with grandchildren	5
Teach	4
Finish degree	4
Close to retirement	4
Working part time	4
Reading	4
More time with family	3
Move	3
More time with husband	2
Too far to envision/try not to envision	2
Continuing education	2
Volunteer work	2
Mission work	2
Get children through college	2
Get grandchildren	2
Art	2
Research	1
Still paying bills	1
Still working to pay off daughter's college loans	1
Learning	1
More active in church	1
Work with husband	1
See son get married	1
More time with friends	1
Making new friends	1
Home schooling daughter	1
Getting married	1
New puppy	1
Build house	1
Garden	1
Riding horses	1
Tennis	1
Hobbies	1
Camping	1
Staying healthy	1
Fighting aging	1
Exercising	1
Losing weight	1
Spirituality	1
Practice compassion	1
Useful happy life	1
Life more simple	1
Enjoying life	1

Table A9. Question 20. In your opinion, what are the advantages that come with growing older?

Wisdom	18
Freedom	13
Time	9
Acceptance	9
Experience	8
Financial security	7
Self confidence	6
Less concern with the opinions of others'	5
Perspective	3
Courage	3
None/not too many	3
Invisibility (good and bad side to this)	3
Patience	3
Grandchildren	3
Clarity	2
Tolerance	2
Love	2
Stable/content marriage	2
Less responsibility	1
No more menstruation	1
Stability	1
More control	1
Can give back to the community	1
Mentor	1
Judgment	1
Assertive	1
Self awareness	1
Less extreme reaction to hardships	1
Don't sweat small stuff	1
Can laugh at self and others	1
Power	1
Ambition	1
Increasing skills and abilities	1
Independence	1
More opportunities	1
Deeper relationships	1
Easier to make friends	1
More compassion – 1	1
Less distraction	1
Less driven	1
Less tedium	1
General change in attitude	1

Table A10. Question 21. What are the disadvantages?

Physical limitations	28
Health issues	25
Living in an ageist society	6
Invisibility	4
Sense of there being less time (closer to the end of their lives)	4
Changes in appearance	3
Weight problems	2
Financial concerns	2
Concern about losing parents	2
Coping with the loss of parents	2
Coping with the loss of spouse	2
Worry about Alzheimer's	1
Worry about memory loss	1
Eyesight	1
Cost of health care	1
Fewer job opportunities	1
Overworked	1
Harder to stay caught up with technology	1
Concerned about losing spouse	1
Concerned about losing loved ones	1
Coping with empty nest	1
Being perceived as non-sexual	1
Loneliness	1
Static relationships	1
Lack of excitement in love life	1
Fewer social outlets	1

Table A11. Question 22. In what ways have women's positions in society changed since you were 25?

More career opportunities	21
More positions of power (incl. leadership positions, government, etc.)	10
More professional respect	7
Not as many as there should/could have been. Women are still at a disadvantage	7
Freedom	7
Independence	6
Less regard for marriage and home life (including more divorces and single mothers)	4
More professional women employed outside the home	3
Better pay	2
Men are more aware of sexual harassment boundaries and more women are aware that they do not have to take harassment	2
More responsibility	2
Do not necessarily have to marry or have children to be considered successful	2
More vocal	1
Does not have to choose between career and children	1
The Women's Liberation Movement was just getting started and we thought we could change world	1
The younger generation does not realize how easily the advantages could slip away. The playing field will not be equal until all male parents take equal responsibility as female parents.	1
No change for the poor or disenfranchised	1
Even with advanced opportunities women are still expected to be sexually appealing – at the risk of exploitation	1
Had hoped for a generation of revered older women but most do not seem to want to be older or wiser	1
Women are still second class citizens but it does not seem to bother women as much as it did when I was 25	1
More working mothers	1
K-12 teachers have diminished in quality due to other opportunities	1
Better	1
Women are expected to work now but still for less pay and still have more responsibility for home and family	1
Better education	1
More women are waiting later to have children to establish career first	1
More acceptance of women having career and family	1
Girls are still taught that being pretty is important and women are still attending college to find husbands	1
Women can get mortgages or car loans on their own	1
Less need for male approval	1
Self awareness	1
More risk taking	1
Control over reproductive health	1
More women own businesses	1

Table A12. Question 23. In what ways would you change the way media treats women over 50?

Realistic image of aging	18
Positive image of aging	14
Would not change	4
Less medicalization of aging	3
Respect	3
Less focus on outside beauty	2
Depict them as people without labels	2
Less sex to sell products	2
Same as men over 50	2
Advertisers need wake-up call. Rest of media are catching on.	1
More contemporary products	1
Stop replacing older women with younger ones	1
Honor age	1
Focus on balance and peace	1
Focus on the whole woman	1
More value on contributions	1
Explore sexuality	1
Same as younger women	1
Cannot change	1
More romantic roles	1

Table A13. Question 24. In your opinion, what does it mean to age gracefully?

Acceptance	22
Be your best	11
Care for self and others	8
Care for health	5
Dress appropriately	5
Humor	5
Embrace the advantages	4
Do not complain	4
Moderation in medical intervention for appearance	3
Fitness	3
Elegance, grace, class	3
Confidence	3
Enjoy it	3
Poise, Dignity	2
No cosmetic surgery	2
Develop mind and body	2
Be a role model	2
Optimism	1
Challenge expectations	1
Adapt	1
Look for lessons	1
Be positive	1
Kindness	1
Mentor younger women	1
Do not judge or stereotype young people	1
Good will	1
Remain involved	1
Forgive self and others	1
Enhance natural look	1
Youthful look	1
Cosmetic surgery	1
Color hair if don't like gray hair	1
Develop values beyond physical appearance	1
Financial security	1
Holistic planning	1
Value diversity	1
Live fully with desire	1
Use common sense and intuition	1
Find balance	1
Find bliss	1
Be happy	1
Gratitude	1

Table A14. Question 24A. In your opinion, what does it mean to age successfully?

Engaged in life/open to new experiences and challenges	15
Health/fit (mental, physical, spiritual)	14
Acceptance	12
Happy	6
Social network (friends/family/loved ones)	6
Accomplishing goals/sense of purpose	6
Minimum regrets/forgive self	5
Financial security	5
Top of profession	4
Independent	3
Mentor/role model/concern for future generations	3
Relationship with God	2
If you're alive you're successful	2
Kindness/caring	2
Pride in achievements	2
Recognition	1
No surgery	1
Genetics and good care	1
Self-confidence	1
Leave legacy	1
Wiser	1
Still contributing	1
Look and act like you want	1
Holistic planning	1
Value diversity	1
Using all tools available	1
Balance	1
If children are not in jail or on drugs	1
In you are better off than you thought you would be	1

Table A15. Question 25. Is there anything else regarding the media and how women our age are treated you'd like to comment on?

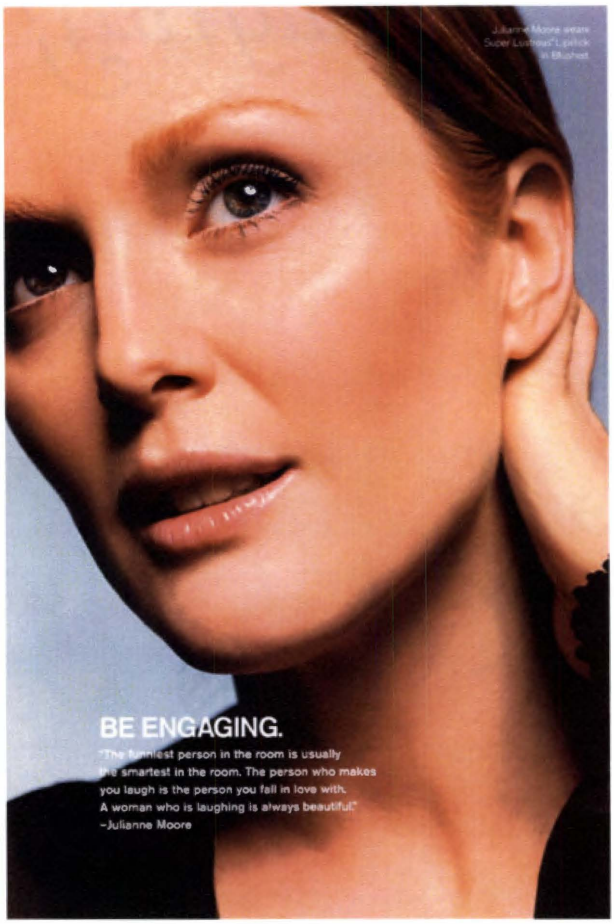
Age is not a disease it is a process and the media needs to portray it in a positive light	5
Older women are still invisible	3
Does not fault media	1
Sex sells or so we're told	1
There are more role models now for aging women	1
Physical beauty is still influential but it's no longer the only criteria	1
Intelligence and grace are becoming sexy	1
The idea of a prominent, visible crone scares most people in this society	1
Ageist greeting cards are offensive	1
More attention should be given to disease prevention and health maintenance	1
There is too much emphasis on sex and violence	1
Media coverage is slanted too far left on political and moral issues	1
Hollywood in filled with chauvinist pigs that are economically driven, who exploit women. The conservative church is just as bad	1
There may be silly older people but it's better not to see them	1
Katie Couric dress your age	1
Younger women are the ones under pressure to achieve the same look because of the cookie-cutter models on fashion magazines, commercials, and ads	1
There should have a talk show geared toward those over 50	1
Find a product that does away with wrinkles although I would have cosmetic surgery if I could afford it	1
Show that older women do more than housework and childcare	1
The Virginia Slims slogan says it all "We've come a long way baby"	1
Retailers are finally realizing that older women are the ones who are spending money so it's getting better	1
More interest in human issues	1
I object to beautiful 40 year old actresses referred to as aging	1
Stop replacing women when they reach a certain age. Men aren't	1
Stop pressuring older women to be pencil thin	1

Appendix B: Interview Material

Interview Questions

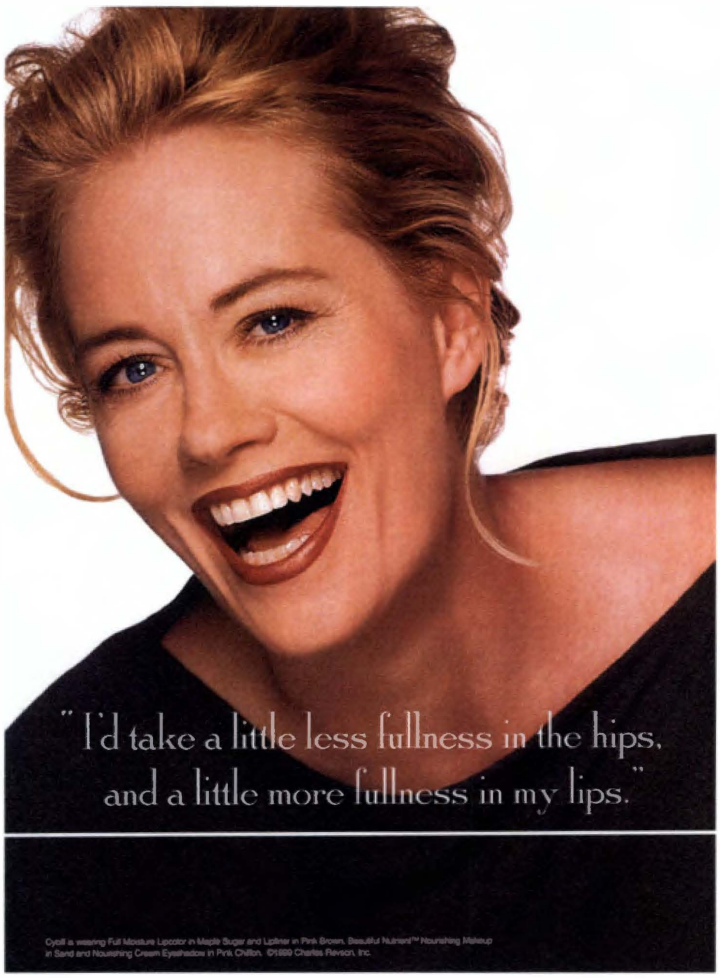
1. What would you like to talk about in terms of women over 50 and popular media?
2. Can you name any ads that you've seen recently that you really liked?
3. Why did you like them?
4. Can you name any ads that you've seen recently that you really disliked? Why?
5. What is different about your life since you were 25?
6. In what ways would you change the way popular media treats women over 50?
7. Is there anything else regarding the media and how women our age are treated you'd like to comment on?
8. After the questions segment of the interview was completed a series of ads and artistic photographs were shown to the participants. They were asked to give their thoughts and responses to each of the images presented to them.

   This is the order of presentation:



Quote: "Be Engaging. The funniest person in the room is usually the smartest in the room. The person who makes you laugh is the person you fall in love with. A woman who is laughing is always beautiful." Julianne Moore

Figure B1. Julianne Moore – lipstick.



Quote: "I'd take a little less fullness in the hips, and a little more fullness in my lips." -- Cybill Shephard

Figure B2. Cybil Shepard – lipstick ad.



Figure B3. Oil of Olay – mother's wrinkles/daughter's pimples.

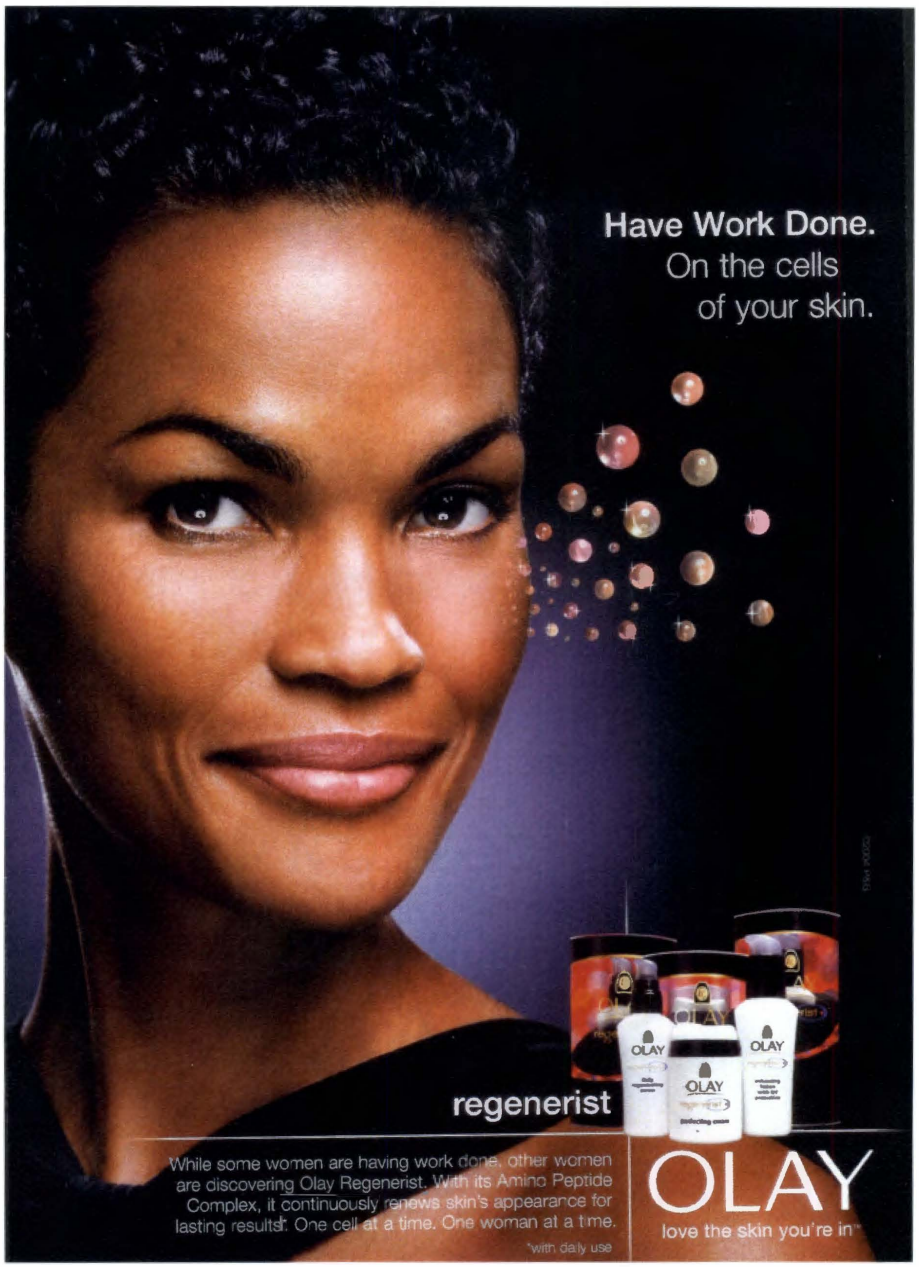


Figure B4. Oil of Olay – have work done.

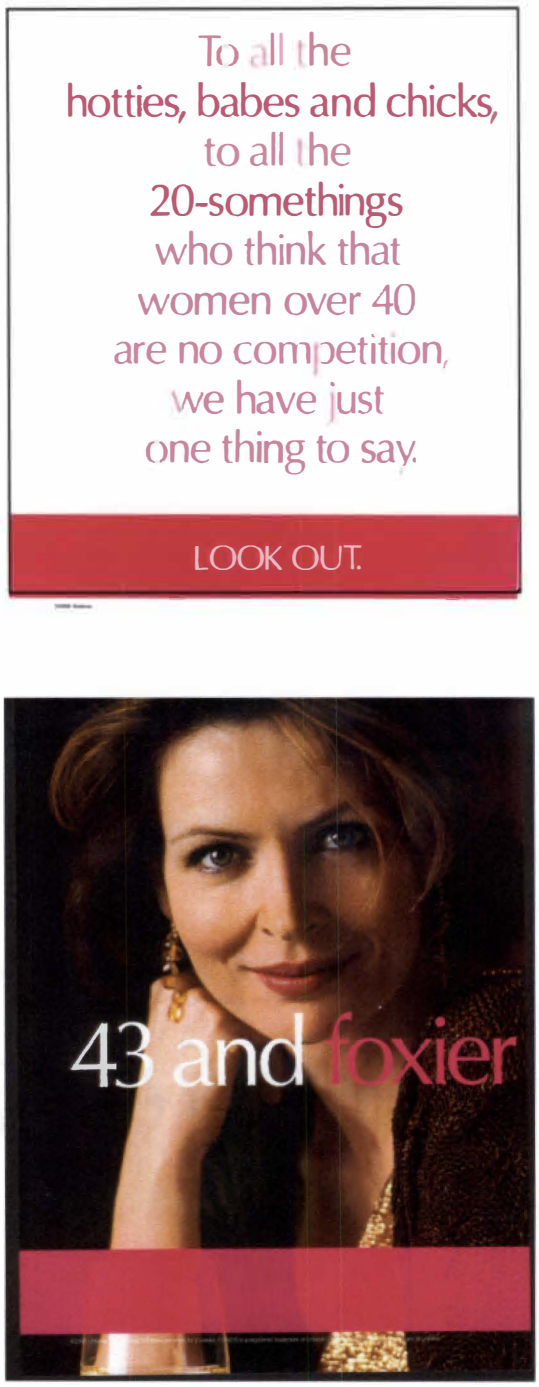


Figure B5. Ponds: 43 and foxier – two sided.



Let's face it, firming the thighs of a size 2 supermodel is no challenge. Real women have real curves. And according to women who tried new Dove Firming, it left their skin feeling firmer in just one week. What better way to celebrate the curves you were born with? New Dove Firming Lotion, Cream and Body Wash. For beautifully firm skin.



USA TODAY

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Ad campaigns tell women to celebrate who they are

By Theresa Howard, USA TODAY

NEW YORK — Some health and beauty marketers are trying to send a message about body image that many parents have tried to teach their daughters for years: Be happy with who you are.

Dove's 'Campaign for Real Beauty' sets a more realistic standard for attractiveness.



Unilever's Dove brand and retailer Bath & Body Works, in a deal with American Girl, are ditching the traditional "aspirational" marketing messages that tell women and girls that if they buy a particular health or beauty product, they can look like the supermodel in the ad.

Instead of images of long locks, longer legs and incredibly lean bodies, the two companies are promoting their products with a message of "real beauty" by encouraging women and girls to celebrate themselves as they are — while using the products, of course.

It's a marketing risk: The "real beauty" ads still need to sell women on the idea that they need these products to become even better.

Figure B6. Dove Ad/USA Today article.

Opinions of Photos From The *Wise Women* book



Make use of all your faculties while you are going toward your golden years, because you want to be of service. To give of youself, to love—this is why we are on earth. Lola Santos, 76 (Tenneson, 2002)

Figure B7. Lola Santos quotation.



I don't think of myself as being old. When I'm with my granddaughter, China, I feel the same age. I was born in Japan. I was brought in a very old-fashioned way. There is not the same attention to etiquette anymore. I love China's Yes Saint Laurent outfit. It's so different from my Fortuny dress, which is 50 years old. They are both beautiful in their own right. Mona Miwako Lutz, 78 and China Chow (Tenneson, 2002)

Figure B8. Mona Miwako and granddaughter.



Everyone calls me "Miss Birdie." My mother said I looked like a bird when I was born, so that's what she named me. I walk four miles a day, and drink half a gallon on water—that keeps me healthy. I have no sympathy for people who abuse their health. Birdie M. Hale, 88 and friend (Tenneson, 2002)

Figure B9. Miss Birdie and friend.



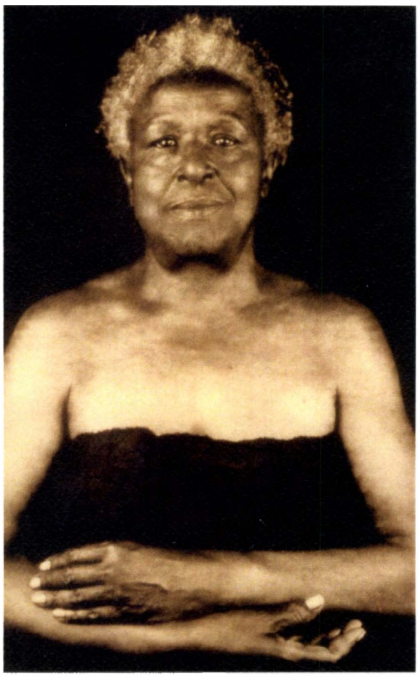
I think it's cool being older—I still get hit on. People are always telling me how beautiful I am now. It's like they are almost incredulous because the old stereotype is that we shouldn't get more beautiful with age. I have respect for the body and live in harmony with nature. That's where beauty comes from. Marilyn Alex, 70 (Tenneson, 2002)

Figure B10. Marilyn Alex quotation.



I keep telling my young friends that sex keeps getting better. After dealing with all of life's trials and tribulations for so many years, you just realize that there must be a higher power. Once you realize this, you can let life unfold. You get more to the point where you say, "I'm not going to worry anymore; I've done that long enough." Joanie MacPherson, 72 (Tenneson, 2002)

Figure B11. Joanie MacPherson.



I don't need a mirror to see how I look. Long ago, I realized the inner self is visible if you present yourself truthfully and authentically. I'm comfortable with getting older. I have lived a good life. Geraldine Smith, 70 (Tenneson, 2002)

Figure B12. Geraldine Smith.

Vita

Teresa Shelley Bowman was born May 2, 1957 in Knoxville. She attended High Bluff Elementary School and Klondike Junior High School. She graduated from Doyle High School in 1975. While bringing up two sons, Teresa worked for an advertising agency in Knoxville, Tennessee. Teresa earned a B.A. in Anthropology and Psychology from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2002.

Teresa entered the Graduate School at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and earned her Masters of Arts in 2006. While pursuing her degree, she served as a Teaching Assistant in Cultural Anthropology and as an assistant to Dr. Faye Harrison.

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