

The Effect of Advertising on Male Body Image Disturbance: A Content
Analysis of Male Models in *Esquire* Magazine Ads from 1955-2005

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

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May 2015

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*To my parents, for their immeasurable support and continuous encouragement. I
would not be the person I am today without you both.*

Acknowledgements



First and foremost, I would like to thank my Thesis Committee Dr. Haley, Dr. Hovland, and Dr. Taylor for not only their guidance throughout this whole process, but also for being wonderful educators who have helped me realize my passion for learning. Dr. Haley, thank you for being a wonderful teacher, mentor, and Thesis Chair; without your Advertising and Society class and complete support, I don't think I could have had the inspiration for a thesis topic I love so much and the calling for my new research interest. Dr. Hovland, you have been nothing but encouraging since my first class with you, and your inspiring words not only give me a tremendous confidence boost, but have truly motivated me to pursue my PhD degree and a career in academia. Dr. Taylor, thank you for three semesters of—without overstating—the most enjoyable classes I have ever had; thank you for showing me how to think outside the box, be critical, and look at things from different perspectives. *Thank you all for two very wonderful years.*

I would also like to thank my family for their unconditional love and support throughout this whole journey: My mother Mona, my father Ahmed, my fun-loving brothers Mohamed and Yousef, and my grandmother Zeinab.

Finally, I would like to thank my best friend and fiancé Ahmed for bearing with me through this very challenging and testing time. Thank you for always believing in me, even on the days I stopped believing in myself.

Abstract

This study examines the transformation of the male body ideal in magazine ads over time. A content analysis of 218 male models in *Esquire* ads from 1955 to 2005 were coded for level of male models' fat, muscularity, and nudity levels; whether the ad was photographed or illustrated; and product category. Findings reveal (1) a significant decrease in male models' fat levels over time, (2) a significant increase in male models' muscularity levels over time, and (3) a significant increase in nudity over time. Male models in photographed advertisements were found to have higher levels of muscularity and nudity than those in illustrated advertisements. The majority of product categories differed significantly on the fat, muscularity, and nudity scales. Practical and theoretical implications of the results are considered.

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Introduction

Advertising influences many aspects of our daily lives, and it has the ability to do so because it is an institution of social control (Potter, 1954). This control comes in the form of shaping societal norms and values, as well as instilling ideologies in the minds of consumers (Schudson, 1984). Because advertising attempts to “set the standard,” some use the images it portrays as reference points for different aspects of their lives. This is where a criticism comes in: oftentimes the images, norms, or values depicted by advertising are hyper-realistic, encouraging consumers to reach the unreachable (Schudson, 1984). Some will spend their entire lives attempting to reach this advertised ideal by purchasing unnecessary products or participating in dangerous behaviors, and in doing so harm themselves and others around them.

Unrealistic standards of the ideal body, beauty, and health have been instilled in the public in all forms of media, including advertising. Over the past decades, the media has portrayed increasingly less realistic body ideals (Blond, 2008; Grogan, Williams, & Conner, 1996; Engeln, Sladek, & Waldron, 2013; Hatoum & Belle, 2004; Leit, Gray, & Pope, 2001, 2002; Pope, Olivardia, Gruber, & Borowiecki, 1999). With the emergence of image editing technology, it has become easier to make unhealthy, stick-thin, or unnaturally muscular models look very attractive, consequently creating a body ideal people will aspire to. This has a negative effect on body image because almost all of those attempting to attain the ideal body will never reach their goal (Adams, Turner, & Bucks, 2005; Blond, 2008; Cafri, Thompson, Ricciardelli, McCabe, Smolak, & Yesalis, 2005; Cusumano & Thompson, 1997; Galioto & Crowther, 2013; Grogan, Williams, & Conner, 1996; Mills, Jadd, & Key, 2012; van den Berg, Paxton, Keery, Wall, Guo, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2007), and may turn to harmful eating behavior or substance abuse to help them achieve the impossible (Cafri et al., 2005; Cash, 1996; Cash, Phillips, Santos, & Hrabosky, 2004; Hatoum & Belle, 2004; Leit,

Pope, & Gray, 2001; Levine & Murnen, 2009; McDonald & Thompson, 1992; Morry & Staska, 2001; Olivardia, Pope, Borowiecki, & Cohane, 2004; Thompson & Stice, 2001).

Because of the negative repercussions of unrealistic body ideals, it is important to understand the magnitude of advertising's possible influences on body image. By identifying the factors that create negative body image, we will come one step closer to understanding an important societal issue and have the ability to provide practical solutions to industry.

Chapter I: Academic Literature Review

What is Body Image Disturbance?

Body image is defined as how a person feels about, thinks about, or behaves towards his/her body's appearance (Barlett, Vowels, & Saucier, 2008; McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2004; Muth & Cash, 1997; Tiggemann, 2004), especially in terms of weight and shape (Tiggemann, 2004). The multidimensional construct includes both a person's attitude (thoughts and feelings) towards and perception of (for example, weight estimation) his/her own body's appearance (Adams et al., 2005; Barlett et al., 2008; Cash & Deagle, 1996; Giovannelli, Cash, Henson, & Engle, 2008; Muth & Cash 1997).

The attitude component of body image is further divided into evaluation, affect, and investment. Evaluation is defined as a person's beliefs about or level of satisfaction with his/her own body's appearance, and is based on a person's internalized body ideals. Affect relates to the emotions a person attributes to his/her body evaluation that may be vocalized during certain situations such as being around attractive people of the same sex or looking in the mirror. Investment is defined as the level of importance a person attributes to appearance in general; in other words, how much a person pays attention to his/her own appearance, how a person maintains or attempts to improve his/her own appearance, or how significant appearance is in relation to a person's self-concept. Both evaluation and investment influence the nature of affect. (Cash, 1994; Muth & Cash, 1997) In addition, investment and evaluation have an inverse relationship: the more importance a person ascribes to appearance, the less likely he/she will be satisfied with his/her own body's appearance, and vice versa (Cash, 1994; Giovannelli et al., 2008).

When a person is dissatisfied with his/her own appearance or expresses negativity towards a specific part of his/her body, this is referred to as body image disturbance (Thompson & Stice, 2001). Body image disturbance indicates negativity in not only a

person's body image attitude, but also in how he/she perceives his/her own body (Adams et al., 2005; Barlett et al., 2008; Galioto & Crowther, 2013). It is generally seen as a continuum that ranges from satisfaction to dissatisfaction with body appearance, with those experiencing body image disturbance placed towards the dissatisfaction side (Agliata & Tantleff-Dunn, 2004).

Who is More Prone to Body Image Disturbance?

Several studies have explored the factors likely to make an individual more prone to body image disturbance than others. The first of these factors is gender. Based on findings from previous literature, it has been shown that women are more likely to experience body image disturbance than men are (Adams et al., 2005; Cash et al., 2004; Grogan et al., 1996; McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2004; Mills et al., 2012; Muth & Cash, 1997; Tiggemann, 2004). For example, in Grogan et al.'s (1996) study where men and women viewed photographs of same-sex models, women had significantly lower body esteem scores than men did. College students completing measures related to the three main components of body image revealed that females had more negative body image than males did (Muth & Cash, 1997). Based on Cash et al.'s (2004) development of the Body Image Disturbance Questionnaire, men reported less body image disturbance than women did.

Age is another factor that may affect body image disturbance tendencies. A meta-analysis by McCabe & Ricciardelli (2004) of studies on body dissatisfaction among males revealed that over time, males have different body image concerns. As children, males are overall satisfied with their bodies. During adolescence, some teenage boys are dissatisfied with their muscularity and attempt to increase muscle size; others focus on losing weight. In adulthood, negative body image is mostly prevalent, with middle-aged/older men focused on losing weight and toning their muscles. Another meta-analysis, by Barlett et al. (2008), also revealed that age did have an influence on negative body image: older males felt more

pressured and body image concerns from the media than did adolescent males to conform to the male body ideal.

Some studies have concluded that race can have an effect on body image, and differences have mainly been found between Black and White women. In Cash et al.'s (2004) study, Black women reported less body image disturbance than did White women on the Body Image Disturbance Questionnaire. A meta-analysis by Roberts, Cash, Feingold, & Johnson (2006) also revealed that White women experienced less body satisfaction than Black women did (as cited in López-Guimerà et al, 2010). This may be attributed to the fact that the female body ideal dominant in the media is ideal by White standards (López-Guimerà et al, 2010).

BMI, or body mass index, has also been found to be a factor that can influence body image. In their study that administered measures of body image, Muth & Cash (1997) observed that the relationship between BMI and body image was curvilinear in men and linear in women. In other words, men who had above or below average BMI had negative body satisfaction, while women with higher BMI had more negative body satisfaction. With the use of their Body Image Disturbance Questionnaire, Cash et al. (2004) discovered that heavier women exhibited greater body image disturbance. In their meta-analysis, Cafri et al. (2005) illustrated that both low and high BMI lead to body image disturbance in men, with the former relating to a desire for muscularity and the latter to the desire for decreasing body adiposity.

Sexuality has been touched upon in terms of body image disturbance, with most studies showing that gay men are far more likely to exhibit body image disturbance than heterosexual men are (Adams et al., 2005). Using two large online surveys to assess body satisfaction among gay men, heterosexual men, lesbians, and heterosexual women, Peplau, Frederick, Yee, Maisel, Lever, & Ghayami (2009) discovered that heterosexual men

exhibited greater body satisfaction than gay men, and lesbian women were to a small degree more satisfied with their bodies than heterosexual women were.

Psychological factors such as self-esteem and tendency to compare with others have been shown to influence body image. Van den Berg et al.'s (2007) study using self-reporting questionnaires found that low self-esteem was related to body dissatisfaction in both males and females. Cafri et al. (2005) agree with these findings, showing through a meta-analysis that self-esteem is found to be a key factor in male body dissatisfaction, especially in terms of muscle enhancement. In their meta-analysis, López-Guimerà et al. (2010) revealed that girls with low self-esteem were more likely to be influenced by the media and experience body dissatisfaction. Findings from Galioto & Crowther (2013) indicate that the more a person tends to compare him/herself to others on a regular basis, the more likely he/she will exhibit body dissatisfaction.

Studies have also shown that people who adopt healthy lifestyles tend to have lower levels of body image disturbance than those who do not. In McDonald & Thompson's (1992) study assessing body satisfaction, self-esteem, eating disturbance and motives for exercise in 100 men and 100 women, results indicated that men who exercised for fitness purposes tended to have low body image disturbance. College students who carefully watched their food intake showed greater body satisfaction than unrestricted eaters did, even after being exposed to images of ideal bodies in the media (Joshi, Herman, & Polivy, 2004; Mills, Polivy, Herman, & Tiggemann, (2002), as cited in Levine & Murnen, 2009). A study by Halliwell, Dittmar, & Orsborn (2007) revealed that men who tried to increase muscularity through exercise exhibited more body satisfaction than those who were not, even when exposed to images of body ideals (Blond, 2008).

Finally, findings from Cash's (1996) meta-analysis on studies of body image in bulimics and anorexics in comparison to control groups revealed not only the expected

conclusion that women with eating disorders have more body image disturbance than those without eating disorders, but also found that women with bulimia had greater body image disturbance than women with anorexia did.

The Media's Role in Body Image Disturbance

Although it has been proposed that several factors can contribute to the development of body image disturbance such as body talk, teasing, parental influence, peer popularity, and social comparison (Cafri et al., 2005; Engeln et al., 2013; Mills et al., 2012), much of the blame has been put on the media. The media are revered as one of the most powerful influencers of body image in both men and women by promoting body ideals that amplify existing body sensitivities and evoke negative body attitudes (Agliata & Tantleff-Dunn, 2004; Barlett et al., 2008; Morry & Staska, 2001; Olivardia et al., 2004).

The media have the power to construct the body types people strive to achieve—however unrealistic they may be (Cramblitt & Pritchard, 2013; Mills et al., 2012). When a person is exposed to these body ideals, he/she may either internalize these ideals or use them as a basis for comparison, which could potentially result in body image disturbance. When a person internalizes a body ideal, he/she uses it as a standard that becomes an integral part of his/her sense of self; as a result, reaching this ideal becomes increasingly important for him/her. If a person uses media body ideals as a basis of comparison, he/she will constantly evaluate the difference between his/her own body and the bodies portrayed in the media; because media ideals may be unrealistic for some, a person may constantly be dissatisfied with his/her body no matter how hard he/she tries to achieve it. (Adams et al., 2005; Blond, 2008; Cafri et al., 2005; Cusumano & Thompson, 1997; Galioto & Crowther, 2013; Grogan et al., 1996; Mills et al., 2012; van den Berg et al., 2007).

Body Ideals Portrayed in the Media

The current “culturally approved” (Hatoum & Belle, 2004) ideal body type portrayed by the media for women is very lean and ultra-thin (Hatoum & Belle, 2004; Mills et al., 2012; Morry & Staska, 2001; Olivardia et al., 2004; van den Berg et al., 2007). Although many women attempt to reach this ideal (Olivardia et al., 2004), perhaps to be thinner (and consequently better) than the average woman (Mills et al., 2012), critics contend it is a dangerous exaggeration of slenderness that is completely unreachable by any means (Engeln et al., 2013; Mills et al., 2012). According to some, one of the best representations of this unrealistic body female ideal is the Barbie doll, with its super-slim waistline combined with a curvaceous body that is physically impossible to achieve (Hatoum & Belle, 2004).

A number of studies have found that the majority of U.S. and European women have a desire for this thin ideal (Levine & Murnen, 2009; López-Guimerà, Levine, Sánchezcarracedo, & Fauquet, 2014), no matter what their current body weight is (McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2004). Results from Muth & Cash’s (1997) study on adults’ desire to be thinner presented a linear relationship between body weight and body dissatisfaction among women; the more a woman felt fat or the more she weighed, the more she felt dissatisfied with her own physical appearance. Cash et al. (2004) added on to this, not only concluding that heavier weight resulted in women’s body image disturbance, but that this body image disturbance was directed towards the waist, legs, thighs, abdomen, and hips. Finally, Mills et al. (2012) observed the effect of different body norms on female body image. After assigning women into three different groups, each group was presented with a fictitious population average representing either a thin body norm, heavy body norm, or no body norm. After being exposed to these, women indicated their current and ideal body size norms using body silhouettes measures. Results concluded that the thinner the body norm being presented, the thinner the ideal body size indicated by women in the group.

Leanness, the central feature of the female body ideal, is only secondary to the main defining feature of the male body ideal portrayed by the media: muscularity. Recognized as toned, trimmed, athletic, and mesomorphic (Arbour & Ginis, 2006; Grogan & Richards, 2002; Grogan et al., 1996; Hatoum & Belle, 2004; Leit et al., 2002; Morry & Staska, 2001; Pope et al., 1999) the current male body ideal emphasizes the need for both muscularity (Barlett et al., 2008; Engeln et al., 2013; Hatoum & Belle, 2004) and leanness (Engeln et al., 2013) in men. The specific body shape corresponding to this ideal is V-shaped with a muscular upper body, narrow hips, and a flat stomach (Leit et al., 2001; Olivardia et al., 2004). The problem with this ideal is in its promotion of unrealistic, hypermuscular bodies that are very difficult to achieve because of their tremendously high lean muscle mass and dangerously low levels of body fat (Engeln et al., 2013; Hatoum & Belle, 2004; Leit et al., 2001; Pope et al., 1999), implying the possible need for steroid use or dangerous dieting habits (Hatoum & Belle, 2004; Leit et al., 2001).

The cultural shift to this hypermuscular body ideal for men has been occurring for many years (Blond, 2008; Grogan et al., 1996; Hatoum & Belle, 2004; Leit et al., 2001, 2002; Pope et al., 1999). Studies have shown that especially in the past four decades, the male body ideal has greatly increased in terms of muscularity, and this has been reflected in various media forms such as action figures and magazines. Pope et al. (1999) analyzed several action toys from 1973 until 1998 to observe a change in the cultural representation of the male body ideal. All action figures' waist, bicep, and chest circumferences were measured and scaled to 5'10" (representing the average male height). Results indicated that over time, action toys increased greatly in terms of muscularity, and the figures that belonged to the present time period represented advanced body-builder or physically impossible bodies. In Leit et al.'s (2001) study, 115 centerfold men in *Playgirl* magazines from 1973 to 1997 were analyzed to determine whether there was a shift in the male body ideal over the past 25 years. For each

photograph, an experienced rater estimated the male model's body mass index and fat-free mass index. Analyses yielded a positive correlation between body mass index and the year and an even greater negative correlation between fat-free mass index and the year, concluding that models became leaner and even more muscular over the years (referred to by the researchers as "denser").

Findings from several studies have concluded that the majority of men in the U.S. and the U.K. desire to reach the hypermuscular body ideal portrayed in the media. Muth & Cash's (1997) research on weight and body dissatisfaction yielded a curvilinear relationship between the two in men. Unlike women whose dissatisfaction resulted from increased weight, men felt dissatisfaction with their bodies when their weight was either too high or too low. Cash et al. (2004) concluded that men's body image disturbance anxieties related to their waist and abdomen just as women's did, but what made men unique was their drive for muscularity. Utilizing focus groups made of several men, adolescents, and boys, Grogan & Richards (2004) uncovered "fear of fat" and "importance of being muscular" as two recurring themes relating to male body image. All participants had negative attitudes towards those who were overweight and did not conform to the lean ideal. Additionally, they attributed great importance to muscle mass and tone.

Approximately 81 percent of Hatoum & Belle's (2004) college male sample indicated that they were not satisfied with their current weight, despite the fact that about 65 percent of the sample was within a normal weight range. Specifically, about 30 percent of the male sample (who were overweight) desired an average weight loss of 18.7 lbs., and approximately 51 percent (who were underweight) desired an average weight gain of 15.2 lbs. Furthermore, the majority of the male sample wished for more muscular legs and upper bodies, as well as more defined abs. In their review of previous literature on male body dissatisfaction, McCabe & Ricciardelli (2004) concluded that: a) the majority of men strive to

reach the sociocultural body ideal, and the more they are keen on achieving this build, the more dissatisfied they are with their current bodies; b) men both want to gain weight (to achieve a larger body) and lose weight (for a leaner body); and c) previous literature has not specified what the desire to gain weight actually encompasses, but it is assumed that it relates to increasing muscle rather than fat.

In Olivardia et al.'s (2004) study on college men's body image, findings gave more proof to the expanding gap between current male body ideals and actual men's bodies: participants rated themselves as having more fat than they actually did, and chose a male body ideal that had an average of 8 lbs. less body fat and 25 lbs. more muscle mass than those of their own bodies. Arbour & Ginis' (2006) study sought to determine whether hypermuscular or muscular images best represented the male body ideal. After being exposed to 48 images of both body types, 27 men rated these images based on possibility to achieve through exercise, attractiveness/desirability, and how much it represented the male body ideal. Results showed that the muscular male ideal was more desired, attractive, and representative of the male ideal by participants, probably due to the perceived unrealism and unattainability of the hypermuscular ideal. Finally, Mills et al. (2012) observed the effect of different body norms on male body image, as they did with female body image. Men were divided into three separate groups and exposed to either a less muscular body norm, more muscular body norm, or no body norm. Using body silhouettes measures to designate current and ideal body size norms, participants revealed that the more muscular the body norm they were exposed to, the more muscular the body ideal indicated.

The Relationship Between the Media and Body Image Disturbance

Several studies have explored the relationship between media exposure and body image disturbance. Findings are in agreement that the media do in fact influence the different

aspects of body image in both men and women across different platforms. Most research has focused on the extent to which media influences female body image disturbance and the negative consequences of this influence (for a review, see Levine & Murnen, 2009; López-Guimerà, Levine, Sánchezcarracedo, & Fauquet, 2014), while only a few studies have either focused on male body image disturbance specifically or have compared both genders' body image disturbance to reveal any significant differences between the two groups.

The majority of studies have used stimulus-response methods in their attempt to uncover a relationship between the media and body image disturbance. Grogan et al.'s (1996) study aimed to identify a relationship between exposure to photographs with ideal bodies on both men and women's body satisfaction. Participants, almost evenly split by gender, were first asked to complete a body image questionnaire. A week later, they were divided into three groups and given a folder with 16 photographs. The first group was an all-male group given photographs of male models taken from fashion magazines, the second group was an all-female group given photographs of female models taken from fashion magazines, and the control group was made up of both men and women who were given photographs of landscapes. After rating each photo based on attractiveness, participants repeated the body image questionnaire. Results indicated that after being exposed to the photographs of same-gender models, both men and women experienced a decrease in their body satisfaction (with women experiencing higher levels of body dissatisfaction than men did); the group exposed to landscape photographs showed no change in body satisfaction.

A sample of college men in Leit et al.'s (2002) study were divided into two groups, each exposed to 30 clothing catalog and magazine advertisements. While one group was exposed to 30 neutral advertisements (either no images of people or images with people where focus was not on the body), the other was exposed to 10 neutral advertisement and 20 advertisements featuring muscular models. After viewing these images, participants were

asked to complete body image perception assessments. Results indicated that the group exposed to muscular models indicated higher levels of body image disturbance (suggested by their rating of ideal bodies as more muscular and their own bodies as less muscular, resulting in a greater difference between ideal and perceived body image) than the group who viewed neutral images.

Agliata & Tantleff-Dunn (2004) randomly assigned a sample of college-aged men to two groups: one exposed to advertisements with models embodying the male body ideal (thin and muscular) and the other exposed to neutral advertisements (where models did not replicate the male ideal nor appear with image-enhancement products such as cologne) during the screening of a television program. After the screening, participants completed questionnaires containing several appearance satisfaction scales. Results concluded that when exposed to television commercials displaying the male body ideal, men experienced body image disturbance specifically with their muscles and became more angry and depressed.

Galioto & Crowther (2013) added to previous research by viewing the effects of muscular and slender body ideals individually on a group of college-aged men. Participants were divided into three different groups and exposed to seven advertisements of: a) a shirtless model portraying the slender male body ideal, b) a shirtless model portraying the muscular male body ideal, or c) a product while completing a distractor between advertisements. After being exposed to these, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire to measure body satisfaction levels. Findings revealed that brief exposure to both the muscular and slender aspects of the male body ideal resulted in a significant increase in body image disturbance among males.

In addition to brief-exposure experiments, a number of studies have deployed surveys using several media-consumption and body image scales in an attempt to identify a

relationship between the two. In Morry & Staska (2001), a sample of college-aged men and women were asked to complete questionnaires including scales that measured exposure to women's beauty magazines, exposure to men's health magazines, and body image. Results indicated a link between magazine exposure and body image disturbance in both men and women. Women who read beauty magazines greatly internalized body ideals and experienced dissatisfaction with their bodies. Similarly, men who read fitness magazines internalized the body ideals portrayed and were dissatisfied with their own body shapes.

Similar to this study, Hatoum & Belle's (2004) study aimed to explore the relationship between male body image disturbance and male-directed magazine consumption. College-aged men were asked to complete a questionnaire that included scales of self-esteem, muscularity attitudes, frequency of media consumption, and bodily concerns. Findings presented a relationship between both variables: participants who were exposed to male-directed magazines in the past month were more dissatisfied with their bodies and were more concerned with improving their current bodies in terms of fitness and muscularity.

Adding to these studies, Cramblitt & Prichard (2013) measured both magazine and television consumption to reveal a relationship between exposure to media body ideals and body dissatisfaction in both men and women. A sample of college-aged men and women (almost evenly split by gender) completed an online questionnaire that measured media exposure over the past month (popular entertainment, sports, and image-focused television shows; men and women's health and fashion, sports, teen, entertainment, and beauty magazines), awareness of body ideals, internalization of body ideals, and drive for muscularity. Results concluded that more exposure to television shows and health magazines resulted in body dissatisfaction in men (specifically in terms of muscularity).

Consequences of Body Image Disturbance

Because body image disturbance includes both attitudes towards and perceptions of the body, its outcomes have both physical and psychological effects (Barlett et al., 2008; Bergeron & Tylka, 2007; McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2004; Muth & Cash, 1997; Thompson & Stice, 2001). Numerous studies have shown that body image disturbance can lead to unhealthy eating patterns or radical dieting, and in more extreme cases eating disorders such as bulimia or anorexia nervosa (Cafri et al., 2005; Cash, 1996; Cash, et al., 2004; Hatoum & Belle, 2004; McDonald & Thompson, 1992; Morry & Staska, 2001; Olivardia et al., 2004; Thompson & Stice, 2001). Results from McDonald & Thompson's (1992) study revealed that women who try to control their weight or increase their attractiveness could increase their risk for eating dysfunction. Cash (1996) revealed that body dissatisfaction was more prominent in women experiencing bulimia or anorexia nervosa, and later on concluded that it was the major underlying cause of eating disorders in both men and women (Cash et al., 2004). Results from Morry & Staska (2001) revealed a positive correlation between magazine exposure and body dissatisfaction, which led to eating problems in both men and women. In Thompson & Stice (2001), findings revealed that men and women who strived to reach an internalized body ideal were potentially disposed to dieting and developing an eating disorder. Findings from Hatoum and Belle (2004) revealed that one-third of their college male sample who exhibited high bodily concerns admitted to skipping a meal in an attempt to lose weight. Olivardia et al. (2004) suggested the use of body dissatisfaction as a way to detect eating disorders in both men and women. In Cafri et al.'s (2005) review, strive for leanness and muscularity was associated not only with eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia, but also with unhealthy dieting practices such as restricted intake of carbohydrates and an enormous intake of protein and fat.

In addition to disordered eating, other physically damaging effects of body image disturbance include steroid abuse, unnecessary supplement intake, and excessive exercise (Cafri et al., 2005; Hatoum & Belle, 2004; McDonald & Thompson, 1992; Olivardia et al., 2004). McDonald & Thompson (1992) indicated that women were more likely than men to exercise for weight reasons, and this exercise was strongly linked to increases in body image disturbance. In a study by Hatoum & Belle (2004), one-third of their sample of college men with heightened bodily concerns indicated that they consumed dietary supplements to aid in muscle building, and one-seventh of the sample took fat-burning supplements. Findings also revealed that men who desired to improve their bodies spent a significant amount of time exercising, and had a greater probability of holding a gym membership than average. Twenty-seven percent of Olivardia et al.'s (2004) college male sample revealed that they used performance-enhancing steroids to improve their looks; moreover, the authors indicated the possible underestimation of this result, because other supplements and steroids regularly taken by college males are not considered performance-enhancing steroids. Cafri et al.'s (2005) review indicated that the most frequent strategies used by males to enhance their muscles include the use of steroids such as anabolic steroids (used to increase muscle size) and prohormones (to increase blood testosterone).

Although not as discernible as the physical effects, the psychological effects of body image disturbance can be detrimental. Studies have shown that body image disturbance can be a factor in low self-esteem (Agliata & Tantleff-Dunn, 2004; Barlett et al., 2008; Galioto & Crowther, 2013; Giovanelli et al., 2008; Grogan et al., 1996; Grogan & Richards, 2004; Engeln et al., 2013; Olivardia et al., 2004; van den Berg et al., 2007), depression (Agliata & Tantleff-Dunn, 2004; Cash et al., 2004; Galioto & Crowther, 2013; Olivardia et al., 2004; Thompson & Stice, 2001; van den Berg et al., 2007), social anxiety (Agliata & Tantleff-Dunn, 2004; Cash et al. 2004; Engeln et al., 2013), and a poorer health-related quality of life

(Giovanelli et al., 2008). Results from Olivardia et al. (2001) indicated that dissatisfaction with muscularity in men was associated with depression, and body dissatisfaction in general had a negative effect on self-esteem. In Grogan & Richards' (2004) focus groups with men, adolescents, and boys, participants expressed their bodily concerns that caused levels of social anxiety. Results from Hatoum & Belle (2004) revealed that concerns with weight have a negative effect on men's self-esteem. Finally, a study by Bergeron & Tylka (2007) revealed that male body dissatisfaction, specifically dissatisfaction with muscularity, results in low self-esteem; dissatisfaction with body fat, in addition to low self-esteem, results in depression and distress.

Although the majority of studies have found a link between exposure to body ideals in the media and negative outcomes, this is not to say that everyone internalizes these ideals and acts upon them negatively. Some studies have shown that exposure to body ideals can actually result in decreased body image disturbance and positive outcomes. For example, two studies by Wilcox and Laird (2000) revealed that young women who focused their attention on thin magazine models more than on their own bodies experienced less body image disturbance (as cited in Levine & Murnen, 2009). Studies by Joshi, Herman, & Polivy (2004) and Mills, Polivy, Herman, & Tiggemann (2002) indicated that college students who restricted their food intake had increased levels of body satisfaction after viewing images of thin magazine models (as cited in Levine & Murnen, 2009). A study by Durkin & Paxton (2002) indicated that some girls experienced an increase in body satisfaction after they viewed attractive magazine models (as cited in Levine & Murnen, 2009). Humphreys & Paxton (2004) revealed that men who did not have issues with their bodies had increased body satisfaction after being exposed to images of male models portraying the male body ideal (as cited in Blond, 2008). One suggested reason for increases in body satisfaction after exposure to body ideals is that people may internalize these images as inspiration to improve

their own bodies, or those currently working on their bodies may view these images as a final attainable goal they will soon reach (Blond, 2008).

Chapter II: Research Gap & Research Questions

Although research has shown an increased prevalence in body image disturbance among men (Adams et al., 2005; Bergeron and Tylka, 2007; Galioto & Crowther, 2013; Grogan et al., 1996; Grogan & Richards, 2004; Muth & Cash, 1997; Olivardia et al., 2004; van den Berg, 2007) and more research interest has emerged with regards to male body image disturbance (Agliata & Tantleff-Dunn, 2004; Bergeron and Tylka, 2007; Leit et al., 2001; Olivardia et al., 2004), the literature on this topic is limited (Adams et al., 2005; Hatoum & Belle, 2004; Olivardia et al., 2004; van den Berg, 2007). The main reason for this inadequacy is that most body image research focuses on females (Adams et al., 2005; Barlett et al., 2008; Hatoum & Belle, 2004; McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2004; Olivardia et al., 2004) because they are more likely dissatisfied with their bodies than men are (Engeln et al., 2013; McDonald & Thompson, 1992; Muth & Cash, 1997), attribute more importance to physical appearance than men do (McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2004; Muth & Cash, 1997), more frequently mention body image concerns to others in non-body related contexts than men do (Engeln et al., 2013; Muth & Cash, 1997), and are more likely than men to develop eating disorders or adopt unhealthy eating habits (Grogan et al., 1996; McDonald & Thompson, 1992).

Furthermore, most studies explore a brief-exposure effect of body ideals on male body image disturbance, which does not wholly demonstrate the formation of these ideals over time. Existing longitudinal studies on male body ideals have evaluated media types not considered mass media (for example, action figures), and those that are considered mass media are not specifically targeted to general male audiences. Because of this discrepancy, the goal of the current study is to evaluate the changes of the male body ideal over time in a general male audience magazine to uncover how advertising has potentially exerted increasing pressure on men to conform to an unrealistic ideal and consequently influence

their body image. Based on this, the main research question this current study will address is: How has the male body ideal evolved since the second half of the twentieth century? This broad research question is broken down into five specific research questions as follows:

RQ1: How has the male body ideal changed over time in terms of fat level?

RQ2: How has the male body ideal changed over time in terms of muscularity level?

RQ3: How has the male body ideal changed over time in terms of nudity level?

RQ4: Putting year aside, do fat, muscularity, and nudity levels of the male ideal differ based on type of advertisement (photograph vs. illustration)?

RQ5: Putting year aside, do fat, muscularity, and nudity levels of the male ideal differ based on product category (automobile, clothing, diet and exercise products/services, shoes and accessories, travel/entertainment/leisure/food, swimsuits/underwear, toiletries, sinful products, and other)?

Chapter III: Methods

Research Design

A content analysis method was deployed for the current study. Perhaps one of the most well known definitions of content analysis is Berelson's description of the method as, "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (1952, p. 55, as cited in Kassarian, 1977 and Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 1992). Essentially, a content analysis seeks to transform various forms of verbal or written communications (words or images) into analyzable data that can be objectively evaluated for symbolic meanings (Kassarian 1977; Lombard et al., 2002) embedded within them, resulting in valid and reliable inferences (Krippendorff, 1989). Despite the systematic and quantitative nature of the method, its main goal is to go beyond the overt and seeks to reveal and quantify social phenomena or trends that are not apparent on the surface (Krippendorff, 1989; Lombard et al., 2002).

In the communications field, content analyses are integral for research (Kassarian 1977; Krippendorff, 1989; Lombard et al., 2002) because of their focus on symbolic and verbal behavior (Kassarian 1977). The focus lies not only on the communication message itself, but context is also taken into consideration in the attempt to understand what meanings have been embedded in the message by its creators (such as industries or cultures) and how these messages may be interpreted (Kassarian, 1977; Krippendorff, 1989). Previous studies have used content analyses to observe the changing values in society reflected in mass communication (Kassarian, 1977), which is what the current study aims to do as well. With the use of content analysis, images of males in magazine advertisements will be objectively and methodologically analyzed with the goal of uncovering a pattern of changing male body ideals over time, consequently allowing for the development of valid and reliable inferences that will contribute to the literature.

Sample

Esquire magazine was analyzed for the current study's content analysis. Dating back to the 1930s, the magazine, a Hearst Corporation publication, is "the only general-interest lifestyle magazine for sophisticated men. ...[it] defines, reflects and celebrates what it means to be a man in contemporary American culture" (Hearst Corporation Official Website, 2015). Receiving many awards and honors, the publication is recognized for providing strong editorial content with a broad range of topics including health, news and culture, fashion, women, politics, and food and drink (Esquire Media Kit, 2015b; Esquire Media Kit, 2015c; Hearst Corporation Official Website, 2015). According to the Alliance for Audited Media, *Esquire's* total paid and verified print circulation for the January–June 2014 period was reported to be 684,434 (Esquire Media Kit, 2015a).

Esquire describes its audience as affluent, refined, intellectual, and confident men (Esquire Media Kit, 2015b). Research from GfK MRI supports this, showing that the magazine's readership is comprised of over 2.5 million adults, of whom approximately 72 percent are male with a median age of 45.9, a median household income of \$70,178, and a college education or higher (Esquire Media Kit, 2015f). In addition, research shows that *Esquire* readers are wealthier than readers of other magazines in the same category such as *Men's Health*, *Men's Journal*, *GQ*, and *Details* (Esquire Media Kit, 2015d; 2015e). The magazine focuses not only on retaining this affluent audience, but also on attracting readers who are influential in their social groups and have the power to promote luxury brands and encourage buying decisions (Esquire Media Kit, 2015d); basically, readers are men who other men aspire to become (Esquire Media Kit, 2015g).

Esquire was chosen for this study due to its relevance to the research objectives. Because the main focus of research is to observe trends of the male body ideal since the second half of the twentieth century by evaluating advertisements in male-targeted audience

magazines, *Esquire* is deemed most appropriate. Not only does the magazine fit the criteria of being a general male-audience magazine, but it was also the only magazine in its category whose older issues were available to obtain. Furthermore, the fact that the magazine's prime audience is composed of influential and affluent men reinforces the idea that the images of male bodies presented are ideals that men aspire to become or deem as the norm.

The specific issues chosen for the content analysis include the June issues of the years 1955, 1965, 1975, 1985, 1995, and 2005. The selection of magazines issues in five-year intervals allows for a chronological and transitional view of the advertisements and body ideals presented in them by decade. The month of June was chosen purposively because, as a summer month, it was expected to contain advertisements with greater levels of nudity that would provide a clearer view of the male models' bodies and consequently decrease complications of coding fully clothed models.

Coding Scheme

Any advertisement that prominently featured a frontal view of a male model was retained for the content analysis. The entire body did not have to be visible, but the minimum of a visible torso was needed for inclusion. The current study's coding scheme is derived from previously developed scales.

Thompson & Gray's (1995) Contour Drawing Rating Scale, a body-image assessment tool, was used to measure the model's body size. The 9-point scale displays a range of illustrations that are arranged from extremely thin to obese, with each illustration increasing in plumpness and width as the number on the scale increases. The scale has moderate reliability ($r = .78$) and very high validity (ranging from 96.1 percent to 98.7 percent).

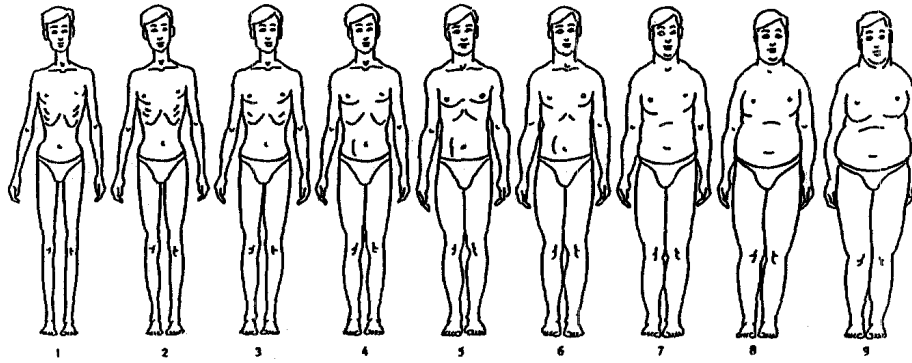


Figure 1: Contour Drawing Rating Scale, Thompson & Gray (2005)

The Muscle Silhouette Measure, developed by Buchanan & Frederick (2003) was used to evaluate the muscularity levels of the male models in the advertisements. The scale is made up of eight illustrations that increase in muscularity and muscle definition in the arms, chest, shoulders, and thighs. The scale begins with a slender silhouette and ends with a hypermuscular one. This measure has reported extremely high levels of reliability, ranging from $r = .83$ to $.95$. Validity of the scale has also been observed by independent judges. (Frederick, Buchanan, Sadehgi-Azar, Peplau, Haselton, Berezovskaya, & Lipinski, 2007)

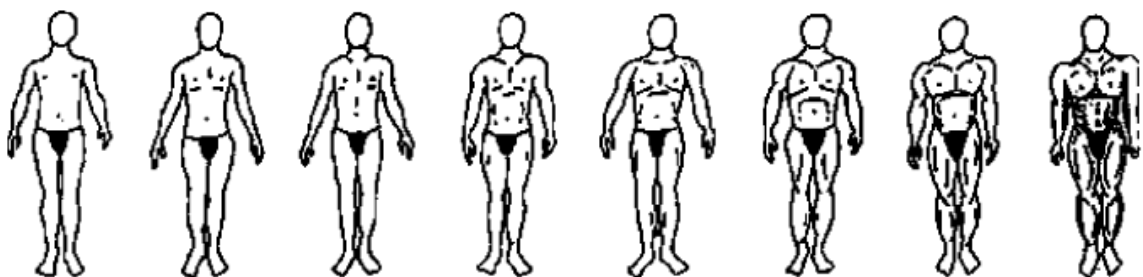


Figure 2: Muscle Silhouette Measure, Buchanan & Frederick (2003)

The scale used to measure levels of nudity was adapted from Reichert, Lambiase, Morgan, Carstarphen, & Zavoina's (1999). The researchers defined *nudity* as, "...the amount and style of clothing worn by models in ads" (p. 8). Images of the male models in the advertisements were categorized as having one of the following types of dress:

(1) *demure*, which refers to regular and everyday clothing (including long shorts); (2) *suggestive*, which refers to form-fitting clothing, short-shorts, and any type of clothing that reveals the upper body (unbuttoned shirts or low-cut tops); (3) *partially-clad*, which includes shirtless males, bathing suits, and underwear; and (4) *nude*, which includes not only overt nudity (full-frontal nudity), but also nude silhouettes and situations where it is implied the model is naked but his genitals are covered by the way the picture is taken or if the model is holding only a towel. The scale has an extremely high level of reliability (Kappa = .91).

In addition to these scales, advertisements were coded for the following variables: (a) year (1955/1965/1975/1985/1995/2005), (b) photo vs. illustration (the older issues contained a significant amount of hand-drawn advertisements as opposed to photographs), and (c) product category (automobile, clothing, diet and exercise products/services, shoes and accessories, travel/entertainment/leisure/food, swimsuits/underwear, toiletries, sinful products (i.e., tobacco and alcohol), and other (products who did not belong to the previous eight categories)). Any male model whose upper front torso was clearly visible in every advertisement was coded.

Coding Procedures

Three independent judges, who were trained by the author, conducted coding for the content analysis. The coders were briefed on the coding scheme and instructed on how the coding would go about specifically. For more organized coding, the author physically labeled the advertisements in every magazine that were to be included in the analysis, numbered the advertisements (to cause less confusion in cases where there were multiple male models in the same advertisement), and coded for year, photo vs. illustration, and product category beforehand. Before the coding began, the independent judges were asked to practice code three advertisements from the 1955 issue and another three from the 2005 issue (these were excluded from the final sample).

For every unit of analysis (i.e. male model), coders were asked to rate the male model's body using the three scales included in the coding scheme. First, coders indicated the male model's level of adiposity using a score of 1 to 9 on the Contour Drawing Rating Scale. Coders then designated a rating of 1 to 8 on the Muscle Silhouette Measure to evaluate the male model's level of muscularity. Finally, the level of nudity displayed by the model in the advertisement was rated using the 4-point scale. For the three aforementioned criteria, coders also had the option of rating the model as "Unable to determine". After the coding was completed, intercoder reliability was calculated for measures of fat (Cohen's kappa = .83 to .84), muscularity (Cohen's kappa = .85 to .94), and nudity (Cohen's kappa = .97 to .99), resulting in an overall high level of agreeability. Discrepancies were resolved by discussion among all coders, resulting in the final agreed-upon codebook.

Chapter IV: Results

The final sample consisted of 218 male models in *Esquire* advertisements. As previously mentioned, advertisements came from the 1955, 1965, 1975, 1985, 1995, and 2005 issues. In light of this criterion, the magazine ads were distributed by year as follows: 70 (32.1%) from the 1955 issue, 55 (25.2%) from the 1965 issue, 23 (10.6%) from the 1975 issue, 43 (19.7%) from the 1985 issue, 8 (3.7%) from the 1995 issue, and 19 (8.7%) from the 2005 issue. The majority of advertisements were photographs ($n = 165$, 75.7%), but a number of illustrated advertisements ($n = 53$, 24.3%) were also analyzed. Most illustrated advertisements were found in the 1955 ($n = 27$, 50.9%) and 1965 ($n = 17$, 32.1%) issues, and the 1995 and 2005 issues contained no illustrated ads.

In terms of product categories, the advertisements were distributed into the 9 product categories as follows: clothing ($n = 110$, 50.5%), travel/entertainment/leisure/food ($n = 25$, 11.5%), sinful products ($n = 18$, 8.3%), automobile ($n = 16$, 7.3%), other ($n = 14$, 6.4%), shoes and accessories ($n = 10$, 4.6%), diet and exercise products/services ($n = 9$, 4.1%), toiletries ($n = 9$, 4.1%), and swimsuits/underwear ($n = 7$, 3.2%)

Research Question 1

This question explored whether there were any significant changes in male models' fat levels by year. With the use of independent sample t-test statistics, significant changes in fat level were found between male models in the 1955 ($M = 4.79$, $SD = 1.089$) and 1985 ($M = 4.02$, $SD = .801$) issues, $t(111) = 3.98$, $p = .000$; the 1955 ($M = 4.79$, $SD = 1.089$) and 1995 ($M = 3.63$, $SD = .744$) issues, $t(76) = 2.93$, $p = .004$; and the 1955 ($M = 4.79$, $SD = 1.089$) and 2005 ($M = 3.74$, $SD = .933$) issues, $t(87) = 3.83$, $p = .000$. These results show that male models in the 1955 issue had significantly greater fat levels than those in the 1985, 1995, and 2005 issues.

Table 1: Combined t-test results for 1955 and subsequent years on fat scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1965		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1955	4.79	1.089	--	--	--
1965	4.35	1.566	.440	1.76	92.374
1975	4.61	1.033	.177	.69	91
1985	4.02	.801	.762	3.98**	111
1995	3.63	.744	1.161	2.93*	76
2005	3.74	.933	1.049	3.83**	87

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Results also indicated that fat levels found in models in the 1965 issue ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 1.566$) were significantly greater than those found in the 2005 issue ($M = 3.74$, $SD = .933$), $t(53.243) = 2.02$, $p = 0.048$.

Finally, significant differences were also observed between the fat levels of the 1975 models ($M = 4.61$, $SD = 1.033$) and 1985 models ($M = 4.02$, $SD = .801$), $t(36.465) = 2.36$, $p = .024$; the 1975 models ($M = 4.61$, $SD = 1.033$) and 1995 models ($M = 3.63$, $SD = .744$), $t(29) = 2.47$, $p = .020$; and the 1975 models ($M = 4.61$, $SD = 1.033$) and 2005 models ($M = 3.74$, $SD = .933$), $t(40) = 2.84$, $p = .007$. Results indicate that models in the 1975 issue had more observable body fat than those in later years.

Table 2: Combined t-test results for 1965 and subsequent years on fat scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1965		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1965	4.35	1.566	--	--	--
1975	4.61	1.033	-.263	-.74	76
1985	4.02	.801	.322	1.32	84.104
1995	3.63	.744	.720	1.27	61
2005	3.74	.933	.609	2.02*	53.243

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Table 3: Combined t-test results for 1975 and subsequent years on fat scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1975		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1975	4.61	1.033	--	--	--
1985	4.02	.801	.585	2.36*	36.465
1995	3.63	.744	.988	2.47*	29
2005	3.74	.933	.872	2.84*	40

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Table 4: Combined t-test results for 1985 and subsequent years on fat scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1985		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1985	4.02	.801	--	--	--
1995	3.63	.744	.398	1.3	49
2005	3.74	.933	.286	1.23	60

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Table 5: T-test results for 1995 & 2005 on fat scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1995		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1995	3.63	.744	--	--	--
2005	3.74	.933	-.112	-.3	25

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

All of the above results demonstrate an overall downward trend in male models' body fat. In other words, there is an exhibited significant decrease in the adiposity levels of males in magazine advertisements over time. Based on the calculated mean differences of all magazine issues, the greatest significant change in body fat—the tipping point to when fat dramatically decreased—was apparent in 1985.

Research Question 2

The second research question explored differences in the male models' muscularity over time. T-test statistics revealed significant differences between a portion of the magazine issues. Significant differences in muscularity were found between 1955 ($M = 3.59$, $SD = .771$) and 1965 ($M = 3.85$, $SD = .687$), $t(121.381) = -2.07$, $p = .040$; 1955 ($M = 3.59$, $SD = .771$) and 1995 ($M = 4.88$, $SD = 1.356$), $t(7.525) = -2.64$, $p = .031$; and 1955 ($M = 3.59$, $SD = .771$) and 2005 ($M = 4.47$, $SD = .964$), $t(87) = -4.21$, $p = .000$. All of these statistics demonstrate that the male models in the 1955 issue were significantly less muscular than those in subsequent years.

Table 6: Combined t-test results for 1955 and subsequent years on muscularity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1955		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1955	3.59	.771	--	--	--
1965	3.85	.687	-.269	-2.07*	121.381
1975	3.48	.898	.107	.557	91
1985	3.63	.874	-.042	-.27	111
1995	4.88	1.356	-1.289	-2.64*	7.525
2005	4.47	.964	-.888	-4.21**	87

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Similarly, the muscularity levels of models in the 1965 issue ($M = 3.85$, $SD = .687$) were significantly less than those in the 2005 issue ($M = 4.47$, $SD = .964$), $t(24.439) = -2.586$, $p = .016$.

Significant differences in muscularity were also found between the 1975 ($M = 3.48$, $SD = .898$) and 1995 issues ($M = 4.88$, $SD = 1.356$), $t(29) = -3.312$, $p = .002$; as well as between the 1975 ($M = 3.48$, $SD = .898$) and 2005 issues ($M = 4.47$, $SD = .964$), $t(40) =$

Table 7: Combined t-test results for 1965 and subsequent years on muscularity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1965		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1965	3.85	.687	--	--	--
1975	3.48	.898	.376	1.81	32.983
1985	3.63	.874	.227	1.403	77.523
1995	4.88	1.356	-1.020	-2.091	7.517
2005	4.47	.964	-.619	-2.586*	24.439

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

-3.459, $p = .001$. Again, male models in 1975 had levels of muscularity that were significantly less than those in subsequent years.

Table 8: Combined t-test results for 1975 and subsequent years on muscularity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1975		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1975	3.48	.898	--	--	--
1985	3.63	.874	-.150	-.657	64
1995	4.88	1.356	-1.397	-3.312*	29
2005	4.47	.964	-.995	-3.459**	40

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Finally, statistics revealed significant differences between the muscularity levels of 1985 models ($M = 3.63$, $SD = .874$) and 1995 models ($M = 4.88$, $SD = 1.356$), $t(8.114) = -2.51$, $p = .036$; and between the 1985 models ($M = 3.63$, $SD = .874$) and 2005 models ($M = 4.47$, $SD = .964$), $t(60) = -3.41$, $p = .001$.

Table 9: Combined t-test results for 1975 and subsequent years on muscularity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1985		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1985	3.63	.874	--	--	--
1995	4.88	1.356	-1.247	-2.51*	8.114
2005	4.47	.964	-.846	-3.41**	60

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Table 10: T-test results for 1995 & 2005 on muscularity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1995		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1995	4.88	1.356	--	--	--
2005	4.47	.964	.401	.875	25

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Research Question 3

This question analyzed the nudity level associated with the male models in the magazine advertisements. Based on coder ratings from the scale, the following statistically significant results were obtained.

First, magazine ads in the 1955 issue ($M = 1.3$, $SD = .688$) had statistically lower levels of nudity than those in the 1995 issue ($M = 2.75$, $SD = .707$), $t(76) = -5.63$, $p = .000$; this was also true between the 1955 ($M = 1.3$, $SD = .688$) and 2005 issues ($M = 1.74$, $SD = .806$), $t(87) = -2.36$, $p = .02$.

T-tests between the 1965 issue and later issues also revealed statistically significant differences. Male models in the 1965 issue ($M = 1.53$, $SD = .813$) exhibited more levels of nudity than did those in the 1975 issue ($M = 1.17$, $SD = 3.88$), $t(74.584) = 2.59$, $p = .011$. Contrastingly, ads in the 1965 issue ($M = 1.53$, $SD = .813$) had considerably less nudity than ads in the 1995 issue ($M = 2.75$, $SD = .707$), $t(61) = -4.03$, $p = .000$.

Table 11: Combined t-test results for 1955 and subsequent years on nudity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1955		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1955	1.3	.688	--	--	--
1965	1.53	.813	-.227	-1.69	123
1975	1.17	3.88	.126	1.09	67.969
1985	1.33	.68	-.026	-.19	111
1995	2.75	.707	-1.45	-5.63**	76
2005	1.74	.806	-.437	-2.36*	87

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Table 12: Combined t-test results for 1965 and subsequent years on nudity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1965		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1965	1.53	.813	--	--	--
1975	1.17	3.88	.353	2.59*	74.584
1985	1.33	.68	.202	1.34	95.527
1995	2.75	.707	-1.223	-4.03**	61
2005	1.74	.806	-2.10	-.97	72

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Results also revealed a significant difference between the nudity level of male models in the 1975 ($M = 1.17$, $SD = 3.88$) and 1995 issues ($M = 2.75$, $SD = .707$), $t(8.51) = -5.99$, $p = .000$; a similar relationship was found between the 1975 ($M = 1.17$, $SD = 3.88$) and 2005 ($M = 1.74$, $SD = .806$) issues, $t(24.798) = -2.79$, $p = .01$.

Male models in magazine ads found in the 1985 issue ($M = 1.33$, $SD = .68$) were statistically less nude than those in the 1995 issue ($M = 2.75$, $SD = .707$), $t(49) = -5.41$, $p = .000$; the same was found between the 1985 ($M = 1.33$, $SD = .68$) and 2005 issues ($M = 1.74$, $SD = .806$), $t(60) = -2.07$, $p = .042$.

Table 13: Combined t-test results for 1975 and subsequent years on nudity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1975		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1975	1.17	3.88	--	--	--
1985	1.33	.68	-.152	-1.15	63.677
1995	2.75	.707	-1.576	-5.99**	8.51
2005	1.74	.806	-.563	-2.79*	24.798

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Table 14: Combined t-test results for 1985 and subsequent years on nudity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1985		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1985	1.33	.68	--	--	--
1995	2.75	.707	-1.424	-5.41**	49
2005	1.74	.806	-.411	-2.07*	60

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Finally, the nudity levels of advertisements in the 1995 issue ($M = 2.75$, $SD = .707$) were found to be considerably greater than those in the 2005 issue ($M = 1.74$, $SD = .806$), $t(25) = 3.09$, $p = .005$.

Table 15: T-test results for 1995 & 2005 on nudity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with 1995		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
1995	2.75	.707	--	--	--
2005	1.74	.806	1.013	3.09	25

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Research Question 4

In addition to comparing the levels of fat, muscularity, and nudity of male models in advertisements by year, comparison was also conducted based on the type of advertisement analyzed. More specifically, this question explored whether there were significant differences in the fat, muscularity, and nudity levels of models in photographed advertisements versus those in illustrated ones. Significant differences were observed in terms of muscularity: models in photo ads ($M = 3.86$, $SD = .93$) were found to be more muscular than models in illustration ads ($M = 3.51$, $SD = .669$), $t(216) = 2.55$, $p = .012$. In addition, photo ads ($M = 1.53$, $SD = .816$) were more likely to contain a higher level of nudity than illustration ads did ($M = 1.17$, $SD = .47$), $t(155.338) = 3.95$, $p = .000$.

Table 16: T-test results for Photo vs. Illustration ads on all three scales

	Photograph		Illustration		Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
	M	SD	M	SD			
Fat	4.4	1.168	4.28	1.321	.117	.61	216
Muscularity	3.86	.93	3.51	.669	.351	2.55*	216
Nudity	1.53	.816	1.17	.47	.357	3.95**	155.338

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Research Question 5

This research question explored significant differences in the fat, muscularity, and nudity levels of male models based on product categories. Using an array of independent sample t-tests, all nine product categories were compared based on their scale scores to see which in particular had significantly more/less fat, muscularity, and nudity across the years.

Fat. One product category that exhibited significant differences in fat levels among many of the other categories was swimsuits/underwear. Models in swimsuit/underwear

advertisements ($M = 3$, $SD = .577$) were found to have significantly less fat levels than those in automobile ads ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.025$), $t(21) = -2.1$, $p = .048$; clothing advertisements ($M = 4.5$, $SD = 1.171$), $t(9.518) = -6.12$, $p = .000$; ads for diet and exercise products/services ($M = 4$, $SD = 1.118$), $t(12.471) = -2.32$, $p = .038$; shoes and accessories advertisements ($M = 4.5$, $SD = .85$), $t(15) = -4.04$, $p = .001$; travel/entertainment/leisure/food ads ($M = 4.44$, $SD = 1.5$), $t(30) = -2.46$, $p = .02$; advertisements for sinful products ($M = 4.67$, $SD = 1.237$), $t(21.903) = -4.58$, $p = .000$; and other ads ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 1.151$), $t(18.968) = -4.36$, $p = .000$.

Table 17: Combined significant t-test results for Swimsuits/underwear and other product categories on fat scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with Swimsuits/underwear		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Swimsuits/underwear	3	.577	--	--	--
Automobile	3.88	1.025	-.875	-2.1*	21
Clothing	4.5	1.171	-1.5	-6.12**	9.518
Diet and exercise products/services	4	1.118	-1	-2.32*	12.471
Shoes & accessories	4.5	.850	-1.5	-4.04**	15
Travel/entertainment/leisure/food	4.44	1.5	-1.44	-2.46*	30
Sinful products	4.67	1.237	-1.667	-4.58**	21.903
Other	4.64	1.151	-1.643	-4.36**	18.968

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Moreover, male models in clothing advertisements ($M = 4.5$, $SD = 1.171$) were found to have significantly greater fat levels than male models in automobile advertisements ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.025$), $t(124) = 2.02$, $p = .045$.

Muscularity. Male models in diet and exercise products/services advertisements ($M = 5$, $SD = 1.5$) had significantly higher levels of muscularity than those in automobile ads ($M = 3.38$, $SD = .5$), $t(9.012) = 3.15$, $p = .012$; clothing advertisements ($M = 3.76$, $SD = .777$), $t(8.355) = 2.45$, $p = .039$; advertisements for travel/entertainments/leisure/food products ($M =$

Table 18: T-test with Clothing and Automobile product categories on fat scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with Clothing		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Clothing	4.5	1.171	--	--	--
Automobile	3.88	1.025	.625	2.02*	124

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

3.6, $SD = .707$), $t(9.311) = 2.69$, $p = .024$; ads for sinful products ($M = 3.39$, $SD = .778$), $t(10.207) = 3.03$, $p = .012$; and other advertisements ($M = 3.43$, $SD = .514$), $t(9.219) = 3.03$, $p = .014$.

Table 19: Combined significant t-test results for Diet and exercise products/services and other product categories on muscularity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with Diet and exercise products/services		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Diet and exercise products/services	5	1.5	--	--	--
Automobile	3.38	.5	1.625	3.15*	9.012
Clothing	3.76	.777	1.236	2.45*	8.355
Travel/entertainment/leisure/food	3.6	.707	1.4	2.69*	9.311
Sinful products	3.39	.778	1.611	3.03*	10.207
Other	3.43	.514	1.571	3.03*	9.219

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Male models in swimsuit/underwear advertisements ($M = 4.71$, $SD = .756$) also exhibited significantly higher levels of muscularity than those in automobile ads ($M = 3.38$, $SD = .5$), $t(21) = 5.06$, $p = .000$; clothing advertisements ($M = 3.76$, $SD = .777$), $t(115) = 3.14$, $p = .002$; advertisements for travel/entertainments/leisure/food products ($M = 3.6$, $SD = .707$), $t(30) = 3.63$, $p = .001$; ads for sinful products ($M = 3.39$, $SD = .778$), $t(23) = 3.85$, $p = .001$; and other advertisements ($M = 3.43$, $SD = .514$), $t(19) = 4.62$, $p = .000$

Table 20: Combined significant t-test results for Swimsuits/underwear and other products categories on muscularity scale

	M	SD	t-test with Swimsuits/underwear		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Swimsuits/underwear	4.71	.756	--	--	--
Automobile	3.38	.5	1.339	5.06**	21
Clothing	3.76	.777	.951	3.14*	115
Travel/entertainment/leisure/food	3.6	.707	1.114	3.63**	30
Sinful products	3.39	.778	1.325	3.85**	23
Other	3.43	.514	1.286	4.62**	19

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Similarly, male models in shoes & accessories ads ($M = 4.2$, $SD = .632$) were observed to have significantly greater muscularity than those in automobile ads ($M = 3.38$, $SD = .5$), $t(24) = 3.69$, $p = .001$; advertisements for travel/entertainments/leisure/food products ($M = 3.6$, $SD = .707$), $t(33) = 2.33$, $p = .026$; ads for sinful products ($M = 3.39$, $SD = .778$), $t(26) = 2.82$, $p = .009$; and other advertisements ($M = 3.43$, $SD = .514$), $t(22) = 3.29$, $p = .003$.

Nudity. Statistics revealed greater nudity levels in the diet and exercise products/services ads ($M = 2.56$, $SD = .527$) than in automobile ads ($M = 1$, $SD = 0$), $t(8) = 8.85$, $p = .000$; clothing advertisements ($M = 1.37$, $SD = .689$), $t(117) = 5.03$, $p = .000$; shoes and accessories advertisements ($M = 1.6$, $SD = .843$), $t(17) = 2.92$, $p = .010$; travel/entertainment/leisure/food ads ($M = 1.4$, $SD = .764$), $t(32) = 4.175$, $p = .000$; advertisements for sinful products ($M = 1.11$, $SD = .323$), $t(11.11) = 7.543$, $p = .000$; and other ads ($M = 1.14$, $SD = .535$), $t(21) = 6.22$, $p = .000$.

Male models in swimsuit/underwear advertisements exhibited greater levels of nudity ($M = 2.86$, $SD = .378$) than those in automobile ads ($M = 1$, $SD = 0$), $t(6) = 13$, $p = .000$; clothing advertisements ($M = 1.37$, $SD = .689$), $t(8.783) = 9.11$, $p = .000$; shoes and accessories advertisements ($M = 1.6$, $SD = .843$), $t(13.268) = 4.16$, $p = .001$;

Table 21: Combined significant t-test results for Shoes & accessories and other product categories on muscularity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with Shoes & accessories		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Shoes & accessories	4.2	.632	--	--	--
Automobile	3.38	.5	.825	3.69**	24
Travel/entertainment/leisure/food	3.6	.707	.6	2.33*	33
Sinful products	3.39	.778	.811	2.82*	26
Other	3.43	.514	.771	3.29*	22

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Table 22: Combined significant t-test results for Diet and exercise products/services and other product categories on nudity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with Diet and exercise products/services		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Diet and exercise products/services	2.56	.527	--	--	--
Automobile	1	0	1.556	8.85**	8
Clothing	1.37	.689	1.183	5.03**	117
Shoes & accessories	1.6	.843	.956	2.92*	17
Travel/entertainment/leisure/food	1.4	.764	1.156	4.175**	32
Sinful products	1.11	.323	1.44	7.543**	11.11
Other	1.14	.535	1.413	6.22**	21

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

travel/entertainment/leisure/food ads ($M = 1.4$, $SD = .764$), $t(20.774) = 6.97$, $p = .000$; ads for toiletries ($M = 1.89$, $SD = 1.167$), $t(10.061) = 2.34$, $p = .041$; advertisements for sinful products ($M = 1.11$, $SD = .323$), $t(23) = 11.58$, $p = .000$; and other ads ($M = 1.14$, $SD = .535$), $t(19) = 7.55$, $p = .000$.

Table 23: Combined significant t-test results for Swimsuits/underwear and other product categories on nudity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with Swimsuits/underwear		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Swimsuits/underwear	2.86	.378	--	--	--
Automobile	1	.0	1.857	13**	6
Clothing	1.37	.689	1.484	9.11**	8.783
Shoes & accessories	1.6	.843	1.257	4.16**	13.268
Travel/entertainment/leisure/food	1.4	.764	1.457	6.97**	20.774
Toiletries	1.89	1.167	.968	2.34*	10.061
Sinful products	1.11	.323	1.764	11.58**	23
Other	1.14	.535	1.714	7.55**	19

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Male models in clothing advertisements ($M = 1.37$, $SD = .689$) had significantly greater levels of nudity than those in automobile ads ($M = 1$, $SD = 0$), $t(109) = 5.68$, $p = .000$ and ads for sinful products ($M = 1.11$, $SD = .323$), $t(47.528) = 2.6$, $p = .012$.

Table 24: Combined significant t-test results for Clothing and other product categories on nudity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with Clothing		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Clothing	1.37	.689	--	--	--
Automobile	1	0	.373	5.68**	109
Sinful products	1.11	.323	.262	2.6*	47.528

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Finally, automobile advertisements ($M = 1$, $SD = 0$) were found to have less nudity than travel/entertainment/leisure/food advertisements ($M = 1.4$, $SD = .764$), $t(241.11) = -2.62$, $p = .015$.

Table 25: T-test with Automobile and Travel/entertainment/leisure/food product categories on nudity scale

	M	SD	<i>t</i> -test with Automobile		
			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Automobile	1	0	--	--	--
Travel/entertainment/leisure/food	1.4	.764	-.4	-2.62*	241.11

Note. * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .001$

Discussion & Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine the transformation of the male body ideal over time by analyzing male models in advertisements found in the June 1955, 1965, 1975, 1985, 1995, and 2005 issues of *Esquire* magazine. Results from RQ1 indicated a significant downward trend in male models' fat levels over time. RQ2 revealed a significant upward trend in male models' muscularity over time. These findings coincide with previous studies that examined the evolving male body ideal and observed male body representations becoming less fat and more muscular over several decades (Leit et al., 2000; Pope et al., 1999). They also reinforce the literature's reference to the current male body ideal as mesomorphic and hypermuscular (Arbour & Ginis, 2006; Grogan & Richards, 2002; Grogan, Williams, & Conner, 1996; Hatoum & Belle, 2004; Leit, Gray, & Pope, 2002; Morry & Staska, 2001; Pope, Olivardia, Gruber, & Borowiecki, 1999), highlighting high muscularity and low adiposity (Barlett et al., 2008; Engeln et al., 2013; Hatoum & Belle, 2004).

Results from RQ3 demonstrated that nudity levels generally increase over time, but two differences were found to deviate from this (males models in the 1965 issue were found to exhibit greater levels of nudity than those of the 1975 issue, and male models in the 1995 issue were found to exhibit greater levels of nudity than those of the 2005 issue). RQ4 revealed that male models in illustrated advertisements were less muscular and less nude than male models in photographed advertisements. Because the majority of the illustrated ads came from the earlier issues, and models in the earlier issues were found to have less muscularity and nudity than those in subsequent issues, this conclusion is logical.

Finally, RQ5 compared all product categories on the fat, muscularity, and nudity scales. Male models in swimsuit/underwear advertisements were leaner than male models in automobile, clothing, diet & exercise products/services, shoes & accessories, travel/entertainment/leisure/food, sinful products, and other advertisements. This would be

expected, as swimsuit/underwear advertisements will likely have more nudity, encouraging the advertiser to display a more “ideal” body type. In addition, models in automobile ads were found to be leaner than those in clothing ads.

In terms of muscularity, diet & exercise products/services advertisements were found to display more muscular models than automobile, clothing, travel/entertainments/leisure/food, sinful products, and other advertisements did. This is not a surprise, considering the fact that diet & exercise products/services advertisements are aimed at men who desire more muscular bodies; consequently, displaying a muscular ideal as an end goal to using the advertised product/service is understandable. Similarly, swimsuit/underwear advertisements showed more muscular male models than automobile ads, travel/entertainments/leisure/food products, and other advertisements did. Again, because swimsuit/underwear ad models will likely have more nudity, advertisers will be compelled to display an ideal body. In addition, male models in shoes & accessories advertisements were more muscular than those in advertisements for automobiles, travel/entertainments/leisure/food products/services, sinful products, and other products/services.

Finally, in terms of nudity, diet & exercise products/services ads displayed greater nudity levels than automobile, clothing, shoes & accessories, travel/entertainment/leisure/food, sinful products, and other ads did. The fact that most people use exercise machinery without being fully clothed and the motivation of advertisers to display as much as they can of the ideal body they imply will be reached by the use of the advertised products/services makes this finding understandable. Male models in ads for swimsuit/underwear were found to be more nude than those in ads for automobiles, clothing, shoes & accessories, travel/entertainment/leisure/food products/services, toiletries, sinful products, and other products. This finding seems logical because of the nature of swimsuits

and underwear; generally, these items are displayed and worn without other items of clothing. Male models in clothing advertisements displayed more nudity than those in automobile and sinful products advertisements. Finally, male models in travel/entertainment/leisure/food advertisements exhibited greater nudity than those in automobile advertisements. This is possibly due to the fact that a number of travel advertisements featured beach resorts, with males in swimsuits and other beachwear.

Implications

The results brought forth by this study provide implications for both the producer side (i.e. the ad industry) as well as the consumer side (i.e. those exposed to ads) of advertising. Although this study does not prove causation, previous studies in the literature have found a link between unrealistic body ideals in the media and negative physical and psychological repercussions such as eating disorders, radical dieting, unhealthy eating patterns, excessive exercise, unnecessary supplement intake, steroid abuse, low self-esteem, depression, social anxiety, and a poorer health-related quality of life (Agliata & Tantleff-Dunn, 2004; Barlett et al., 2008; Cafri et al., 2005; Cash, 1996; Cash et al., 2004; Engeln et al., 2013; Galioto & Crowther, 2013; Giovanelli et al., 2008; Grogan et al., 1996; Grogan & Richards, 2004; Hatoum & Belle, 2004; McDonald & Thompson, 1992; Morry & Staska, 2001; Olivardia et al., 2004; Thompson & Stice, 2001; van den Berg et al., 2007). These very real and potentially harmful effects increase the severity of the issue of unrealistic body ideal representations in advertising.

The advertising industry should work on initiatives to display more realistic body images. Not only should advertisements present ideal bodies more realistically (i.e. should not automatically alter images substantially), but they should also focus on displaying a broad range of body types on an equal pedestal (for example, models with high fat levels should not

always be displayed in a humorous manner). This will send a message about the acceptability of different body types and the fact that a certain body type that is impossible to achieve by most is the only thing regarded as perfect. The Dove® Campaign for Real Beauty is an example of an advertiser that has embraced this idea and taken a step towards disagreeing with the confinement of the body ideal as a single unrealistic representation. As a part of their campaign, the advertiser launched an advertisement in June 2005 with an image of six “real” women in underwear with all of their tattoos, scars, fat, and curves unaltered; this ad kick-started a forum of discussion about the “only thin is beautiful” stereotype (Dove Official Website, 2015).

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) can also begin to enforce rules and regulations relating to bodies displayed in advertising. Advertisers could be required to comply with guidelines for disclosing the use of photo editing programs and to what extent these programs were used. The FTC can also impose a ceiling on image manipulation and decide how far images can be technologically altered before they become too unrealistic and therefore unacceptable for display.

On the other side, consumers need to understand that advertising sometimes presents unrealistic standards in the bodies they display. They should be more educated about the role of advertising in persuading people to achieve hyperrealistic goals and glamorizing ideals that are not necessarily easy or safe to achieve. Moreover, consumers should be aware of the fact that advertisers are not required to disclose the extent to which the images of models have been technologically altered, or “touched-up”; there is no penalty for them passing Photoshopped, airbrushed images as reality. If targeted consumers are informed with all of this, they can have the knowledge to critically analyze the legitimacy of body images in advertisements as opposed to taking them for face value and using them as body goals that, if they cannot physically achieve, may cause them to resort to dangerous activities or behaviors.

Finally, a (possibly abstract) implication is the fact that cultural standards are subjective, and there is no single “ideal body.” Every person has physical capabilities that cannot achieve certain combinations of fat and muscularity levels. Just because a body is presented in an advertisement does not necessarily mean that it is the body type a person should desire and work to achieve at all costs. Although cultural standards have the greatest influence on us as human beings, we should learn to think on our own and strive for a healthy body type that we are personally comfortable and satisfied with.

Limitations & Future Directions

Just as with any research study, the current study is not without limitations. First, the current study analyzed only *Esquire* magazines. Although *Esquire* magazine is itself a great representation of the magazines targeted for this study (general male interest with issues dating back to at least the 1950s), the results accrued from it are not enough to generalize on the whole. Future research can analyze other general male audience magazines in addition to *Esquire* (such as *GQ* and *Sports Illustrated*) to observe whether the shift in male body ideals is a ubiquitous trend, and if so, how clearly it is represented in each of these different publications.

Another hindrance to generalizability was the use of only one magazine issue per decade (1955, 1965, 1975, 1985, 1995, and 2005), due to time and resource constraints. A similar limitation is the sole use of June issues. Although the reasoning behind this decision was to decrease complications related to coding because of the likelihood of greater levels of nudity overall, this does not eliminate the possibility of compromising the generalizability of results. Further studies should include a larger sample that incorporates more magazine issues by month and year.

Moreover, this study deploys a content analysis. Because the purpose of research is only to analyze the existence of a possible trend, there is no way to test the effect of these patterns and body ideals on the consumer. Future studies may deploy experiments or interviews with men across all age groups to see if the differing body ideals held by males from different generations run parallel with the trends observed in this study.

Finally, the body ideals discussed in this study pertain to Western cultural standards, and the magazine chosen is an American publication. Future studies can extend the current study by examining other countries' body ideals as represented in native media. Furthermore, imported media can be analyzed to see whether the body ideals represented are tailored to the importing country, or whether in addition to media, body ideals are being imported as well.

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Vita

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