

Georgia State University

**ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University**

---

Communication Theses

Department of Communication

---

5-16-2005

## **Gender Images and Power in Magazine Advertisements: The Consciousness Scale Revisited**

Lorie N. Bonham

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/communication\\_theses](https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/communication_theses)



Part of the [Communication Commons](#)

---

### **Recommended Citation**

Bonham, Lorie N., "Gender Images and Power in Magazine Advertisements: The Consciousness Scale Revisited." Thesis, Georgia State University, 2005.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.57709/1061267>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Communication at ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Communication Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@gsu.edu](mailto:scholarworks@gsu.edu).

GENDER IMAGES AND POWER IN MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS:

THE CONSCIOUSNESS SCALE REVISITED

by

LORIE BONHAM

Under the Direction of David Cheshier

ABSTRACT

This study re-evaluates the Consciousness Scale originally formulated by Pingree et al. in 1976. The element of assumed power was added to the Consciousness Scale, which was then used to evaluate 516 magazine advertisements from 1999 to determine if the Consciousness Scale still accurately evaluates sexism in media. A set of advertisements was culled which had contradictory Consciousness Scale and power ratings. The set was evaluated, revealing common themes, which created difficulty in coding these modern images. The study revealed that while the Consciousness Scale can still provide a valuable tool in evaluating media images, the change in the social dynamic of women as well as minorities and how advertisers portray them must be taken into account. The element of power as well as a more nuanced reading of each level of the Consciousness Scale creates a more modern and complex evaluation of gender images in the media.

INDEX WORDS: Consciousness Scale, Gender Images, Race, Sexuality, Magazine Advertisements, Power, Sexism, Media

GENDER IMAGES AND POWER IN MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS:  
THE CONSCIOUSNESS SCALE REVISITED

by

LORIE BONHAM

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

**Masters of Arts**

Georgia State University

2005

Copyright by  
Lorie Neisel Bonham

GENDER IMAGES AND POWER IN MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS:  
THE CONSCIOUSNESS SCALE REVISITED

by

LORIE BONHAM

Major Professor: David Cheshier  
Committee: Cynthia Hoffner  
Carol Winkler

Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Studies  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Georgia State University  
2005

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Consciousness Scale.....	2
Power.....	8
Sample Analysis of Potential Problematic Advertisements.....	10
Research Project.....	12
2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	14
Gender and Advertisements in the 1970's.....	14
Gender and Advertisements in the 1980's.....	20
Gender and Advertisements in Recent Research.....	29
Related Research.....	41
Implications of Existing Research.....	52
3 REPLICATING/MODIFYING CONSCIOUSNESS SCALE RESEARCH: METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES.....	54
Measurement Variables.....	57
The Coding Process.....	60
Results and Discussion of the Coding Process.....	61

Implications for Study of Power.....	73
4 ANALYSIS OF DISCREPANCY IMAGES.....	75
The Womyn of Level 5 Portrayals.....	76
Analysis of Discrepancy Set By Product.....	83
Discrepancy Compared to Non-Discrepancy Set.....	134
5 CONCLUSION.....	145
REFERENCES.....	155
APPENDIX.....	159

## TABLES

1	Consciousness Scale for Media Sexism: Women.....	16
2	Goffman's Six Categories of Decoding Behavior.....	18
3	Kang's Findings.....	36
4	Correlations- Coder A and Coder B for Q1.....	62
5	Correlations- Coder A and Coder B for Q2a.....	62
6	Consciousness and Power Scale Correlations.....	63
7	Relation Between Consciousness Scale and Power Code.....	63
8	Levels of Consciousness of Advertisements in Four Magazines- 1999.....	66
9	Levels of Consciousness of Advertisements in Four Magazines- 1976.....	67
10	Comparison Table 8 and Table 9: Level of Consciousness of Advertisements in Four Magazines.....	67
11	Crosstabulation of Power and Consciousness Scale.....	68
12	CS* Referent Crosstabulation.....	71
13	CS* Reward Crosstabulation.....	71
14	CS* Another Crosstabulation.....	72
15	CS* Coercive Crosstabulation.....	72
16	CS* Legitimate Crosstabulation.....	73
17	CS* Expert Crosstabulation.....	73



## FIGURES

1	Dior.....	11
2	Disaronno.....	11
3	Proactiv.....	85
4	Organic Root Stimulator.....	85
5	Oil of Olay.....	86
6	Dove.....	87
7	Frizz Free.....	87
8	Scudder.....	90
9	Comfort Bath.....	93
10	Migraine Ice.....	93
11	Glucophage.....	95
12	Blue Cross Blue Shield.....	96
13	Contact Cleaner.....	96
14	Tums.....	98
15	Breast Cancer Drug (Nolvadex).....	99
16	Breast Cancer Drug (Nolvadex).....	100
17	Osteoporosis Prevention (Merck).....	101
18	Poise.....	103
19	Always.....	104
20	Weight Watchers.....	106

21 Kraft.....	108
22 151 Bar.....	108
23 Altoids.....	109
24 Winston.....	112
25 Newport.....	112
26 Disaronno.....	114
27 Glenlivet.....	115
28 Sketchers.....	116
29 Playtex Body Language.....	117
30 L'eggs SilkenMist.....	118
31 Benetton.....	119
32 Esprit.....	120
33 Elisabeth Arden.....	121
34 Lycra Dockers.....	124
35 Casual Corner.....	124
36 The Grown-Up Guide to Computing.....	126
37 Pocket e-mail.....	126
38 Toshiba DVD.....	128
39 1-800-Collect.....	128
40 Executive Women's Golf Association.....	131
41 The Best Man.....	131

42	Mattress.....	133
43	Saturn.....	134
44	L'eggs SheerEnergy.....	136
45	Clarins.....	137
46	Loreal.....	138
47	Bali.....	140
48	Visa.....	141
49	PaineWebber.....	142

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The late 1970's and early 1980's saw the publication of a new brand of studies on the relationship between advertising and gender. These studies took a critical look at how advertisements framed womyn<sup>1</sup> in the world they inhabit, and methodologically speaking they tended to coalesce around a set of measures which interrogated advertising based on a fairly straightforward reading of gender portrayals. If research today on these topics exhibits shortcomings, it is not on account of its quantity, but in its continued reliance on the methodological perspectives first articulated in those early works, which persists despite social changes which have much complicated projects based on an assumption that decoding can be made transparent.

The research on gender and advertising continues to offer important insights, but as one reviews the literature, several themes can be concretely observed. Studies assessing gender portrayals are often stagnant methodologically, since they often rely on coding systems dating from the 1970's that nonetheless continue to be applied to womyn in the late 1990's. As I aim to establish, even those coding schemes that are basically valid in assessing gender inequity may fall short, since the changed cultural conditions for womyn in the new century have elicited advertising that navigates gender difference with more complex portrayals.

---

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this project, I will use this spelling of woman and women, since I'm persuaded that it is more consistent with a politics of genuine feminist empowerment.

### *The Consciousness Scale*

Two areas of scholarship have centered on gender portrayal issues: advertising/marketing and communication/cultural studies. The underlying premises of the research programs are quite different, as are their conclusions, but the coding schemes on which both rely are often the same.

Perhaps the most well known scheme for coding gender portrayals in advertising (and thus also given considerable attention here) is the *Consciousness Scale*, proposed by Pingree, Hawkins, Butler and Paisley in 1976. Before this study, the first widely known assessment of gender portrayals was undertaken by Courtney and Lockertz in 1971. They found the following gender stereotypes were the most common: “a womyn’s place is in the home”; “womyn do not make important decisions or do important things”; “womyn are dependant and need men’s protection”; “and men regard womyn primarily as sexual objects, and are uninterested in womyn as people” (1971, p. 94-95). The work of Pingree et al. can be viewed as an extension of this initial project, and as they looked at gendered advertisements, Pingree et al. created an ordinal scale to code gender portrayals into five levels.

In two publications, *A Scale for Sexism* by Suzanne Pingree et al. (1976) and *Woman and the Mass Media* by Butler and Paisley (1980) this scale was elaborated. Level I womyn were those depicted as quintessential dumb blondes, sex objects, or victims (Pingree et al., 1976). This womyn is essentially decorative for the marketed product, and less than a person (Pingree et al., 1976). Level II includes womyn who are mothers, wives, secretaries, teachers, and nurses or who fill other traditionally feminine occupations (Butler & Paisley, 1980). They are invariably shown only in these “traditional” womynly roles (Pingree et al., 1976). Level III womyn are shown as wives and mothers, but are also portrayed as professionals. The implicit message of this kind of advertising is that a womyn’s first place is in the home. Level IV recognizes man

and womyn as equal; though these representations were considered rare (Butler & Paisley, 1980). Finally, Level V womyn are not portrayed based simply on their sex, but are shown as individuals, with common representations including what Butler and Paisley call *role reversal* (where womyn are shown occupying roles traditionally associated with men) and *the unusual role*, where womyn are portrayed in roles unusual for anyone, such as when womyn are shown as mountain climbers (1980).

This is only one of the numerous studies and coding systems that proliferated during this two-decade period, but it (and the initial work of Courtney and Lockertz) is still cited as a major reference point and it can be seen as largely exemplifying the rest. Their work has been cited in numerous studies, including work by Carolyn Lin (1999), William Kilbourne (1990), Mee-Eun Kang (1997), Jean Kilbourne (1999), Michael Klassen, Cynthia Jasper, and Anne Schwartz (1993) and others. The Consciousness Scale has been important in framing an operational consensus around the following ideas: The mass media (and specifically advertising) shows womyn in stereotypical ways. Media portrayals function as a conditioning tool perpetuating the dominant ideology, reinforcing a larger pernicious worldview about womyn (Meyers, 1999). By creating these structures of meaning, advertising is selling *us to ourselves* (Williamson, 1978). The mass media reinforces cultural norms about womyn, reiterating hierarchical social formations, thereby supporting the views of those in power/ those who have authority (Meyers, 1999). The work done by Jean Kilbourne (1999) shows how even when the intent of advertisers is not apparently to reinforce the ideology of patriarchy, the advertising industry's use of images and ideas perpetuates it, even if only as an indirect consequence.

Positioning a womyn (as a being and with respect to other "objects") "teaches" an audience to think of her as both advertisement and gender enactment. This is why it is important

to study womyn and advertising, and the schemes used to categorize their portrayals. The evaluation and reevaluation of womyn in advertising is important as the advertising world changes, but also as the worldview of American society changes. Though texts are a “product(s) of the dominant ideology,” they are also open to interpretation, reinterpretation, and re-evaluation by the audiences they reach (Meyers, 1999, p. 8).

Although the 1970’s was not that long ago, and though the evolving scene of gender relations may be only slowly modified, coding systems like the Consciousness Scale were nonetheless created in a different time, when womyn played different roles in society. Womyn today, with greater frequency and sometimes more disposable income, more often run single-parent households. Womyn run major businesses and run for and win more elected political seats, in addition to succeeding in many arenas (like athletics), becoming superstars more often than before when compared to their male counterparts. Their “beauty” is still “sold,” of course, but sometimes their ability as womyn who achieve “great” things regardless of their appearance is also sold. Additionally, models now occupy a more complicated subject position in American culture. They remain “beauty” objects, but also thrive as spokeswomyn, actresses, singers, and pop icons.

These changing roles for womyn have blurred the clean lines created by the Consciousness Scale. The resulting danger is that the increasing possibilities for both oppression and emancipation may be missed by the simplicity of older analytical frameworks. Consider the example of advertising that portrays female athletes. Where do they fit into the Consciousness Scale? Because such ads celebrate athletes as womyn who have done great things, they might be plausibly coded as either Level IV or Level V, but either categorization would miss the other gender work accomplished by the portrayal. If such an ad is coded as Level IV (where womyn

are shown in roles equal to men), this coding may undervalue how many audience members will read an image of super-successful female athletes, e.g., how such an image signals a womyn's ability to out-play her male counterparts. Nor does a Level IV coding (by virtue of its emphasis on *equality*) capture how gender remains a central aspect of the campaign's persuasive power to sell. If the ad is coded as Level V, where womyn are treated as individuals, the same problem remains, since Level V categorization seems to downplay how gender remains exploited in a portrayal.

Or consider an actress, politician, model, or singing star, who because of her prolific talents has broken down category distinctions traditionally controlled by or defined with respect to men. These womyn might be celebrated for their work because they are womyn, but such an acknowledgement may not be understood (either by advertising agency intention or popular reception) as disparagement. As society begins to recognize womyn as talented in an apparently sincere way (such as one might encounter in portrayals produced by womyn to run in publications read mainly by womyn), even when such recognition to some extent invariably traffics in a semiotic system where older gender stereotypes still circulate, the Consciousness Scale should be revisited and made more nuanced. More than ever womyn are expected to be mothers, models, maids, and masterminds of the 16-hour day. Such expectations have not only continued to blur the scales, but may require their radical reformulation. Because the roles of womyn have changed in the past twenty years, the time is appropriate for a reevaluation of the Pingree et al. 1976 study.

The literature of advertising/marketing and of communication/cultural studies has begun to realize that womyn's roles are changing as it looks at more complex issues like race, where men fit in the make believe world of advertising, and how audiences (from both a marketing and



sociological stance) react to gendered advertising. But to the extent this new subject matter is coded into old schemes, which are limited in their ability to reflect the complex “modern” world of dual income families or single parent families, where womyn are head households, their findings may be problematic simply by virtue of increasing oversimplification. Social norms have changed significantly since the publication of Pingree et al.’s Consciousness Scale, and relying on that scheme may no longer accurately reflect the gender reality.

Liesbet van Zoonen’s *Feminist Media Studies* (1994) compared the usefulness and utility of evaluating media texts in relation to gender by the use of content analysis and semiotics, and this work provides an important corrective to the prevailing direction of the current work. Too often, van Zoonen notes, content analyses fail to read “between the lines” of media depictions, coding only for explicitly present words, sentences, texts, and images. Van Zoonen uses gender in advertising to illustrate this potential limitation. Many content analyses, which conduct advertising time comparisons, will discover a change in the portrayal of womyn in the work force over time and use this discovered change to announce the appearance of a New Woman.

Such content analyses can easily fail to see this shift on its own terms, as simply the newest symptom of the advertising industry’s desire to capture the buying power of independent womyn. What is described as the discovery of a New Woman is thus nothing more than advertising’s having discovered a new trick for coopting feminist ideals of success. Such an evaluation points out how even nuanced content analysis may appear to evidence a broader social change from traditional role portrayals without seeing how other traditional notions of femininity are still very much at play within advertisements. Content analysis thereby reaches its limit (and in fact because content analysis instructs coders how to read something, this will always be a limitation), where its success in diagnosing *what* meaning is created, it diverts the

analyst away from an accurate account of *how* meaning is created or more to the point, how meaning is created by the viewer. Semiotics, which is partly aimed at decoding the symbols at play within an advertisement, does better at answering the question of *how* meaning is created, though it often accomplishes this by relying too much on the cultural knowledge of the analyzer (van Zoonen, 1994; Williamson, 1978).

This dichotomy (between *what* meaning is created and the more challenging issue of *how* that meaning is conveyed and understood) reveals a fundamental problem with the Consciousness Scale: it can name the portrayal, but cannot explain *how* the viewer creates the meaning. The intricate, though often *ad hoc*, rationale which produces the coding elides important ambiguities and thereby masks/prevents a fuller understanding of subtle social changes. Because many meanings compete for attention within a given advertisement, the Consciousness Scale may be too basic, failing to identify other dynamics (such as the subtleties of negotiated intersubjectively constituted *power*) which may be at work. Van Zoonen concludes with an argument for combining content analysis and semiotic analysis, where the former can be used as an inventory tool, and the latter “gives depth to and illustrate[s] the overall quantitative results” (van Zoonen, p. 86), and this study is an effort to implement her recommendation.

This study thus introduces a supplemented coding scheme, which significantly modifies the Consciousness Scale. As the advertising world becomes more clever in appealing to its more skeptical and savvy audience, advertisers are portraying womyn in radically new ways (Cortese, 1999), and it is the speculation of this thesis that the Consciousness Scale fails to capture issues of irony or complex power portrayals. The ordinal nature of the scale implies a hierarchy where womyn who are sex objects are always at the bottom and womyn who are in the boardroom or portrayed as individuals are always on the top of the social order. Such an observation about a

standard ordinal scale may seem banal, but in a world where womyn's identities are fragmented, divided, and categorized, such a hierarchical rating matters, and implicitly reproduces a cultural logic where womyn are understood solely as a function of the role she inhabits, rather than on her actual identity. Used in contemporary research, the scale seems to deny the possibility that womyn can be sex objects who deploy considerable power, thus failing to rightly value the power a womyn who may be portrayed as a sex object may have. Or, contrarily, the scale may lead one to overlook how the real accomplishments of even apparently influential trailblazing womyn can be subtly undone by the mechanisms of visual disparagement.

### *Power*

Because I argue that *power* is one term that begins to capture the complications of gender analysis, and is also obscured within use of the Consciousness Scale, it is important to briefly introduce research on the nature of power, though "power" is notoriously hard to define or specify. Max Weber defined *power* as the "probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his<sup>2</sup> own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests" (cited in Dahl, 1986, p. 39). Talcott Parsons defined power as "the means of acquiring control of the factors in effectiveness," and he notes power is not zero-sum, which is to say there is no fixed quantity of power, and accumulating power is not necessarily accomplished at someone else's expense (1986, p. 98). An additional understanding of *authority* is offered by Parsons, who states authority is being in a "position to legitimately make decisions which are binding, not only on himself but on the collectivity as a whole" (1986, p. 114).

---

<sup>2</sup> Throughout the project, when using direct quotes I will not gender paraphrase or change the spelling of *womyn* used by the author. I have explained my use of the alternate spelling of *womyn*, but despite my sense of its importance will not impose my preference on other authors.

John Kenneth Galbraith focuses on instruments and sources as a means to define how power is used. He defines the exercise of power as “the submission of some to the will of others” (1986, p. 218). *Condign*, the first instrument of power, is the ability to win submission by imposing (or treating) an unpleasant or negative effect. *Compensatory power*, conversely, is the ability to win submissions by offering positive or affirmative effects. Lastly, *conditioned power* is used when one induces another to change a belief. The first source for power, according to Galbraith, is personality or leadership. Property is the second source of power, wherein wealth accords authority and hence “invites conditioned submission” (1986, p. 214). Lastly, and most important, is an organizational source of power, which uses both persuasive and condign instruments of power.

These diverse definitions of power, though basic and orientational, nonetheless highlight some of the shortcomings of the Consciousness Scale. As womyn are portrayed within the scale, Level I womyn seemingly have no power (such a coding declares her always the victim) while Level IV and Level V womyn have power (or at least there she can claim a share of the power). But power is multivalent, and as important as objectification is in diagnosing power differentials, it is not the only relevant resource. A modified scale might better show how even some womyn reasonably coded as Level I (sex-object, victim, dumb blonde) can also be understood or read as deploying significant power. As I’ve mentioned, the ordinal levels of the Consciousness Scale reinforce society’s normative understanding of how womyn’s roles supposedly work, where the sex-object is understood (within the Consciousness Scale world) as already powerless because she is simply a two-dimensional non-thinking object. But this is a problematic categorization if the portrayal actually communicates something more complex. A supplemented scale and an

analysis of advertisements that problematize the scale will additionally shed light on the sometimes flawed assumptions behind the Consciousness Scale.

### *Sample Analysis of Potentially Problematic Advertisements*

Before describing the modifications undertaken here to the Consciousness Scale, a quick look at some sample advertisements featuring Level I womyn may help clarify the issue. The two advertisements below would typically classify the womyn shown as Level I in the Consciousness Scale, since the womyn in the advertisements are plainly sexualized even though I would argue they also have a power not recognized by the traditional coding instrument. The womyn in Figure 1 is sexualized, but is also a temptress whose hypnotic powers extend even over the audience (we know this because of the name of the product she endorses, *Hypnotic*, though the meaning is also plain enough in the carefully posed gaze by which she enchants the audience). She may be a “sex-object” but she is certainly not a victim or dumb; rather she deploys her sexual attraction to exert a kind of control.

The womyn in Figure 2 is again a sex object, but she clearly dominates the man who accompanies her in the advertisement. Note how she grips his head, pulling him toward her, and how he is apparently entranced and oblivious to the audience, unlike the womyn who controls the scene. Again, the womyn is sexualized, but certainly not dumb or a victim.

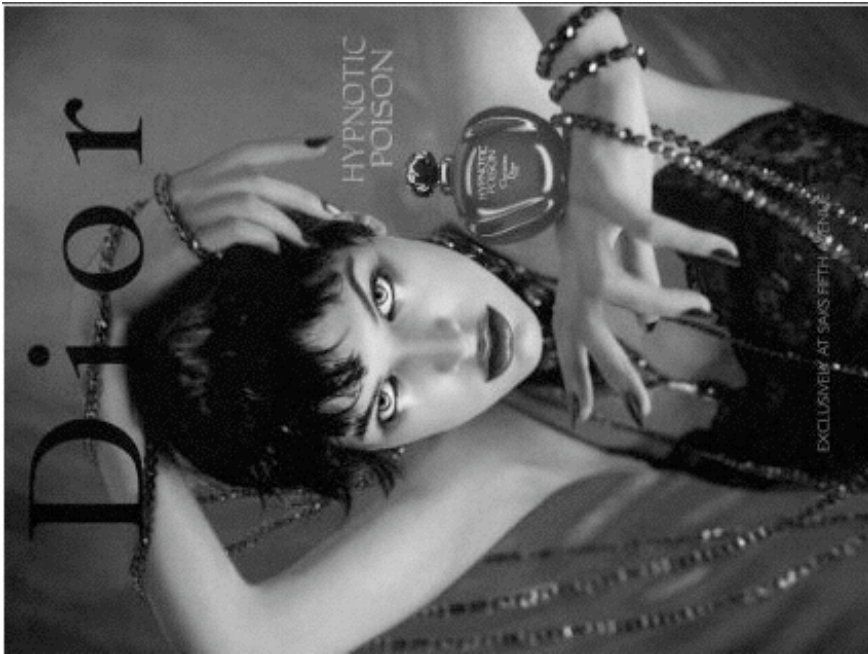


Figure 1 Dior



Figure 2 Disaronno

Such womyn reveal the problematic shortcomings of the Consciousness Scale. Womyn may rightly be placed into Level I of the Consciousness Scale, but such a coding scheme misses much of what's happening in the advertising, and would produce a critical reading that misconstrues, among other things, the sexual resources commonly understood as available to womyn today. The ordinal nature of the Consciousness Scale simply does not accurately identify these womyn. While it provides an important part of the puzzle of evaluating gender portrayals of womyn, it also misses important factors at work within many new advertisements.

### *Research Project*

The following chapters provide a considerably more detailed account of the changes I propose to the Consciousness Scale, but a basic summary of the project may be helpful. I propose some reworking in the Consciousness Scale, and use coders to apply this revised scale to contemporary gender portrayals. In particular, coders were asked to code ads using the essentially unchanged scale, but also to separately code ads with respect to the concept of power deployed by the womyn shown. Advertisements where coders consistently placed the ads in the same Consciousness Scale category (say, Level I), but also agreed in identifying the presence of power inconsistent with the Consciousness Scale level (say, where womyn were coded as enacting significant power even at Level I) were separated, a so-called *discrepancy set*. The main analysis chapter in the project scrutinizes these discrepancy advertisements to uncover the dynamics which produce disparate ratings.

In proposing new additions to the Consciousness Scale more sensitive to the intersubjective dynamics of power level and type, the project also addresses the following questions:

- Does the addition of variables to the Consciousness Scale produce a discrepancy set of advertisements where measures of apparent power are judged by coders as at odds with Consciousness Scale ratings (such as womyn who is coded as Level I, but who are also coded as embodying significant or even total power)?
- If these advertisements do exist, how do their portrayals of womyn qualitatively differ from advertisements where the power/Consciousness Scale coding is consistent?
- Within the discrepancy set, what kind of power is most commonly employed by womyn? Is that type of power different from the type of power commonly employed by womyn in advertisements that have consistent power/Consciousness Scale codes?
- What types of portrayals are most common in this discrepancy set and do these portrayals enable a revision in the pre-defined Consciousness Scale levels?

While gender studies in advertising are not new, the need to evaluate and re-evaluate our methods is important. As notions of gender identity are constantly changing and because those changes bring about new inequalities, as well as resolving old inequalities, it is important evaluate our academic methods to negotiate these changes. As same sex relationships, plus size models, and non-traditionally beautiful womyn find their way into advertising, re-evaluation of our academic tools, and the Consciousness Scale in specific, is necessary to address the new dynamics of imagery and the power it portrays.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### *Gender and Advertisements in the 1970's*

As the efforts of womyn to achieve workplace equality proceeded during the 1970's, scholars sought to explain which sociological factors were affecting their social standing, and advertising was often cited as a contributing cause of sexism, since it tended to portray womyn through limited and negative stereotypes. In 1971, Alice E. Courtney and Sarah Wernick Lockertz analyzed role portrayal in advertising. They focused on seven magazines published during the week of April 18, 1970, including *Life*, *Look*, *Newsweek*, *The New Yorker*, *Saturday Review*, *Time*, and *U.S. News and World Report*. Very rarely, they found, were womyn shown working, and when they were, female roles were limited to entertainers, stewardesses, schoolteachers, assembly line workers, and a lone portrayal identified only as a "working woman" (Courtney & Lockertz, 1971, p. 93). In their final analysis, Courtney and Lockertz determined that advertisements portray womyn by use of the following stereotypes: "A woman's place is in the home," "Women do not make important decisions or do important things," "Women are dependant and need men's protection," and "Men regard women primarily as sexual objects; they are not interested in women as people" (Courtney & Lockertz, 1971, p. 94-95).

From this groundbreaking work, studies by advertising and marketing professionals proliferated. Lawrence H. Wortzel and John M. Frisbie (1974) in *Women's Role Portrayal Preferences in Advertisements: An Empirical Study*, and Jacob M. Duker and Lewis R. Tucker, Jr. (1977) in *"Women's Lib-ers" Versus Independent Women: A Study of Preferences for*

*Women's Roles in Advertisements*, sought to measure how presentations of gender portrayals were internalized (or dismissed) by their audience, especially womyn. They reached the same general findings about womyn's opinions regarding gendered advertising the womyn were shown (Wortzel & Frisbie, 1974; Duker & Tucker, 1977). Wortzel and Frisbie showed womyn a portfolio of pictures and asked them to produce advertisements for certain products. They found that womyn produced advertisements primarily based on the product, i.e., an advertisement for laundry detergent would be designed to show a womyn doing laundry. Like Duker and Tucker, they categorized the womyn viewing the portrayals based on their self-identified beliefs and determined that these self-identified beliefs did not affect their perception of advertising (Wortzel & Frisbie, 1974). Later, Duker and Tucker conducted a study to determine what "types" of womyn were critical of gendered advertising. A 1977 study concluded that a womyn's self-identified beliefs about gender issues did not affect her judgment toward role portrayal in advertising and they found that many womyn kept the product type in mind when determining whether the advertisement inaccurately portrayed womyn (Duker & Tucker, 1977).

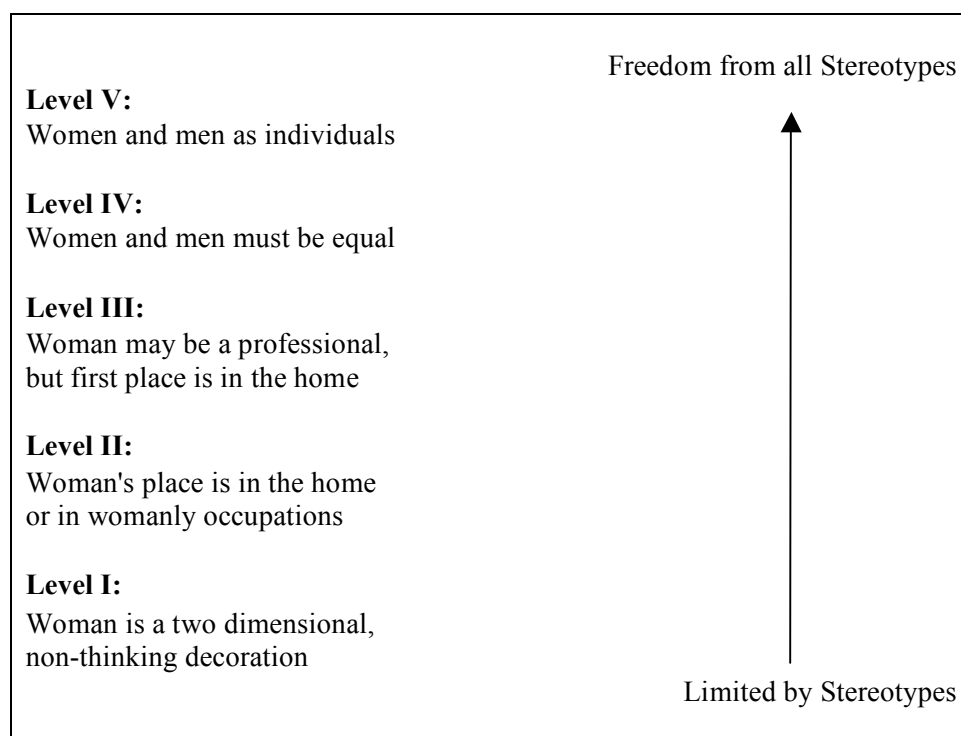
The late 1970's produced a more critical assessment of advertisements. Academic work centered in advertising/marketing and to some degree in communication/cultural studies was gradually coalescing around the view that advertising did in fact negatively portray womyn and began to focus attention on detailing the means by which advertising portrayed womyn. As the advertising world began to recognize the problematic situation with stereotypical advertisements, Ahmed and Janice M. Belkaoui (1976) undertook a comparative analysis of advertisements from 1958, 1970, and 1972, for the purpose of historically contextualizing gendered advertisements. They were especially interested to know whether advertisers seemed to be directly responding to the womyn's movement. Their analysis of 1958 advertisements found womyn were portrayed as

follows: “Women are unemployed,” “Women are low income earners,” “Nonworking women in decorative roles and idle situations,” and “Women have limited purchasing power” (p. 197).

Even by 1972 the mass media had not specifically reacted to social change and still tended “to portray women in unrealistic settings and in under-representative numbers” (p. 172).

In August 1974 Butler and Paisley introduced their ordinal scale of sexism in the media, a “Consciousness Scale,” as seen in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Consciousness Scale for Media Sexism: Women**



Note: From “A Scale for Sexism” by Pingree, S., Hawkins, R.P., Butler, M., & Paisley, W. (1976). *Journal of Communication*, 26(4), p. 194.

Two studies (*A Scale for Sexism* by Susan Pingree et al. and *Woman and the Mass Media* by Butler and Paisley) which fully developed the scale looked at *Ms.*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Playboy*, *Life*, *Newsweek*, *The New Yorker*, *Saturday Reader*, *U.S. News and World Report*, and *Reader's*

*Digest* (Butler & Paisley, 1980; Pingree et al., 1976). In both studies, Level V portrayals were rare while Level I and Level II womyn constituted over half of the womyn “displayed” in magazine advertisements (Butler & Paisley, 1980). Butler and Paisley (1980) also generated a comparable scale to measure the depiction of men in advertising, for instance coding an advertisement as Level III when it showed a man who could help competently at home, but whose first place was plainly connected to his work. In Level II, a man’s place was either at work or in undertaking manly activities at home (Butler & Paisley, 1980). A Level I man is a two-dimensional decoration (Butler & Paisley, 1980). They determined that Level V and Level IV did not need “reconstruction” because these roles were “gender neutral” and had always made an “equal” or individualistic place for both men and womyn (Butler & Paisley, 1980).

Erving Goffman’s (1976) *Gender Advertisements* looked at the nature of gendered advertising, specifically how different types of body display determine how gender is offered to the consumer. He begins by explaining how many advertisements are framed ceremonially, a view consistent with his decades-long prominence as a theorist of social and ritualistic interaction. He argues that since life is a series of rituals or social situations (and pictures of them), they are an indicator of how gender is constructed (Goffman, 1976). As seen in Table 2, his six categories of gender display include attention to *Relative Size*, the *Feminine Touch*, *Functional Ranking*, the *Family*, the *Ritualization of Subordination*, and *Licensed Withdrawal*. Over the course of a fifty-five page presentation of pictorial evidence, Goffman looks at specific advertisements and explains how these categories invariably place men in dominant positions over womyn, and generally reinforce stereotypes about womyn and men. Advertisers use already socialized situations then conventionalize, stylize, and make frivolous scenes that are already cut from the context of a larger ceremony, or as he deems “hyper-realization” (p.84).

And this hyper-realization sells ceremony and more to the point, sells gender role definitions through these specific displays.

**Table 2**  
**Goffman's Six Categories of Decoding Behavior**

<b>Relative Size:</b>	Weight, and more specifically height are a method used by advertisers to show social weight.
<b>The Feminine Touch:</b>	Unlike men, who are generally shown grasping objects, women are shown cradling or "just barely touching objects."
<b>The Family:</b>	Generally only the nuclear family is displayed –or– mothers are shown with daughters and fathers are shown with sons.
<b>Licensed Withdrawal:</b>	Displays of fear, shyness, remorse, laughter, and snuggling again are telling of how society expects men (protector) and women (protected) to behave. The "exception" to this display is that of parental protection.
<b>The Ritualization of Subordination:</b>	This category takes into account the arguments behind Relative Size. Body stance (posture, placement, head cant, childlike gestures, assault, "arm-locking," and hand holding) creates a sense of who is in control of a situation (men) and who is not (womyn).
<b>Functional Ranking:</b>	Men in the advertisements are performing executive roles (Doctors, teachers, business executives, leading the conversation) where womyn are performing more submissive roles (nurses, students, listening intently).

Goffman, 1976

In 1977 William J. Lundstrom and Donald Sciglimpaglia conducted research to determine if men and womyn are critical of their portrayals in advertising *and* if that attitude affects their attitude toward products. They found that womyn thought advertisements "(1) suggest that they don't do important things; (2) portray women offensively; and (3) suggest that their place is in the home" (1977, p. 75). Womyn who felt advertisements failed to accurately represent the "average womyn" and/or found them offensive were typically well educated,

earned higher incomes, and were younger. But their conclusion argues against grouping womyn into one demographic cohort, concentrating instead on evidence that all womyn were generally critical of their representation in advertisements.

Elizabeth Cagan offered a related indictment of the new “capitalist feminism” by arguing that advertisers who present the liberated womyn were only making a money motivated move to capture a new market by flattering the “new woman” (1977). For many years advertisers visually subjugated womyn to the home because there she was a ready consumer of household products, a “pliant and obedient consumer” (p. 60). As the womyn’s movement emerged, however, the “‘new woman’ advertisers could be constructed into a pliant and obedient consumer” with products that targeted her new independent, self-fulfilling identity (p. 8).

Gaye Tuchman gave further credence to this view by focusing on the manner by which advertisers before the womyn’s movement targeted a “given” market and so perpetuated a cyclical stereotyping process (1978, p. 5). She argues that the mass media reinforces the dominant ideology, or the so-called “reflection hypothesis” (p. 7). However when advertisers condemn, trivialize, or omit womyn, they engage *symbolic annihilation* (p. 8). In her analysis of television and magazines, she found that both treated womyn basically the same, portraying them as victims, sex objects, dependent on men, submissive, and/or household functionaries. She also looked at fiction in womyn’s magazines and found that it too reinforced the dominant ideology: womyn are either in the home *or* the magazine found a way to condemn working womyn. She did however find womyn’s magazines engage in less symbolic annihilation, though she attributes this in part to the target audience, womyn. Though much of her analysis focused on television, she concludes that media perform two tasks simultaneously: (1) reflect the dominant values and ideology of society and (2) to “act as agents of socialization” (p. 38).

In sum, the literature from the 1970's formed a nascent response to the womyn's movement. It asked how the media portrayed womyn, how the womyn's movement effected advertisements, and what should advertisers do in response. Much of this work involved systematic reviews of magazines to determine both numerical and theoretical portrayals. These studies shaped operational definitions of how advertisers portray womyn: at home or as a sex object or as not important. The Consciousness Scale is the most rigid and organized categorization of these portrayals. Alternatively Tuchman and Cagan looked at these portrayals from a more theoretical perspective, asking why portrayals where as they were, rather than simply naming the portrayals. The literature of the 1970's sought to answer either *how* the media portrayed womyn or *why* were womyn portrayed as they were. However, with the exception of Goffman, much of the literature failed to address the issue of how specifically advertisers portrayed these womyn as a means to subvert or support the dominant ideology. In this new time of gender research, it seemed academics were asking simply *how* or *why*, but not *what*. A womyn may be portrayed as a sex object, which is a representation of a dominant stereotypical view, but how do advertisers do this? What is at work within the advertisement to cause this assessment? Goffman's categories help to answer this *what* question, but still fail to focus on the larger theoretical issues such as power.

#### *Gender and Advertisements in the 1980's*

In 1982, Alreck, Settle, and Belch conducted a survey to determine "Who Responds to 'Gendered' Ads, and How?" Their study sought to determine how gendered advertising portrayals relate to product acceptance and to assess how fully men and womyn adhere to gendered stereotypes when looking at gendered products (products used specifically by a single

gender). They found that “men tended to emphasize the differences by gender” generally preferring “same-sex” advertisements (1982, p. 29). They concluded that while womyn are more accepting of male identity (products), men tended to find their identity (specifically sexual) in products.

In a 1988 study, Leigh, Rethans, and Whitney sought to determine how “traditional” womyn and “the new” womyn were reacting to changes in advertisements. They found that womyn were more sympathetic to advertisements “consistent with their role orientation” (p. 55). Womyn’s role portrayal strongly affected consumer recall and purchasing influence. They concluded that womyn coded as values-“traditional” were more tolerant of advertisements portraying the modern womyn (more so than vice versa) and advocated the use of the modern womyn in advertisements, since she reached (and was accepted) by a larger percent of womyn.

Seventeen years after the publication of Courtney and Lockeretz’s role analysis of magazine advertisements, Gary L. Sullivan and P.J. O’Connor (1988) did a comparative study of magazines from 1958, 1970, and 1983, looking specifically at *People*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Life*, *Newsweek*, the *New Yorker*, *Reader’s Digest*, *Time*, and *U.S. News and World Report*. In their conclusion, they used Courtney and Lockeretz’s original findings as a baseline to illustrate how (if at all) the times had changed.

They first concluded that the depiction, “A woman’s place is in the home,” was no longer characteristic of advertising campaigns (Sullivan & O’Connor, 1988). There “has been an increased propensity to depict women as employed.” Specifically, ads from 1983 were twice as likely as ads from 1970 to show womyn in the workforce, and womyn were less likely overall to be shown in the “family environment” (p. 187). Second, portrayals reflecting the view that “women do not make important decisions or do important things” were again found less



common, based on the fact of an observable increase in portrayals of womyn in the work force, where some roles for the “working womyn” included business executives, professionals, salespersons, and managers in a required decision making role (p. 187). Third, the dominance of the view of “women as dependent and needing men’s protection” was subverted by the 1983 advertisements since men and womyn appeared to be portrayed more equally and womyn were shown in a wide variety of activities (p. 188). With regard to the measure “men regard women primarily as sexual objects; they are not interested in women as people,” Sullivan and O’Connor found too little data to produce a quantitative analysis (p. 188). They did find a resurgence of womyn portrayed in decorative roles, but found that typically these images were used for products primarily used by womyn (such as cosmetics, health and beauty aids) and that portrayals of womyn as primarily decorative objects relative to men was relatively low. They conclude by stating that advertisers have begun to “recognize the increasing economic and social status of women in America” (p. 188).

Meanwhile Goffman’s influential work was not forgotten. Masse and Rosenblum (1988) conducted a study to update Goffman’s work to the late 1980’s. They looked at both men’s and womyn’s magazines to “consider the landscape of advertising, representation of self and other in men’s and women’s magazines, and gender differences in total advertising from all magazines” (p. 127). They looked at *Woman’s Day*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Harper’s Bazaar*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Playboy*, and *Esquire* in March of 1984, using only full or double-page advertisements. Advertisements were coded for figures (number of men and women figures, children and family groups, drawn figures, objects only, and partial body parts), behavior, and product (p. 128).

They found that many advertisements rely on the marketed products in the primary ad image, but when individuals were included in the advertising visuals, 37.6% of ads included just

one person (Masse & Rosenblum, 1988). This statistic and others led them to see advertising as presenting an asocial world, where the product and/or the *one* human live in a utopian, narcissistic cultural context. Their study did reveal advertisements where one or more humans were present in advertisements, but it found that womyn (76.1%) more often than men were cast as the lone figures in advertisements and that womyn were disproportionately disembodied compared to men. In both men's and womyn's magazines, womyn made up the largest portion of models (71.2% and 74.6% respectively).

The second part of their study reproduced Goffman's original methodology. Masse and Rosenblum counted displays of subordination, connection (smile, touch, gaze), gender and class. Of all the models shown as subordinated in some way, a full ninety percent were womyn. Looking at smile revealed that men and womyn's rate of smiling were fairly consistent, although male models smiled more in womyn's magazines than in men's. When considering touch, womyn were depicted as touching more often than men in womyn's magazines (85.2%), although they typically are not shown touching others at all, and men touched more often than womyn in men's magazines (69.8%). With respect to gaze, womyn are characteristically either averting or closing their eyes (43.2%) *or* looking directly at the viewer (42.6%). While men were depicted most often looking at womyn (21.9%), both types of magazines favor closed or averted eyes rather than directly looking at the viewer. However, unlike their male counterparts, the womyn were not typically seen engaging other people in the advertisement, but engaging in more submissive forms of gaze.

Their conclusion indicated that womyn were more often shown alone, and yet they touched more, smiled more, gazed at objects more, were less active and more often subordinate than the men presented in advertisements. The advertising was thus seen as implying that a

womyn's identity centers on relationships, that her identity is constructed by men and for the benefit of men, and that her body is fetishized by the advertising world to sell products.

Linda Lazier-Smith, in *Women in Mass Communication* (1989) summarized her dissertation regarding studies of womyn in the mass media, specifically her reevaluation of the Consciousness Scale and the earlier work done by Kilbourne and Goffman. Her purpose was to see if a change in advertising was representative of the change in status womyn had been achieving. Her study replicated the method, categories, and procedures of the previous research, and focused on four magazines and the issues they published from July 1986 to June 1987. She found advertisements had not significantly changed since the original publication of these studies, and surprisingly were actually "slightly more sexist" than before (p. 254). Some positive changes were noted in respect to Goffman's work, where relative size, function ranking, and family scene portrayals were so infrequent that Lazier-Smith could claim they no longer applied. But even with this change of Goffman's coding scheme in mind, she presents findings from a reevaluation of the Consciousness Scale and Goffman's work that verify the ongoing sexist tendencies in the media made famous by Kilbourne's widely circulated documentary film.

Lazier-Smith also detected an increase in Level I and Level V portrayals in advertising. This leads her to ask if the situation for womyn has gotten any better (a conclusion reachable because of the larger number of Level V womyn) or was actually worse (a view one could defend based on the larger number of observed Level I womyn) or whether a new type of sexism was now at work in advertising (1989). Here she discussed the importance of understanding the cultural nature of advertising as one evaluates the changes (or lack thereof) in advertising. "Advertising does reflect a cultural faithfulness, but not to demographics or to being 'true to the facts of customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits'" (p. 257). Rather, advertising

reflects the traditions of those in power as they attempt to maintain their views, including sexism and a chauvinism reflective of a mythically ideal traditional American womyn. Though Level V womyn are now seen with greater frequency, this fact doesn't necessarily verify a fundamental change in the cultural ideals of womynhood. Advertisements represent a problem within American society which Lazier-Smith called *cultural lag*, where American cultural attitudes and beliefs relating to gender lag in time behind actual changes in womyn's economic and social standing. This lag can thus perpetuate a cycle where sexist ads continue (since advertisers are responding to the perception and not the new reality), which only further stretches out the realization that times have changed, in turn dragging down the rates of social progress. Breaking this cycle requires a change in both the message advertisers are sending as well as the advertisers who make the messages.

In *Putting on Appearances* (1988), Diane Barthel was concerned with how advertising and the beauty it sells is tied to broader cultural forces, with special attention to magazines marketed to womyn. She surveyed *Vogue*, *Glamour*, *Self*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Essence*, and *Seventeen* from 1979 to 1981 and also analysed a follow up sample from January through June 1987 from each magazine.

Barthel reviews the nature of the advertising industry as well as broader social trends relating to gender and appearance and concludes that beauty is a key determinant in how a person (specifically a womyn) is defined within a social context, and by men (1988). The book outlines this idea by focusing on a few key concepts: authority, the self, sex and romance, social status, existing in a man's world, and beauty rituals. Products need a unique identity to set them apart from similar products, and advertisers accomplish this by "giving a product a place to live" (p. 19).

*Authority* in advertising, Barthel argues, derives from three different types of knowledge: female knowledge, scientific knowledge, and professional knowledge. Female knowledge is the authority arising from relationships between womyn. When advertisers draw upon the closeness of the mother-daughter relationship, they foster an idea of “nurturing, protective, gently encouraging, and born of experience” (p. 40). Advertisers capitalize on the relationship a womyn has/had with her mother and, for example, may emphasize how a womyn will move into old age as her mother did before her as their main persuasive/marketing cue. Or, in some instances, ads subvert maternal advice, suggesting the mother is out of date. A second source of authority is scientific knowledge, a voice that presumes to definitively detail scientific experiments relating to the world of beauty. When advertisers use doctors to tell womyn why they should use a specific product (perhaps claiming it will work because of the underlying science), they rely on this voice of apparent objectivity to persuade womyn to purchase. Lastly, professional knowledge allows the womyn whose profession it is *to be beautiful* (models and actors) to speak to the audience. Such womyn presumably have a secret knowledge of the world of beauty, which is made available via advertising to more average (amateur beauty) womyn.

The *self* speaks to one of the “fundamental contradictions in the female role,” the idea that her major goal is to find and keep a man while simultaneously appearing not to (p. 57). Barthel again draws from one of the premises of her work, that beauty defines womyn, where “appearance becomes identity and woman’s main line of action” (p. 62). Advertisers use this notion to sell products, on the implicit promise that their products will give womyn power over men.

The second part of this analysis focuses on sex and romance. As the story of womyn looking-but-not-looking for a man progresses, Barthel describes two types of womyn portrayed

in advertising: the *fair maiden* and the *dark lady*. The fair maiden lacks a sexual identity. She is the virgin or mother, the innocent womyn, often portrayed in self-involved poses or in nature (perhaps even looking at herself in a pond, a female Narcissus). Conversely, the dark lady is a womyn of mystery, marked by her knowledge of sex and sexuality. Sometimes this sexual knowledge is used to mark the dark lady as whore. These two womyn mark a dichotomy of womyn in advertising which reflects the female contradiction; she must be simultaneously looking for a man (the dark lady) but not looking at all (the fair maiden).

Barthel then assessed social status, as defined by beauty. This appears in two ways: how a womyn can “marry-up” and how a womyn’s possessions mark her social status (whether that status is achieved by marrying up or not). Barthel argues it is in this social status that a womyn is commodified because her beauty and her possessions typically reflect a man’s wealth and his status. From a wardrobe of designer clothes to a face covered by designer make-up, a womyn can look and feel “like a million” (p. 98).

If she is to avoid becoming a commodity for purchase by men, womyn are often portrayed living in and dealing with a man’s world. Barthel outlines two types of womyn who delve into the man’s world: “the new woman” and “actionwoman” (p. 123). The “new woman” was a term originally used to mark a womyn as androgynous in the late 1800’s, but the “new woman” of the late 1980’s is far different. As the “new woman” of the late 1800’s began to threaten men, she was criticized for being, among other things, unnatural. In contrast, the “new woman” of the early 1900’s was liberating herself from “female sexual innocence, real or feigned” (p. 123). The “new woman” of the 1980’s, as described by Barthel, can actively work in the boardroom without threatening the men who still consider the boardroom their natural habitat. This “new woman” must therefore juggle a life in the boardroom, with sexual prowess

in the bedroom, and maternal mastery of the baby's room. These narratives take shape in advertising where womyn are told they can have it all, liberation and femininity.

"Actionwoman," like the "new woman," has a new sense of liberation, while at the same time retaining her old femininity. "Actionwoman" may be the athlete, often pictured wearing sports attire (usually legwarmers and leotards as was typical for the 1980's) in which she appears both tough and feminine, the *new feminine toughness* (p. 133).

In her conclusion, Barthel remarks on the identities given to womyn by the advertising world. "The beauty role is neither neat nor simple. Rather, it entails complex forms of cultural participation replete with psychological, social, and ritualistic significance" (p. 185). Barthel advocates that scholars continue investigating advertising and how it changes in response to shifts in culture and the significance that we let advertising carry in our daily lives.

Much of the reviewed literature of the 1980's was concerned with determining if advertisers had adjusted their gender portrayals to reflect the new position womyn had achieved in society. Either by chronological review of magazines or by reevaluating old research methods, academics asked again if and how portrayals had changed to reflect a modern womyn. Alternatively, they also began to explore how consumers responded to ads, if self-identified modern womyn or feminists have a different perception of a product and an advertisements portrayal compared to the perceptions of men or self-identified traditional womyn. Like Goffman, Barthel more closely addresses the question of what is happening within advertisements to create a stereotypic view. She looks at not only matters of categorical portrayal, but also the issue of power (in the form of authority) as a means of dominant ideological portrayals. Barthel too addresses womyn's relationship to and with men. Both the work of the 1970's and 1980's continue to dichotomize the world into what is the man's and

what is the womyn's. Research, while expanding, also relied on traditional research methods, managing to largely neglect the matter of what was at work within an advertisement in favor of seeking what types of advertisements were prevalent and why they were so.

### *Gender and Advertisements in Recent Research*

The nature of advertising research shifted in the 1990's. The literature of the 1970's and 1980's mainly extended the original studies: how do the arguments of Courtney and Lockertz apply to a certain demographic? Are womyn critical of certain gender portrayals? And if so, how do they respond to them? Are images changing and what are the apparent motivations? The literature of the 1990's took a broader approach to advertising. The literature from the 1970's and 1980's mainly emerged from the business world (e.g., *Journal of Marketing Research*, *Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Advertising Research*). The literature from the business world was met, in the 1990's, with literature from a broader range of sources, especially communication, sociology, and womyn's studies scholarship. This more diverse range of disciplinary perspectives permitted in-depth study of gender in advertising in areas yet untouched by the business world.

In 1990, William Kilbourne asked how gendered advertising impacted the "perception of the degree to which women possess managerial attributes" (p. 25). Leadership, aggressiveness, emotionality, and analytical skills were the traits recognized for managerial competency. Rather than analyze advertisements from certain magazines, Kilbourne used six black and white advertisements, depicting a "housewife sex role" and a "professional sex role" using three products: a kitchen cleanser, a boil-in-bag dinner, and an electronic calculator. His sample



included 103 male and 70 undergraduate students who were asked to evaluate the person in the ad (scoring the ad on eleven measures) and the ad overall (on a nine measure instrument).

Results indicated that the models in the “professional sex roles” were evaluated higher on managerial attributes than models in the “housewife sex roles” for both womyn and men samples (Kilbourne, 1990, p. 29). His discussion pointed to two implications. First, his data confirmed the “diagnosticity of out-of-role characterization relative to in-role,” that is, it showed diagnostic information can affect social categorization (p. 31). Second, Kilbourne recommended that advertisers avoid sex role stereotypes as a means to promote the societal goal of achieving non-preferential job treatment.

In *Looking Through Gendered Lenses: Female Stereotyping in Advertisements and Gender Role Expectations*, Lafky, Duffy, Steinmaus, and Berkowitz (1996), following Kilbourne’s lead, attempted to bring a richer sociological perspective to the study of gender images, with the goal of better accounting for how sexual stereotypes affect gender role perceptions. Their literature review notes that consumers take cues from gendered advertising and that advertisers use this in their advertising campaigns. Three hypotheses were tested:

- Even short-term exposure to sex-stereotyped images will affect audience perceptions of gender roles.
- Exposure to gender stereotypes in advertising will cultivate among viewers more traditional attitudes toward gender roles.
- Because of the “lenses of gender” described in Bem’s scholarship, there will be an aesthetically significant relationship between the gender of subjects and the ways in which the subjects draw upon heuristics to cognitively process advertising images that include representation of gender roles (Lafky et al., 1996, p. 382).

One hundred twenty five high school students (59 males and 66 females) from a local high school were shown ten slides of magazines advertisements (Lafky et al., 1996). Students were

divided by academic/school classes, where three school classes were shown advertisements portraying womyn in stereotypical roles and two school classes were shown advertisements portraying womyn in non-stereotypical roles. While students were questioned after viewing the initial stereotypic and non-stereotypic images, they were then shown a “neutral” image of a womyn dressed in a button down shirt and jeans, not engaged in any specific task. The neutral image remained in view as students were asked questions to elicit a response about the qualities of the womyn in the image (p. 383). Their experiment supported all three hypotheses, noting however that the images of womyn used for the study fit into Level II and IV of the Consciousness Scale and that perhaps by using images of womyn from Level I and V the findings might have varied.

As a means to test advertisers and their responses to the feminist movement in the United States, Linda J. Busby and Greg Leichty (1993) coded advertisements from 1959, 1969, 1979, and 1989, drawn from traditional and non-traditional womyn’s magazines. Busby and Leichty argue that the feminist movement aimed to change reality for womyn in the following ways: “(1) opening up all job categories to women, (2) compensation tied to job description, not to gender, (3) a more equal division of labor within the home, (4) less emphasis on the female as an ‘object’ whose primary function is attracting the opposite sex, and (5) the right for each individual to develop to her full potential” (p. 249). Their study questions if advertisements reflect progress toward these goals in the context of the American feminist movement. Advertisements were taken from the June and September issues of *McCall’s* and *Redbook* (both traditional womyn’s magazines) for 1959, 1969, 1979, and 1989. Advertisements were also analyzed from *Ms.* and *Working Woman* (non-traditional womyn’s magazines) for 1979 and 1989, but not for 1959 and 1969 since the magazines did not then exist.

They found significant changes in womyn's role portrayals over time, especially between 1959 and 1969, where the depiction of womyn's role in the home decreased (from 23% in 1959 to 13% in 1969) but the percent of womyn shown occupying decorative roles actually increased from 54% in 1959 to 71% in 1969 (Busby & Leichty, 1993). They attribute this change to the feminist movement. When they evaluated their data by magazine type as opposed to exclusively focusing on the passage of time, Busby and Leichty found traditional womyn's magazines were more likely to portray womyn in family roles or decorative roles than in non-traditional magazines, whereas non-traditional magazines were three times as likely to show womyn in employment roles. Finally, they noted that portrayals varied depending on product, where "with the exception of food, big-ticket items (cars, etc.) and entertainment, the most common role for female models was ... decorative" (p. 257). Their conclusion notes that the use of womyn as product decoration increased over time, while men are virtually absent in all advertising in traditional and non-traditional magazines alike and even non-traditional advertisements contain advertisements which run counter to the tenets of the feminist movement.

Another informative study was published in 1993 by Klassen, Jasper, and Schwartz, which looked at men and womyn in magazines with the purpose of specifying the nature of depicted inter-gender relationships. Where are such relationships shown, and how have relational images changed over time? The study looked at three magazines, *Ms.* ("womyn's interest"), *Newsweek* ("general interest") and *Playboy* ("men's interest") from 1972 to 1989. The authors chose four issues per year, looking only at advertisements showing both men and womyn (or the physical parts of men and womyn), categorizing magazines into three time intervals: 1972-1977, 1978-1983, and 1984-1989. They coded poses as either traditional, reverse sex, or equal.

The study found that the use of traditional poses had decreased while reverse-sex and equality poses had increased (Klassen, Jasper, & Schwartz, 1993). Traditional poses were more common in *Newsweek* (85%) and *Playboy* (85%) compared to *Ms.* (71%), while reverse-sex poses were more common in *Ms.* (18%) than in *Playboy* (9%) and *Newsweek* (5%). Equality poses were roughly equal for *Ms.* and *Newsweek* (11% vs. 10%) while *Playboy* lagged behind at 6%. Klassen et al. argue that over time traditional depictions are decreasing, while equality poses are on the rise.

While many recent studies take a more focused look at how advertising has changed since the 1950's, an interesting article by Charles Lewis and John Neville (1995), "Images of Rose: A Content Analysis of Women Workers in American Advertising, 1940-1946" looked at advertising conditions before the 1950's, namely the advertising campaigns taken on before, during, and after WWII. Before WWII, womyn worked primarily in domestic jobs, but when men volunteered in significant numbers to fight in the war, new opportunities were opened for womyn to work, specifically in industrial settings, such as in new factories, auto plants, aircraft production, and shipyards. After the war, of course, that space was just as rapidly closed to womyn, as jobs were reclaimed by men returning home from war. The study asked how advertising tracked with this opening and subsequently closing of the workspace.

Lewis and Neville (1995) looked at advertisements from the months of January and October from the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Life*, and *Ladies Home Journal*. Their results indicated that before the war (1940), womyn were portrayed as homemakers or mothers in 36% of all ads containing womyn, and 59% of the time did not appear in occupational roles. During the war (1943), the depiction of womyn as wage earners increased to 19% and women in non-occupational settings decreased to 38%. Portrayals of womyn as homemakers remained

relatively stable, while womyn as members of the armed forces increased to 13%. Yet after the war (1946), the portrayal of womyn dropped back to pre-war levels, with womyn shown as wage earners only 7% of the time, and the number of womyn shown in non-occupational roles shot back up to 60% of all depictions.

They concluded from this information that advertisers did not fundamentally “change their ways” when it came to portraying womyn, but were simply responding to two forces: (1) governmental agencies making appeals to recruit womyn into the workforce and (2) working womyn as a new consumer force (Lewis & Neville, 1995). The essay offers an interesting retrospective of the 1950’s womyn. By the 1950’s womyn had come to know what it was like to see womyn in non-stereotypical roles in advertising, but they also knew how quickly such occupational involvements could be yanked away when they were no longer seen as consuming products beyond the household or her body.

The interesting finding of this study is the evidence Lewis and Neville found that advertising was so quickly adjusted to emerging social and political change, and then changed back to older styles as the political and social climate reverted to older patterns of discrimination in the workplace. Advertisers were savvy and adjusted to the social position of womyn, even if it meant adjusting back to old schemes when necessary.

In the 1990’s, many academics continued to return to Goffman’s early research to determine its relevance to current magazine advertisements. Mee-Eun Kang (1997), in *The Portrayal of Women’s Images in Magazine Advertisements: Goffman’s Gender Analysis Revisited*, attempted to replicate Goffman’s original work, while allowing for the addition of new coding categories, using advertisements from 1979 and 1991, and looking at *all* advertisements within the chosen text. Kang points out that Goffman’s original work *only* looked at images

which tended to support his argument, and that his chosen advertisements did not look at overall representations of gender and gender relationships. Kang used Goffman's original categories (*relative size, feminine touch, functional ranking, ritualization of subordination, and licensed withdrawal*) and added two more: *Body Display*, which was used to compare the relative nudity of subjects (body-revealing clothes included mini-skirts, tight shirts, exposed cleavage, 'short' shorts, halter dresses, see-through clothes, a towel, or bathing suits, and close-up shots of bare shoulders) and *Independence and Self-Assertiveness*, which was coded by looking at the "big" picture portrayal of an advertisement. The sample chosen included randomly selected advertisements from *Vogue*, *Mademoiselle*, and *McCall's* from each month in 1979 and 1991, resulting in a total of 504 advertisements.

Kang's (1997) hypothesis was that advertisements from 1991 would show less frequent gender displays than in 1979. But the findings indicated that after twelve years, the images of womyn in magazines had not changed very much. Kang placed the results into differences or similarities to the original Goffman study, indicated in Table 3:

**Table 3**  
**Kang's Findings**

- height relationship-male and female height was generally the same, though males were generally taller;
- using fingers and hands to cradle or caress objects-this was frequent in both years (41.8% of ads in 1979 and 41.4% of ads in 1991);
- self-touching- again, roughly as frequent in both years (38.2% in 1979 and 40.2% in 1991);
- instructing role- though men and womyn shown together in advertisements was rare, the portrayal of men instructing womyn decreased from 1979 (19.1%) to 1991 (4.8%);
- serving other person- no significant change between the years of 1979 and 1991, though Kang indicates that the slight change noted is headed in a more neutral direction;
- conducting superior role- 35.3% of 68 ads in 1979 showed men in superior roles and 38.1% of 42 ad in 1991 showed men in superior roles, equating to no significant change;
- lowering oneself physically-the study indicated no significant change between the two years;
- bashful knee bend- though one of the most frequent gender portrays noted in the study (31.7% of all ads from 1979 and 37.5% of all ads from 1991), no significant change was noted;
- body cant or head cant- this display was very common, and relatively unchanged between the two years;
- lying or sitting on bed or floor- infrequent in both years, with little change comparatively;
- expansive smile- as frequent as a bashful knee bend and relatively no change (32.9% in 1979 and 28.5% in 1991);
- hand covering mouth or face- relatively infrequent in both years;
- head or eye gaze aversion- one of the few categories with significant change, 1991 showed this display more frequently than in 1979 (and counter to the hypothesis that gendered displays would decrease over time);
- maintaining telephone conversation- very infrequent (2 of 252 from 1979 and 1 of 252 from 1991);
- withdrawal from scene at large- again, the results ran counter to the hypothesis, with more stereotyping in 1991(33.2%) than in 1979 (22.7%);
- body-revealing clothes or nudity-these numbers increased for womyn over time, with 24.6% in 1979 and 31.9% in 1991;
- independence and self-assertiveness-no significant change between the two years, though the numbers in 1979 were greater (40.9%) than in 1991 (35.3%).

Kang also looked at Goffman's original display categories and found that only *licensed withdrawal* showed a significant change: advertisements in 1991 actually showed this a *more* strategy in 1991 than in 1979. Kang's new category of *body display* for womyn also produced interesting findings, since 1991 ads contained more sexually provocative content than in ads published in 1979. Kang's conclusion was rather depressing in that the gender portrayal from 1979 and 1991 had not significantly changed, except in the instance of *body display* and *licensed withdrawal*, which actually became more frequent (and thus worse from the perspective of gender equity concerns) over time.

While Goffman and Kang took a close look at body positioning and what is said about power in gendered relationships, Jennifer Paff and Hilda Buckley Lakner (1997) did a content analysis of magazine advertisements that assessed dress and female gender role more closely. Their claims are driven by the view that dress vitally codes gender roles. Their review of the literature includes defining *agonic* ("doing" roles such as achievement, action, independence, aggression, strength, and expertise) and *hedonic* power ("being" roles performed through indirect or covert means). Agonic portrayals are associated with traditional male gender roles and hedonic power with traditional female gender roles (Paff & Lakner, 1997). The content analysis hoped to "(a) examine changes from 1950 to 1995 in gender orientation (agonic versus hedonic) of the roles assumed by womyn depicted in female audience magazine advertisements, (b) examine changes from 1950 to 1994 in the gender orientation of the dress of womyn depicted in female- audience magazine advertisements, and (c) determine the presence or absence and strength of a direct relationship between the gender orientation of the role assumed and the dress worn by womyn depicted in female- audience magazine advertisements dating from 1950 to



1994” (Paff & Lakner, 1997, p. 32). Their texts came from two sources: *Vogue*, for beauty and fashion focus; and *Good Housekeeping*, for a domestic focus.

Paff and Lakner (1997) discuss the issue of symbolic interaction, which states that people construct their own identities based on appearance symbols as they emerge from social interactions with others. Symbolic interaction helps explain the *beauty myth* and the *feminist mystique*, in that advertisers create unrealistic womyn. Since womyn construct their own identities, an economic situation is created where womyn buy products to shift their identity to be more like the womyn in the advertisements they see (i.e. they will consume the product to consume the identity). Paff and Lakner’s findings indicate that the advertisements contained both stereotypical and ambiguous gender roles, but using stereotypical advertisements often means the product purpose is not misunderstood, and that womyn come away with a clear understanding of the underlying social comments left by these gendered advertisements.

Anthony J. Cortese's (1999) book *Provocateur* examines the relationship between advertising, race, gender, and culture. Cortese acknowledges the new advertising world, which often no longer attempts to manipulate the audience, but rather has begun to recognize the savvy, skeptical, cautious, and educated audience they must now address. This is not to say the advertising world has become radically postmodern. Rather, advertisers now attempt to adapt to the ideas of the new audiences, and cannot "separate your 'objective' judgments from your value-laden experiences" (p. 8). In other words, advertising does not foist its own created culture onto the larger society, but repackages the existing culture and sells it back to consumers already steeped in certain ways of seeing and consuming. Two of the chapters from his book provide interesting arguments given the purposes of this project: “Constructed bodies, deconstructing

ads: Sexism in advertising,” and “Symbolic Racism in Advertising,” (we will return to the second at a later point in this review).

In “Constructed bodies, deconstructing ads: Sexism in advertising,” Cortese (1999) outlines how gender is enacted and offers a deconstructive reading of many advertisements. Like Paul Messaris, Cortese is primarily concerned with how womyn are portrayed as sex objects even though they may not fit this stereotype in the real world. He says womyn are portrayed in two main ways, either as sex objects or as mindless domestics obsessed with cleaning. The perfect female beauty must be youthful, good looking, and seductive. Advertisers use this beauty to induce consumers into buying products, argues Cortese, by arousing anxiety and then providing a solution. By portraying the perfect beauty, then telling the consumer how she can become beautiful with a product’s help, advertisers hook their audience into a purchase.

Cortese also looks at two other beauty images portrayed in advertising, the *waif* and the *new Barbie*. The waif look rightly provoked much criticism for offering an obviously unrealistic image of womyn, likely to induce anxiety in womyn. The “solution” is often diet products and medical procedures offered to help a womyn create this unrealistic look. As the manufacturers of the Barbie doll came under increasing criticism for her unrealistic proportions (if blown up to life size, Barbie would have 38-18-34 measurements), she was given a makeover. The new Barbie, no longer a blond bombshell, now has a new future in corporate America. The new Barbie represents “a woman who is beautiful and fashionable as well as professionally competent” (p. 57). This new Barbie is an example of Cortese’s argument that advertisers no longer create a culture or idealized womyn, rather the advertisements repackage our existing culture (even if that culture is theoretically a more positive identity). He concludes with the idea of a perfect womyn as a social construct, not imposed “on an unwilling culture” (p.76).

Examples such as the new Barbie are advertisements way of articulating and channelling cultural acts, not creating artificial desires or mandating behavioral patterns (p. 76).

Again, academics are concerned with representation over time, generally concluding that since the 1950's, advertisements have changed to represent the new place of womyn, but advertisements also increased the portrayals of womyn as decorative or sex objects. While some portrayals may change with a change in womyn's societal position, advertisers continue to subvert womyn by portraying them as decorative. Klassen, Jasper, and Schwartz found however that in advertisements with representatives from both genders, womyn were portrayed as equal or in role reversal situations with greater frequency than when the womyn were portrayed alone. Consumers are effected by the advertisements they see and while advertisers seemed to have created a wider gap between a Level I portrayal and a Level IV or Level V womyn, Cortese argues that advertisers only repackage our culture values not create new world views or behavioral demands.

What is missing from this literature of gender and advertising is a collaboration of quantitative and qualitative work. Much of the existing work includes quantitative research with a seemingly supplemental qualitative section or vice versa, but no work specifically addressing quantitative work (such as the Consciousness Scale) and qualitative analysis in equal space. By adding the element of power to the Consciousness Scale, a set of advertisements is culled which accommodate a qualitative analysis to specifically address potential problems with the quantitative nature of the Consciousness Scale. Rather than create another chronological review of the Consciousness Scale, this project will attempt to use the Consciousness Scale and power to address new advertising that portrays womyn in new ways, beyond the stereotype constructions revealed in previous gender and advertisement literature.

### *Related Research*

Though the focus of this project is on gender and power in advertising, some other research directly relates to this project. A review of the analysis of Celeste Condit's arguments about polysemy and polyvalence, the type of visuals used, class and gender, and race and gender in advertising will be useful as this project progresses.

Condit (1989) defines *polysemy* as "the existence of variety in message on mass communication channels," and notes it "truly offer[s] unstable or internally contradictory meanings" (p. 107). By contrast, *polyvalence* refers to "the fact that audiences routinely evaluate text differently, assigning different value to different portions of the text and hence to the text itself." Celeste Condit's (1989) "The Rhetorical Limits of Polysemy" is a critical analysis of polysemy and the power of audiences. She details the responses of two college students on either side of the abortion debate as they watch a controversial episode of *Cagney & Lacey* dealing with abortion. She uses these responses to argue the validity of previous research about audiences, media effects, and the audience's ability to decode messages. By reporting the reactions of the two students, she is able to show with some specificity the manner by which individuals often decode the same message differently. She ventures from the original notion of polysemy in that she argues the need to explore "the power held by the audience in its struggle with texts and message producers" (p. 105). Her theory of polyvalence comes into play "when audience members share understanding of the denotations of a text but disagree about the valuation of those denotations to such a degree that they produce notably different interpretations" (p. 106). She compares this to the more traditional thoughts on polysemy, which "emphasize the varied ideological positions contained within mass media" and "the variety of decodings possible from a single text" (p. 104).

Both students have seen the same *Cagney & Lacey* episode and recognize the intended (denoted) meaning of the text, but interpret the characters and their values differently. Condit concedes that audiences do sometimes produce oppositional readings of texts, but notes this process is much more difficult than generating a reading in line with one's pre-existing ideas. Additionally, if a pre-existing idea is representative of an organization that has a strongly outlined belief system, it is again easier to read a text in line with the dominant sensibility. The student who comes from the pro-life view will have a more difficult time with a pro-choice text, and his interpretation is often mixed with strong rhetoric of the pro-life stance. He sees the characters as problematic, and the portrayed notions seem insincere. The pro-choice student, while seeing problems within the text, seems to have an easier time interpreting the text given its essentially pro-choice inflection.

Condit's reading of these differences leads her to argue that a critical preference for a theory of polysemy needs to be reevaluated. She argues that the media are not a unified dominant ideological tool where one idea is used or shown, but rather present a complex swirl of ideas where interests between elite and non-elite group interests are sometimes available for actual negotiation. Recognition of this fact is key to understanding how audiences evaluate texts, because in order for them to reject a text, audiences must on some level reject some of their own ideas, since the media usually offers some ammunition for the several sides of an argument. Condit argues for a polyvalent understanding of text, where the text is historically situated, and where audiences are recognized for their ability to access oppositional codes, "the work/pleasure ratio for the available range of the media's intertextual polysemy" is considered, the changes to the dominant ideology that a text may enable are more fully acknowledged, and a greater level of potential empowerment attributed to audiences (p. 119). Understanding how polysemy and

polyvalence work is thus important to understanding how the Consciousness Scale limits our ability to understand the nature of gender and advertising.

What audiences *see* in advertising is also a key factor in determining how they evaluate it. Of the considerable work now available on this topic, a content analysis of print media advertising done by Sandra E. Moriarty (1987) illustrates some of the important complexities. Advertisements were coded as representing either literal or symbolic visuals. Visual images were further broken down in each category:

#### I. Literal Visuals

- (a) Identification (brand, logo, package)
- (b) Description (what it looks like, attributes, parts, schematics)
- (c) Comparison (between two competitors, before & after)
- (d) Demonstration (how to do, use, apply, make)

#### II. Symbolic Visuals

- (a) Association (lifestyle, typical person, situation)
- (b) Association using a Character or Celebrity
- (c) Metaphor (allegorical use, unexpected substitution based on feature similarity)
- (d) Storytelling (narrative, drama, playlet)
- (e) Aesthetics (details become art, pattern, abstraction)

(Moriarty, 1987, p. 550)

The study attempted to ascertain if illustrations or photographs were used more frequently, searching for a “difference in the use of illustrations and photographs between literal and symbolic visuals” to determine if one type of visual was used more often than another (Moriarty, 1987, p. 551). Analyzing ads from *Sports Illustrated*, *US News and World Report*, *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Newsweek*, Moriarty found that the majority of advertisements used photographs (93%) compared to illustrations (7%) and literals and visuals were used with about the same frequency (46% and 52% respectively). The most frequent visuals occurred as follows: association (Symbolic) 22%, description (Literal) 21%, and identification (Literal) 20%.

Moriarty’s study, which determined how images are portrayed in print media, is interesting when

considering how the advertising/marketing world decides to present images (including gendered images) to the mass audiences. As most advertisers choose to use a person (womyn) in lifestyle and/or situational images or where the advertisement attempts to describe how something works, or what it looks like, their decisions represent how they see the world, or at least how they hope their audience will see the world according to their product. She concludes the impact of advertisements is “certainly a function of the power of the visual”(p. 554). When gendered images are used in these visual formats they are not by chance, but rather a fairly systematic approach to advertising.

*Visual Persuasion* by Paul Messaris (1997) looked at the role of images in advertising. Though Messaris’ work is often similar to Goffman (both explore how camera angles work to describe power and connect to social class, emotion, and culture), Messaris also discusses social status and gender images. Messaris says womyn are given three “looks” by advertisers: the *classic beauty*, *sensual/exotic*, and the *girl next door*. These female portrayals are also linked to class, as the classic beauty is assumed to be upper class, the girl next door is typically read as middle class, and both middle and upper class audiences often reject the sensual/exotic. Messaris notes that these categories, specifically the sensual/exotic, are also intrinsically tied to ethnic groups, which “have held lower status in American society” (p. 49). How advertisers relate the “look” womyn are given to a class structure will help one understand how the womyn traditionally classified into the Level I category of the Consciousness Scale is more complex than a simple sex object or victim.

In *The Forms of Power*, Thomas Wartenberg (1990) discusses an additional form of influence, which he names *transformative power*. Notable criticisms exist regarding the operation of power, how it is defined, and how it relates to gender; specifically as such

definitions relate to traditional ideas about whether power can be reduced to simple domination.

Transformative power is a different conceptualization which seeks to define power in ways beyond simple domination, but also as a means to help others reach a more autonomous state.

Transformative power, though often related by feminist scholars to maternal authority, can also describe relationships between teacher and student and therapist and patient (Wartenberg, 1990). How transformative power differs from traditional domination is more conceptually important now than its usefulness as it relates to feminism, or maternal influence. In its easiest definitional form a use of transformative power by an agent where the “use of power, although it involves exercising power over a social agent, seeks to empower that agent by developing that agent’s capabilities more fully” (Wartenberg, 1990, p. 195). Transformative power can include other forms of power, such as influence, force, and coercive power, though it goes beyond those traditional understanding of power.

As I’ve mentioned, the concept of transformative power has been conceptually critiqued by some feminist scholars as necessarily reducing feminist influence to motherhood, since mothers are often thought capable of such power only in their role as nurturers (Wartenberg, 1990). Wartenberg addresses this criticism and offers a social theory that affords an understanding of transformative power outside of the realm of gender. First, he states transformative power must include a choice by both members of the power balance (the dominant and the subordinate) to be involved in the relationship. The choice made by the subordinate is to extend a measure of trust to the dominant (p. 210).

Transformative power is often superseded by another type of power employed by the dominant to make the subordinate more socially acceptable, and this Wartenberg calls *situated power relationships* (p. 217). He uses parenting as an example, where a parent seeks to help a



child develop into an autonomous being, but at the same time, teaches the child table manners.

This power which makes the child more socially acceptable, may seem to be only an execution of traditional dominant power, but is in fact an execution of transformative power in addition to other forms of power. As Wartenberg explains, both forms of power can exist simultaneously, where one (generally the situated power) is superimposed onto another (generally transformative power), which makes it difficult to distinguish or recognize transformative power as its own form of power rather than a subcategory of the existing situated power. He concludes that transformative power, though often thought to distinguish from other forms of power, can exist alongside the traditional dominant use of power. As an analysis of power employed in advertisements is explored, understanding how transformative power can operate in relationship with and along side other forms of power at work will help to understand how a mother might employ total power in a portrayal which would be coded as Level II on the Consciousness Scale.

### Race

Most of the articles reviewed have summarized gender display in advertising but ignore the relationship of gender and race. It is important to briefly review how non-Caucasian womyn are specifically treated in advertising. Both the Consciousness Scale and Goffman's categories look at gender portrayal but do not specifically consider race, although race is obviously often as significant as gender. As race studies have progressed with gender studies, the relationship between race and gender can reveal as much, if not more, than either gender or race alone. This study thus considers how race may or may not play in gendered advertisements and its relevance as a variable intersecting gender, and not as a sole identifier.

In 1997, Plous and Neptune conducted a study to compare how gender and race interact within advertising and specifically how black womyn, white womyn, black men, and white men are differently portrayed. They included magazines specifically targeted towards a gendered, racial audience; for example, how white womyn are portrayed in black men's or black womyn's magazines. Beyond the more standard hypothesis, they asked whether black womyn are more often portrayed wearing animal print clothing (specifically in the garb of predatory animals) and appearing in animal-like poses. They examined six fashion magazines: *Cosmopolitan* and *Glamour* (mainly white womyn readership), *Ebony* and *Essence* (mainly black womyn readership), and *Esquire* and *Gentleman's Quarterly* (mainly white male readership). No magazines were used that specifically targeted a black male readership because none of the available magazines had comparable circulations. Full-page advertisements, fashion layouts, and fashion related covers from odd-numbered months between January 1985 and November 1994 were analyzed, as well as five randomly selected advertisements from each issue. Advertisements were coded for racial/gender representation, body exposure, body position, and clothing.

Their results found:

- Black people appeared in 10.1% of advertisements in magazines with predominately white readership.
- Womyn were approximately four times more likely to be "exposed" (exposing buttock, upper leg, shoulder, stomach, or back) than men.
- Black womyn were exposed more in black womyn's magazines, and white womyn were exposed more in white womyn's magazines.
- White womyn were portrayed in low-status positions more often than black womyn, black men, or white men in respect to body position.
- Womyn were shown in sexual attire (9.2%) more often than men (2.0%) with race not a really a factor.
- Black womyn were more often portrayed in animal prints (of the 43 total: 69.8%), with white womyn making up the difference (of the 43 total: 30.2%).

- Of the advertisements with animal prints, 70% of the clothing was patterned after a predatory animal (Plous & Neptune, 1997, p. 638).

They concluded by noting that body display had significantly increased between 1985 and 1994, especially with respect to portrayals of white womyn. Finally, they pointed out that racial bias was prominent in advertisements, with the exception of black females in white womyn's magazines, for example, the occurrences of advertisements featuring black models were far below demographic parity.

As mentioned above, Cortese, in *Provocateur* (1997), not only looks towards gender, but also at how minorities are portrayed in advertising, processes he names "symbolic racism" (p. 77). When black models are shown (though infrequently) in *GQ*, *Vogue*, *Esquire*, and *Sports Illustrated*, they are athletes, entertainers, laborers, or children, and black womyn are shown even less often than black men. Cortese offers three explanations of why minorities are portrayed in this manner. First, the equal presentation model is described, which includes advertisements portraying whites and minorities in the same way, "regardless of cultural, economic, or physical differences" (p. 99). Copycat advertisements (where two advertisements show the same setting, clothing and product, but featuring different races) support this model. Second is the social reality model, where advertisements feature minority life in a more realistic setting, not as a replica of white life with a different race model in the place of the white model, such as the case in the equal representation model. Advertisements, which feature large extended families or minorities in lower-status jobs, support this model, which more realistically draws "attention to the very real inequalities in our society" (p. 99). Lastly is the cultural attitudes model, which represents white cultural attitudes towards minorities. This model reacts more towards how

American society privileges white, and male over the disadvantaged. This privilege is why many minorities are portrayed the way they are currently shown, or are missing altogether.

Tara L. McLaughlin and Nicole Goulet (1999) published a study of black and white womyn in advertisements in 1999 in *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*. They used Goffman's six categories of decoding behavior to determine if and how gender portrayal was different in black and white womyn's advertisements. They looked at *Cosmopolitan*, *Us*, and *People* as characteristic of white womyn's magazines and *Essence* and *Ebony* as representative of black womyn's magazines. One of the issues they hoped to explore was the relationship of power in advertisements, especially with black womyn's magazines, when considering the perception that black womyn had a stronger familial bond, or the cultural stereotype of the black matriarch.

Their findings, based on analysis of 241 advertisements, showed that black womyn's magazines conformed to the categories of *functional ranking* (the portrayal of men in executive roles and womyn in submissive roles) 6.14% and *family* (either nuclear family or mothers with daughters and fathers and sons) 24.56% times more often than in white womyn's magazines, where *functional ranking* (0.78%) and *family* (5.51%) were significantly less (McLaughlin & Goulet, 1999). However, the categories of *ritualization of subordination* (the portrayal of body stance) were 35.43% greater and *feminine touch* (men grasping objects and womyn caressing objects) were 3.17% greater in white womyn's magazines than in black womyn's magazines, where *ritualization of subordination* (14.91%) and *feminine touch* (0.0%) was much lower. The conclusion explained these differences by referring to larger cultural forces at work. But they also noted that even when black womyn are more positively portrayed in traditionally black magazines, the benefits of such images are subverted by the exposure still experienced by encounter to negative images in traditionally white womyn's magazines. They end with a

“hopeful” note by pointing to the fact that approximately half of the advertisements did not fit into any of Goffman’s categories. Advertisements were changing and taking different forms in their modern portrayals as compared to their older counterparts.

### Television and Womyn

Magazine advertising is not the only place where gender interaction is portrayed, and a large body of literature also evaluates how womyn are portrayed in television advertising. The literature and coding schemes often overlap. The portrayal of womyn in television advertising by Carolyn Lin (1999), from a chapter in *Mediated Women*, provides an updated review of the portrayal of womyn in advertising, and includes reliance on the Consciousness Scale as part of the research project. The literature review makes note of a few historical findings about womyn’s portrayal in television advertising. Studies from the early 1980’s indicated womyn were generally portrayed as stay-at-home mothers primarily concerned with raising a family. Along with its print media counterpart, television advertising has been slow to represent womyn’s march into the workplace, as concluded by Tuchman as well. Lin also speaks briefly to voice-overs, where men traditionally provide the voice, even within commercials where only womyn actors are present. Womyn are often given voice only when speaking about products for the home.

Lin used the Consciousness Scale as a starting point for her research, which asked these questions about womyn’s portrayals in television advertising:

1. Is there a difference in the proportions of women in traditional roles?
2. Do the proportions of women shown in decorative and non-decorative portrayals differ?
3. Do the proportions of women shown in alluring and non-alluring portrayals differ?

4. Is the level of sexism reflected in the portrayals of a model associated with the model's relation to the product in the ad?
5. Is the level of sexism reflected in the portrayals of a model associated with the model's physical appearance? (Lin, 1999, p. 257)

Her sample included a full week of network prime-time (8 p.m. to 11 p.m.) television commercials from the three major networks (NBC, CBS, ABC) during the second week of April 1993 (Lin, 1999). Each womyn was coded individually, unless a group of womyn were shown, in which case the group was coded as a single unit. The model's relation to the product was assessed by judging if the model appeared in a functional role, a decorative role, or other, which she describes as a verbal endorsement. The model's physical appearance was assessed as either obviously alluring (where physical appearance was used to create viewer liking for the product) or other (where physical appearance was not clearly a focus of the sales appeal).

Question one results indicated that non-traditional portrayals were dominated by traditional role portrayals (Lin, 1999). Question two results indicated that decorative portrayals were used with more frequency than non-decorative portrayals. Question three results indicated that advertisers did not, with any great preference, use alluring or other portrayals more often in television advertising. Similar results were found for question four, where advertisers did not portray womyn in a sexist manner in relation to the roles the model perform in endorsing a product. Finally, question five results indicated that a model's appearance is reflective of sexism. Lin's discussion of the results argues that womyn are still portrayed in stereotypical roles for womyn, which explains in part the continued use of alluring womyn in advertising. One interesting finding was that womyn were portrayed as alluring in Level I (two-dimensional) and Level VI (equal to men), but not in Level II and Level III. Lin explains this as reflecting a change in how womyn's identities are socially constituted, noting that "sexy could now be

‘respectable’ in the symbolic world of advertising” (p. 263). This shift of social register is important for this project, as it points to the potential conflation of alluring portrayals within the Consciousness Scale as conventionally applied.

The related literature reviewed here addresses a few key issues that are lacking in the body of work from the literature specific to gender and advertising. As advertisements are coded and analyzed, Condit’s work is important in the assessment of any potential discrepancy advertisements. Why, if an advertisement was coded as Level I would the womyn have total power or vice versa? If the coders see the intended message, why did they code them with power, thus creating a discrepancy set? Perhaps the image’s portrayed social status, power, or race caused the coders to evaluate the text from a different but equally worthy set of values. Alternately, what about the social position of modern womyn compared to when the original Consciousness Scale was published would render a sex object with total power or an individual with none? Because womyn of color or of varying social status are portrayed differently than their white upper class counterparts, perhaps that portrayal itself carries alternative meaning, especially in relation to power.

### *Implications of Existing Research*

For the purposes of presenting the literature in an orderly manner, the literature review has been presented here in mainly chronological order. However, a few themes recur in the literature over the last thirty years, specifically that the nature of the coding systems has remained virtually unchanged. The Consciousness Scale and similar rhetorical categorizations remain the primary way by which academic research has attempted to explore the idea of mass mediated gender portrayals (and more to the point given this project, magazine advertisements).

The scholarship (whether done from a media/cultural studies or marketing/advertising perspective) appears to start from different places, a fact which effects not only what is coded but also what is found. The relationship between these two factors effectually creates a world where womyn in advertising are typologized by a model now thirty years old, an arguably dated perspective from which to acquire a full and nuanced understanding of what is really behind advertising and the images presented.

As advertisers vie for consumer's attention, they employ a varying and evolving stock set of feminized images. As consumers gender awareness changes with the times, the, the coding schemes used to categorize the resulting gendered roles needs to be reevaluated and perhaps adjusted to accommodate emerging ideas of gender.



### CHAPTER 3

#### REPLICATING/ MODIFYING CONSCIOUSNESS SCALE RESEARCH: METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

In the studies where the Consciousness Scale was first presented, Pingree et al. (1976) looked at advertising in *Ms.*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Playboy* to develop the instrument. These texts are used in this project, where appropriate, and new additions are also included. As will be explained shortly, not every advertisement published in the selected magazine issues was evaluated, though a detailed explanation of what texts were selected and why is in order.

*Playboy*, *Time*, and *Newsweek* magazines from the original study are included in this project. *Ms.* is not included because it no longer contains advertisements (except for the section which serves as an "Ad Watch" and specifically targets objectionable advertisements). In its place are ads culled from *Working Woman*, a magazine that markets itself as dedicated to helping the professional womyn succeed and thus plays a role today comparable to *Ms.* in the 1970's. Though it does not claim an explicitly "feminist" perspective, it shares the philosophy of *Ms.* insofar as its express purpose is to help womyn succeed by offering stories about womyn from a more objective (or at least non-stereotypic) perspective (than, say, *Playboy*).

This project also includes ads from *Cosmopolitan*, *Good Housekeeping*, and *Essence*. Because it is important to get the perspective of a magazine focused on and mainly marketed to readers interested in "beautiful womyn," *Cosmopolitan* is included. *Good Housekeeping* was added to the dataset since its target audience is mothers or wives (although many of them, are of course, also professionals in the corporate sense). Finally *Essence* is included because it focuses primarily on black womyn. These magazines seem to target different audiences than those

magazines used in the original Consciousness Scale study, and adding them may shed new light on the old categories.

For this study, only full-page or double-page magazine advertisements are evaluated and coded. Limiting the sample to full-page advertisements principally eliminates the one-quarter or one-third page advertisements in the back of the magazine, or the "shopper" section. Adding these smaller advertisements would make the dataset unnecessarily large without seeming to add much additional insight. This is so because many of these advertisements simply include smaller pictures, or reproduce cropped images from larger advertisements. Coding women into the Consciousness Scale requires an assessment of their surroundings, however those are either eliminated or made unrecognizable by smaller advertisements. Finally, in many of the magazines, the smaller shopper section advertisements are selling either diet drugs or sexually related products, which may distort the dataset and results. Thus, these advertisements have been eliminated for a few reasons. First, many of the advertisements are small and hard to see. Second, these products are represented in the dataset as full sized ads. The use of the Consciousness Scale for coding with the additional measurements of power is only one part of the project. The coding creates a dataset where discrepancy advertisements can be culled then evaluated. The project's purpose is not solely to attain numerical data for the Consciousness Scale; this is not simply a replication of the original Consciousness Scale projects. By allowing for only full sized ads the coders are not given an unduly large dataset to code but they are given images of the products with displays they can see and accurately evaluate. Focusing only on full and double page advertisements allows a broad yet well-rounded (i.e., not skewed) data set to be coded without overwhelming the coding process. Only paid advertising was coded and no editorial advertisements were assessed. Editorial advertisements (or photo layouts presented by

the magazine), while interesting and significant in many respects, generally have only one marketing purpose, which is to display this season's "in fashion." Such photography also suffers from the same problem of de-contextualization as the smaller print ads (fashion pictures often focus on the single runway model, yanked out of other clarifying contexts). Of course limiting the study to magazine advertisements also more closely replicates the Consciousness Scale data.

One issue from each quarter was randomly chosen for each magazine from the available issues. The 1999 January, April, July, and October editions of these magazines were coded. For *Time* and *Newsweek*, which are weekly magazines, the first edition of the relevant month is used. Because magazines offer reduced rates for multiple advertisements, many advertisements are repeated in succession over a particular period of time. All full sized advertisements were used from each magazine, but because of the extensive reprint phenomena, repeats were not multiply entered into dataset calculations. Although including all multiples of the same ad would have numerically increased the total sample, it would have done so at the expense of obtaining a representatively diverse body of advertisements sufficient to evaluate the range of representations of womyn.

This mechanism of selective coding is also logical when one understands that the main purpose of coding was to identify a still-narrower dataset of potentially problematic advertisements. By *problematic* I mean to operationally refer to ads consistently placed by coders in the same Consciousness Scale category/level but also consistently coded in power categories at odds with the Consciousness Scale rating. Achievement of a comprehensive *discrepancy set* of this type can be attained even with the dataset limitations just detailed.

Why focus on this so-called discrepancy set of advertisements? Because advertisements, for example, which encode womyn as both sex objects (i.e., low in the Consciousness Scale) and

powerful (i.e., high on the power scale used here) are the very ads which most problematize the gender portrayal coding schemes, and they call one's attention most clearly to cases where conventional coding may have the pernicious consequence of glossing over deeper analytical challenges. Because an implicit (and for many also a reasonable) assumption of the Consciousness Scale is that a womyn coded there as an Individual (Level V) would likely have access to deployable power and a womyn coded as a Sex-object (Level I) would lack such access, advertisements identified as running counter to this assumption were thus culled for further examination. By supplementing Consciousness Scale rankings with attention to a rating system seeking to measure the active capacity for power possessed by the womyn portrayed in advertising, a better understanding of how the Consciousness Scale can or should be adjusted to better account for modern images of womyn in advertising will hopefully become apparent.

### *Measurement Variables*

In this section I summarize the case for each of the specific questions asked of coders in assessing selected advertising. Coders were asked to engage in activity, which basically replicated Consciousness Scale work, while also required to perform coding aimed at uncovering potential sources of apparent contradiction in portrayals (for measurement variable see Appendix).

### Question 1: The Consciousness Scale

The study addresses three questions relating to the Consciousness Scale proper. First, at which level of the Consciousness Scale does a particular contemporary advertisement fit? Ads were coded as reflecting one of the following levels (using Pingree et al. placement protocols):

- I: The ads portray woman as a two-dimensional, non-thinking decoration.
- II: The ads portray woman's place is in the home or in womanly occupations.
- III: The ads portray woman may be a professional, but her first place is in the home.
- IV: The ads portray woman and men as equals.
- V: The ads portray woman and men as individuals (Pingree et al., 1976, p.194)

The first two coders coded all the advertisements, matching each advertisement into the most appropriate level of the Consciousness Scale.

### Question 2: Power

*Rate the woman/women's power.* The second element of the project involves the addition of the variable of *power* to the Consciousness Scale. After coders assign an advertisement's portrayal into one of the five levels of the Consciousness Scale, they were then asked to rate the apparent power of the womyn on a scale from one to five. A rating of one represents a womyn with no power. A rating of three represents a womyn with a moderate amount of observable perceived power, and a rating of five would signal a womyn with total or near-total power (as shown within the world of the advertisement). Again, the purpose of this addition is to shed light on the possible limitations of the Consciousness Scale by highlighting its implicit assumptions regarding the nuances of power.

Coding for power can assist in revealing potential anomalies warranting further investigation. For instance, if coders interreliably identify a portrayal as Level I, yet also give it a rating of 4 or 5 regarding enacted power, such a discrepancy would stand as a marker of a potential limitation in the Consciousness Scale scheme. Following this emergent discrepancy set, a semiotic reading of advertisements whose ratings at apparent odds creates a fuller understanding of the connections between gender and power and the extent to which the Consciousness Scale does or does not capture this relationship. When judging whether a

womyn has power, I rely on Weber's definition of power: "The probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his<sup>3</sup> own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests" (Dahl, 1986, p. 39). Although such a definition is undeniably ambiguous, in the actual work of coding Weber's account of power was serviceable enough to produce high degrees of inter-coder reliability.

*Types of Power.* If coders rated a womyn as having any power at all (which in the basic scale used here means numerically any score over a one), they were then asked to specify the kind of power she was employing. The bases of power listed on the coding instrument come from French and Raven (1968), as later elaborated by Richmond, McCroskey, Davis, and Koontz (1980). For each base (*coercive*, *reward*, *legitimate*, *referent*, and *expert*) the coder answered either yes or no. Coders could choose as many bases of power as necessary to fully describe the power portrayed. Additionally, they had the option of indicating that the womyn employs some other type of power, and when they chose this option they were invited to name it.

When a womyn is exhibiting *coercive* power, she has the ability to punish someone else (either within the advertisement, or perhaps implicitly the audience) if he/she does not conform to her influence. *Reward* power is her ability to reward someone else or lessen a negative source of control (either others within the advertisement, or perhaps the audience) if the other conforms to her influence. The employment of *legitimate* power is a womyn's authority stemming from a formal position within an organization or group. She has power over others because they feel she has the legal or contractual right to be in control. *Referent* power is gained through a womyn's personal relationship with others and the expectation that, because of the relationship,

---

<sup>3</sup> Has been gender paraphrased in the coding tool to "his/her".

others will want to identify with and please her. Finally, *expert* power is the womyn's source of power, which derives from her competence or knowledge in a very specific area. As mentioned earlier, coders were asked if the womyn employed another type of power not listed. If coders answered yes, they were asked to describe power they saw as best they could.

### Question 3: Difficulty in Coding

Coders were asked if they found coding a particular advertisement difficult because of the ambiguous portrayal of the womyn. Because the instrument requires a coder to make a collective judgment this task is quickly complicated; that is, even if an ad shows audiences a group of ten womyn, this coding instrument requires the assignment of single overall values to the entire portrayal. One can readily imagine a difficult hypothetical where, for example, an advertisement shows one womyn choking another womyn. Coding that ad would be difficult, since in such a portrayal one womyn's power comes directly at the expense of another, and yet the coding instrument requires assignment of a single overall number. This potential difficulty is addressed in part by this main question, simply offered in simple yes or no form, where the question is meant to provide coders with a vehicle to call attention to coding peculiarities that might otherwise have been overlooked.

### *The Coding Process*

Three coders (Coder A, B, C) were used in this project. Coders A and B coded each advertisement to produce a ranking within the parameters of the Consciousness Scale, a separate rating of the womyn's power, and (if she has power) a summary statement of its basis. Coder C reconciled discrepancies between coder A and B. Inter-coder reliability was measured.

The questions regarding power (as its results compare to those results from coding the Consciousness Scale) can assist in determining whether new categories or new understandings are necessary. As mentioned above, the comparisons between where a womyn fits into the Consciousness Scale versus her power and portrayal may shed light on the potential and specific limitations of the Consciousness Scale given changes in the culture, as reflected in more nuanced portrayals and likely audience reactions.

### *Results and Discussion of the Coding Process*

This project is bifurcated into quantitative and qualitative sections. The quantitative portion of this project centered on making a determination, based on replication of Consciousness Scale research, regarding the extent of portrayed power. The quantitative coding was thus performed to simply spotlight possible limitations with the Consciousness Scale and how those spotlighted advertisements represent the portrayal of womyn by bringing to attention advertising coded as somehow significantly discrepant. Once this discrepancy set of ads was identified, a qualitative ad-by-ad reading was undertaken to look for patterns of visual representation.

The results reported next reflect the basic the quantitative findings of the coding described above. The qualitative analysis will follow in the next chapter.

### Intercoder Reliability

The final data set included 516 advertisements. Coders A and B separately coded ads using the three question coding form just reviewed. As seen in Table 4, intercoder reliability for placing womyn into the Consciousness Scale was .66, calculated as a Pearson Correlation. The



intercoder reliability for rating the womyn's power was .61 (see Table 5). For each advertisement with a discrepancy between the coders, a third coder decided which rating best described the portrayal.

**Table 4**  
**Correlations- Coder A and Coder B for Q1**

		CS1	CS2
CS1	Pearson Correlation	1	.662*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.000
	N	516	516
CS2	Pearson Correlation	.662**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	.
	N	516	516

\*\*. Correlation is significant at 0.01 level

**Table 5**  
**Correlations- Coder A and Coder B for Q2a**

		Power1	Power2
Power1	Pearson Correlation	1	.607*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.000
	N	516	516
Power2	Pearson Correlation	.607**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	.
	N	516	516

\*\*. Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

As shown in Table 6, the correlation between question 1 (Consciousness Scale Rating) and question 2a (rate of power) was also calculated at .699. The number of advertisements coded on the Consciousness Scale that were coded within +/- 1 of the power level code was 396, or a correlation of 76.7% of the set (see Table 7).

**Table 6**  
**Consciousness and Power Scale Correlations**

		CS1	CS2
CS	Pearson Correlation	1	.699*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.000
	N	516	516
Power	Pearson Correlation	.699**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	.
	N	516	516

\*\*. Correlation is significant at 0.01 level

**Table 7**  
**Relation Between Consciousness Scale and Power Code**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	-2.00	3	0.6	0.6	0.6
	-1.00	64	12.4	12.4	13.0
	0.00	251	48.6	48.6	61.6
	1.00	81	15.7	15.7	77.3
	2.00	71	13.8	13.8	91.1
	3.00	28	5.4	5.4	96.5
	4.00	18	3.5	3.5	100.0
	Total	516	100.0	100.0	

In comparing these results, several findings are apparent. First, there was a discernable discrepancy between coder A and coder B in evaluating advertisements in light of both the Consciousness Scale and in observed levels of power. However, there was a consistent reading of the Consciousness Scale rank and the correlating level of power for each advertisement by each coder (see Table 6). In other words, while the coders did not always agree with one another, they did consistently code the portrayal on the Consciousness scale and the expected level of power possessed by the womyn. Coder C resolved the discrepancies between the coders.

The directions provided to coders for what a portrayal on the Consciousness Scale might look like came from Pingree et al.'s *A Scale for Sexism* (1976). In addition, the directions included a brief one to two sentence description of each level of the Consciousness Scale, also explicitly derived from mainstream uses of the instrument (see Appendix). Because the correlation between question 1 and question 2a (especially the +/-1 correlation) was fairly consistent, the coders seemed to understand the Consciousness Scale representations and how they related to power.

To speculate as to why the inter-coder reliability was relatively low (though not unacceptably so) we should perhaps look back to Pingree et al.'s comment about the high intercoder reliability of the scales use in 1976 (96.6) where they say, "This result suggest that the scale is clear-cut and reliable for objectifying amounts of media sexism" (p.197). If coders were using directions which came directly from this work, slipping rates of intercoder reliability may imply that perhaps the Consciousness Scale no longer provides a *clear-cut* way to specify media sexism.

### The Consciousness Scale

Question one coded the womyn's portrayal on the Consciousness Scale. It is interesting here to take a moment to review the general findings of the Consciousness Scale question. Of the 516 advertisements coded, the most common portrayal was of Level I womyn, a total of 219. The second most frequent portrayal was of Level V womyn with a total of 149 coded portrayals. Level II was coded for 52 advertisements, Level III coded for 32, and Level IV coded for 64 advertisements.

Each advertisement was given an alphanumeric identification code. This allowed coders to accurately identify advertisements and to answer the questions in the instrument without knowledge of which magazine the advertisement came from. From this identification code, one is able to see how Consciousness Scale portrayals are dispersed via magazine (a total of 26 magazine issues were used).

Perhaps surprisingly (if only because the publication is so plainly marketed to womyn), the magazine containing the highest number of coded Level I portrayals of womyn was *Cosmopolitan*. The three editions of *Cosmopolitan* available for coding contained a total of 104 Level I coded advertisements, or 47.5% of all 219 Level I portrayals, which also made up for 62.7% of all of the coded advertisements in the three editions of *Cosmopolitan*. That percentage was exceeded only by *Playboy*, which contributed 42 advertisements to the overall data set. Of those 42 coded advertisements from *Playboy*, 66.7% or 28 were coded as Level I. Considering all magazines taken together, only six of the 26 magazine issues coded contained no Level I portrayals. These six were the four editions of *Newsweek* and two of the three editions of *Time*.

In addition to the comparatively low numbers for Level II, Level III, and Level IV, the dispersement of coded portrayals was relatively equal across publications, with a few notable exceptions. *Playboy* contained only one Level III portrayal; *Time* and *Newsweek* again were almost devoid of Level III portrayals, except for one edition of *Newsweek*, which contained four advertisements to be coded, three of which were coded as Level III.

The second largest portrayal of womyn in advertising coded in this study was Level V. The magazine with the most Level V coded advertisements was an edition of *Working Woman*, which had a total of 17 advertisements to be coded, where 64.7% or 11 of those advertisements were coded as Level V. One edition of *Time* and one edition of *Newsweek* consisted of 75%

Level V womyn (though their total contribution of advertisements to the overall data set was only four). Three of the four editions of *Playboy* coded contained only one Level V portrayal, and the fourth contained none.

These results vary slightly from the original study by Pingree et al. (see Table 8 and 9). They found *Playboy* to have the most Level I portrayals by percentage compared to other advertisements within the magazine, which was also the case here, though this project found *Cosmopolitan* a very close second (recall that *Cosmopolitan* was not in the original study). They found *Ms.* to consistently include more Level IV and Level V portrayals, which was also true for the *Ms.* substitute, *Working Woman*. The largest variance from the original work was that Pingree et al. found Level II to be the most widely used portrayal, where as coding with this project found Level I and Level V used with a higher degree of frequency.

**Table 8**  
**Levels of Consciousness of Advertisements in Four Magazines- 1999**

Level of Consciousness	Playboy %	Time %	Newsweek %	Working Woman %	Percent of Total
I	67	10	0	13	25
II	7	13	6	8	8
III	2	6	18	16	11
IV	17	29	35	17	21
V	7	42	41	46	35
(N)	42	31	17	76	166

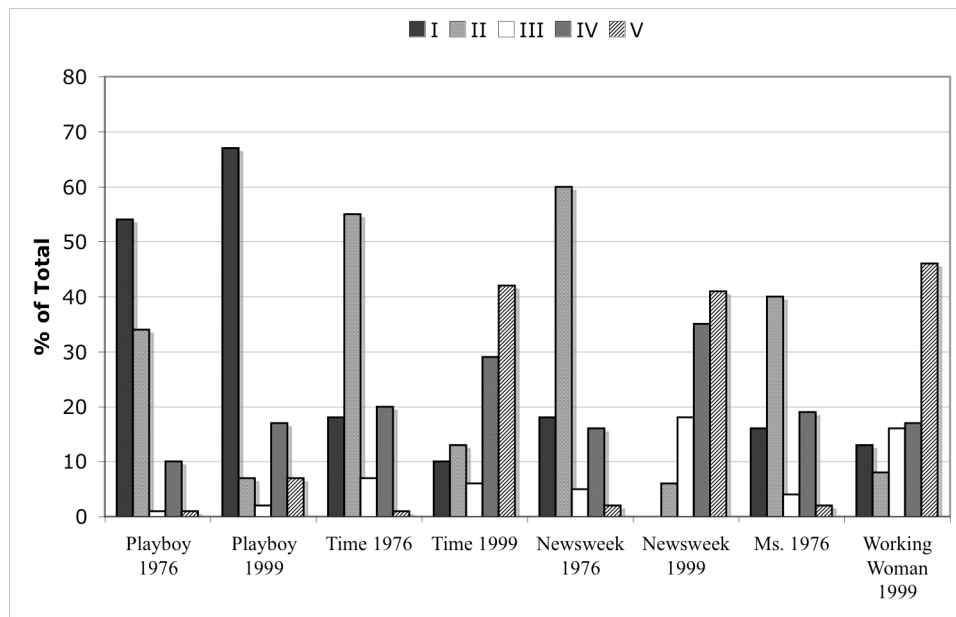
**Table 9**  
**Levels of Consciousness of Advertisements in Four Magazines- 1976**

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

Pingree et al., 1979

As shown in Table 10, a quick view of the level of consciousness of advertisements from the original four in 1976 and those same magazines in 1999 show a shift in magazine advertisements.

**Table 10**  
**Comparison Table 8 and Table 9**  
**Level of Consciousness of Advertisements in Four Magazines**



### Power and the Consciousness Scale

Of the 516 advertisements, 218 were coded as portraying womyn as completely powerless, and only 18 coded womyn as exhibiting total power (see Table 11). Most portrayals in the coded advertisements exhibited moderate to no power, for a total of 428 (82.9%). The suggestion that Level I Consciousness Scale portrayals might exhibit significant power proved unsupported. In fact, no womyn portrayed as Level I were coded as possessing anything beyond moderate power and moderate power portrayals only constituted 1.4% of all Level I coded advertisements. Only Level IV and Level V womyn were coded as possessing power. Most womyn in Level I were coded as having no power (82.2%).

**Table 11**  
**Crosstabulation of Power and Consciousness Scale**

		CS					Total
		Two Dimensional	Home or womanly Job	Professional but 1st place is in the home	Must be equal	Individuals	
Power	1.00 Count	180	10	9	1	18	218
	% within CS	82.2	19.2	28.1	1.6	12.1	42.2
	2.00 Count	36	23	8	13	27	107
	% within CS	16.4	44.2	25.0	20.3	18.1	20.7
	3.00 Count	3	19	9	23	49	103
	% within CS	1.4	36.5	28.1	35.9	32.9	20.0
	4.00 Count			6	24	40	70
	% within CS			18.8	37.5	26.8	13.6
	5.00 Count				3	15	18
	% within CS				4.7	10.1	3.5
Total	Count	219	52	32	64	149	516
	% within CS	100	100	100	100	100	100

Interestingly, however, the reverse of the suspected hypothesis was confirmed by this data. That is, almost a full third of the Level V womyn were coded as exhibiting no or little power, a total

of 45 advertisements (30.2%) and a nearly fourth of Level IV womyn were coded with no or little power, a total of 14 (21.9%).

The argument that as a womyn's portrayal move up levels on the Consciousness Scale, her "opportunity continually increases" was initially made by Pingree et al. in 1976 (p.195). From such a claim and an understanding of the original Consciousness Scale levels, one would reasonably assume that a portrayal on the Consciousness scale (a one to five scale) should correlate in a direct way with the level of evident power (also here a one to five scale), and this inference finds general support in the data. Again, the overall correlation between question one (ranking on Consciousness Scale) and question 2 (ranking of power) was .70.

The purpose of this quantitative work was to identify a subset of the overall advertisement dataset able to potentially shed light on possible limitations in the Consciousness Scale. The advertisements identified for closer examination had a question 1 Consciousness Scale rating and question 2a (rate of power) that was +/-3 or 4 different. The advertisements that have been drawn out with this rule are advertisements coded as either LevelIV Power1<sup>4</sup>; LevelIV Power2; and LevelIV Power1. No advertisements revealed a relationship between the Consciousness Scale and Power of -3 or 4 (in other words, as just mentioned, in no advertisement was the portrayal of the womyn coded as Level I, where she was also rated as exhibiting total or great power).

It is important to take a moment to address one fact that becomes obvious when looking at the Consciousness Scale and Power cross tabulation table. Level I and Level II portrayals were *never* coded as having great or total power. Level III womyn were never coded as having total power. This is consistent with my earlier speculation regarding the relationship between

---

<sup>4</sup> Consciousness Scale level, followed by the Power rating score.



Consciousness Scale rate and power rate. What is apparently inconsistent is Level V portrayals coded as having no power or little power, or Level IV portrayals having no power. One might expect that if a portrayal moves up on the Consciousness Scale, a womyn's "opportunity should increase" along with her power. By this logic, Level V womyn should never be coded without power, when in this case, the number of womyn coded with no power and total power was almost identical (18:15). Perhaps addressing the type of power these womyn use will better address this issue.

### Types of Power Used

If a coder indicated that a womyn had *any* power, they were then asked to best describe that power or its basis (coders were allowed to choose more than one base of power). The most common base of power used by womyn in advertisements was coded as *referent* power (35.5%), with *reward* power as a close second (26%), as seen in Tables 12 and 13. The least common type of power, other than *another* (.017%), was *coercive* power (.025%), as seen in Tables 14 and 15. *Coercive* power, when coded (2.5% of 516), was most often employed by Level V portrayals: 61.5%. All other bases of power, when coded, were most often numerically employed by Level V portrayals. The implications of these types of power are further explored in Chapter 4 and 5 as viewing the specific visual imagery of the advertisements offers a better understanding of how these types of power are portrayed.

**Table 12**  
**CS\* Referent Crosstabulation**

			Referent		Total
			No	Yes	
CS	Two Dimensional	Count	196	23	219
		% with CS	89.5%	10.5%	100.0%
	Home or Womanly Job	Count	21	31	52
		% with CS	40.4%	59.6%	100.0%
	Professional but First Place is in Home	Count	14	18	32
		% with CS	43.8%	56.2%	100.0%
	Must be Equal	Count	28	36	64
		% with CS	43.8%	56.2%	100.0%
	Individuals	Count	74	75	149
		% with CS	49.7%	50.3%	100.0%
Total	Count	333	183	516	
	% with CS	64.5%	35.5%	100.0%	

**Table 13**  
**CS\* Reward Crosstabulation**

			Reward		Total
			No	Yes	
CS	Two Dimensional	Count	203	16	219
		% with CS	92.7%	7.3%	100.0%
	Home or Womanly Job	Count	31	21	52
		% with CS	59.6%	40.4%	100.0%
	Professional but First Place is in Home	Count	25	7	32
		% with CS	78.1%	21.9%	100.0%
	Must be Equal	Count	35	29	64
		% with CS	54.7%	45.3%	100.0%
	Individuals	Count	88	61	149
		% with CS	59.1%	40.9%	100.0%
Total	Count	382	134	516	
	% with CS	74.0%	26.0%	100.0%	

**Table 14**  
**CS\* Another Crosstabulation**

			Another		Total
			No	Yes	
CS	Two Dimensional	Count	214	5	219
		% with CS	97.7%	2.3%	100.0%
	Home or Womanly Job	Count	51	1	52
		% with CS	98.1%	1.9%	100.0%
	Professional but First Place is in Home	Count	32		32
		% with CS	100.0%		100.0%
	Must be Equal	Count	62	2	64
		% with CS	96.9%	3.1%	100.0%
	Individuals	Count	148	1	149
		% with CS	99.3%	.7%	100.0%
Total	Count	507	9	516	
	% with CS	98.3%	1.7%	100.0%	

**Table 15**  
**CS\* Coercive Crosstabulation**

			Coercive		Total
			No	Yes	
CS	Two Dimensional	Count	219		219
		% with CS	100.0%		100.0%
	Home or Womanly Job	Count	50	1	52
		% with CS	96.2%	3.8%	100.0%
	Professional but First Place is in Home	Count	32		32
		% with CS	100.0%		100.0%
	Must be Equal	Count	56	8	64
		% with CS	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
	Individuals	Count	146	3	149
		% with CS	98.0%	2.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	503	13	516	
	% with CS	97.5%	2.5%	100.0%	

**Table 16**  
**CS\* Legitimate Crosstabulation**

			Legitimate		Total
			No	Yes	
CS	Two Dimensional	Count	218	1	219
		% with CS	99.5%	.5%	100.0%
	Home or Womanly Job	Count	52		52
		% with CS	100.0%		100.0%
	Professional but First Place is in Home	Count	28	4	32
		% with CS	87.5%	12.5	100.0%
	Must be Equal	Count	41	23	64
		% with CS	64.1%	35.9%	100.0%
	Individuals	Count	100	49	149
		% with CS	67.1%	32.9%	100.0%
	Total	Count	439	77	516
		% with CS	85.1%	14.9%	100.0%

**Table 17**  
**CS\* Expert Crosstabulation**

			Expert		Total
			No	Yes	
CS	Two Dimensional	Count	219		219
		% with CS	100.0%		100.0%
	Home or Womanly Job	Count	52		52
		% with CS	100.0%		100.0%
	Professional but First Place is in Home	Count	29	3	32
		% with CS	90.6%	9.4%	100.0%
	Must be Equal	Count	53	11	64
		% with CS	82.9%	17.2%	100.0%
	Individuals	Count	125	24	149
		% with CS	83.9%	16.1%	100.0%
	Total	Count	478	38	516
		% with CS	92.6%	7.4%	100.0%

### *Implications for Study of Power*

The most interesting result was the total absence of Level I portrayals where the womyn had total or great power. In contrast to the original advertisement analysis done in the introduction of this project, coders here did not find alluring beauty generative of power. By contrast, though, a far greater number of advertisements coded as Level IV and V portrayed

womyn with little or no apparent power. Though the coders found inconsistencies between the Consciousness Scale and power level with a number of advertisements, the disagreement emerged on the other side of the scale as might have been expected. The pairing of the Consciousness Scale and power did however succeed in culling a set of advertisements calling attention to the potential problems with the Consciousness Scale. This discrepancy set is not a homogeneous set of portrayals, rather, they portray a working womyn at home, womyn who appear naturally, defiant young womyn, and womyn engaged in apparent same-sex relationships.

A brief review of the advertisements pulled from the original set (41 of 516) reveal a few apparent commonalities (the next chapter performs a more detailed analysis of these advertisements). It is interesting that almost half of the advertisements showing major Consciousness Scale and power level discrepancies are for either medicine/medical related products or clothing products. Most of the discrepancy set advertisements feature a single womyn, as opposed to groups of womyn or a womyn with a man or men. The womyn appear racially diverse, with a mix of white, black, and Asian womyn. This demographic information and a closer examination of these images will be explored in the next chapter to better explain how womyn can be portrayed as equal to men or as individuals, yet as still completely lacking power.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **ANALYSIS OF DISCREPANCY IMAGES**

The portrayals found within the discrepancy set are diverse and yet they share numerous qualities. The following analysis explores these similarities and differences in hopes of discovering why they were marked as Level V. A comparison of discrepancy and non-discrepancy ads for similarly marketed products will be evaluated to discover why these womyn were coded with little or no power yet also coded as Level V. For the most part, the analysis that follows accepts at face value the power codes assigned by the coders. That is, since the main purpose of this project is to elaborate a more contemporarily useful version of the Consciousness Scale, the qualitative analysis of the discrepancy set is more focused on understanding CS level assignments than the assignment of a power rating. In Chapter 3, the qualitative data revealed that for the most part the Consciousness Scale succeeds in accurately connecting a relational portrayal to the expected power rating a womyn might have. Qualitative analysis of the discrepancy set thus concentrates on how these womyn are different in other respects. As these womyn mostly fall into the Level V category, for example, taking a more in depth look at this level is important as it will reveal what about the original definition of Level V would allow for these womyn to exhibit individuality without power.

Advertisements culled from the data set for particular attention because of discrepancies in how they had been coded within the context of the Consciousness Scale and Power scale ratings were all, as it turned out, coded as Consciousness Scale Level V or IV and given a Power rating of 1 or 2. That is, a set of advertising images emerged, which were seen by coders as simultaneously showing the womyn portrayed as equal with men and powerless at the same time.

As one reviews this discrepancy set, and compares it to a broader sample of the LevelV Power5 (hereafter referred to as *powerful individual*) and Level1 Power1 (*powerless object*) advertisements, it becomes more apparent why the LevelV Power1, LevelV Power2, LevelIV Power1 (hereafter the *discrepancy set*) ads were difficult to code. A number of issues are apparent in the advertisements and the following section addresses some of them, for the purpose of better understanding the functionality of the Consciousness Scale in rating the sexism of today's magazine advertisements.

### *The Womyn of Level V Portrayals*

Coders viewing portrayals where womyn were categorized as Level V on the Consciousness Scale but seen as possessing little power tended to identify that power as mainly reward or referent. Only in two cases were such womyn coded as employing legitimate power, and in only one case was she coded as employing coercive power. Of the five types of power for which she could have potentially been coded as employing, referent and reward are the weakest and the most stereotypically feminine. Even a womyn in a domestic setting can have reward power, a mother uses it when she praises a child or gives a child a toy for good behavior. A teenage girl can have referent power, such as she might use within a relationship to induce others to act like she does and which marks her as an influential peer. Both referent and reward power are often manifest in the context of interpersonal *relationships*. An organization's president or a research scientist can have power over a stranger because of her or his legitimate or expert power. Given this, for referent and reward power to emerge as the most prevalent type

of power within the discrepancy set implies the coders see portrayals as powerful, but only limitedly so, where the influence is characteristic of that granted womyn at home, in the grocery store, at a bank, or the in bedroom, that is, the influence derived from interpersonal relationships that are *private* and remain stereotypically female.

Womyn who were coded as *powerful individuals* were most often coded as using legitimate power, although these *powerful individuals* often exhibited multiple sorts of power. It is reasonable to conclude that womyn portraying a weaker form of power (but power nonetheless) would be more difficult to place on the Consciousness Scale, whereas a womyn portraying legitimate power would be easier to categorize.

As a discussion of the discrepancy set advertisements progresses, portrayals of the *powerful individual* and the *powerless object* are a useful basis of comparison. Accordingly, the discrepancy set will be analyzed first; there I mainly evaluate the visual imagery and meaning. In some instances the text is evaluated, but the visual image is the primary indicator of power and the Consciousness Scale level as directed to the coders and within the original Consciousness Scale study. Then the discrepancy set will be compared to images of the *powerful individual* and *powerless object* to reach a better understanding of why the images in the discrepancy set were coded as they were.

Comparing, for example, the type of power used in similarly marketed products as shown in the ads which portray *powerful individual*, and then comparing those to the discrepancy set, helps to highlight the rhetorical devices at work within advertising. What about a *powerful individual* advertisement for a beauty product led coders to identify the influence they saw as *legitimate* rather than as *referent* or *reward* power, as they did with the discrepancy set advertisements? Conversely, what characteristics of the discrepancy set beauty advertisements



caused those womyn to be coded as Level V, whereas other advertisements were placed in the *powerless object* set? Why, if the majority of beauty product portrayals show womyn as mainly powerless, would one portrayal be coded as Level V and the other at Level I?

The Butler and Paisley and Pingree et al., coding schemes contain several explicit instructions to guide a coder to a judgment of whether a womyn should be considered Level V. While they have created a consistent description of a Level V portrayal, their instructions nonetheless allow for a number of portrayals to be coded as Level V. The use of *powerful individual* advertisements as a comparison tool also helps explain the complex variety of Level V womyn encountered, especially when compared with divergent levels of coded power and power type. To see why this is so, we must return to the original conceptualization of Level V womyn in the early elaboration of the Consciousness Scale.

The original Consciousness Scale, while not explicitly making power a variable, implicitly assumed that power would play a part in the coding process. Butler and Paisley as well as Pingree et al., describe Level V womyn in the following ways (the differentiation of the bullet points is explored shortly):

- Women and men as individuals
- Non-stereotypical
- Individuals are not judged on their sex
- Each individual should be treated non-stereotypically
- The top of the scale is the only place a woman is allowed to be superior
- Individual women and men are viewed as superior to each other in some respects, inferior in others.
- Woman is shown in an occupation or situation reserved for men.
- Any presentation of a woman that shows her superior in a context other than the home or traditional “womanly” activity must be Level V
- Woman is portrayed in a role reversal (unusual role shows the woman in an occupation or situation reserved for men)

These descriptions create expectations of feminized power for womyn in Level V perhaps appropriate to 1976, but which make coding more difficult today. While the matrix to some extent captures the cultural stereotypes characteristic of Level V, it also identifies something of a modern-day impossibility, since the scale asks coders to distinguish between three identify types (more on this in a moment), which vary depending on the portrayal and which produce incoherent characterizations by today's standards. These three identities emerge from the bullet-point distinctions just made, which can be seen as conflating three distinguishable portrayals: (A) those which mainly position womyn as persons, not as simply representing a gender, or, as an individual, hereafter called *The Individual* (identified above by round black bullet points); (B) those positioning a womyn in relation to men (indicated by round hollow bullet points), hereafter called *The Manwoman*; and (C) those positioning a womyn's status by implicit comparison to "traditional" gender role expectations (indicated by squared bullet points), hereafter called *The Nonwoman*. Perhaps a conflated reading of these attributes done in 1976 would have always yielded consistent codings, but today the same exercise potentially reveals three different womyn interpellated by these instructions. All three womyn are Level V by definition, but the specific person identified is not always the same. Importantly, these separate portrayals are not simply a product of an imaginative reading of contemporary culture, but emerge in the dataset.

In this project, coders were instructed as follows: "05 Woman and men are individuals. This portrayals includes woman/women who are not portrayed based simply on their sex, but are shown as individuals, with common representations including role reversal."

What I have identified as *Individual* womyn in the discrepancy set are arguably not mainly womyn at all, since they are independent beings who are not reducible to their role of

housewife or mother, or for that matter, as a womyn business owner or board executive. The person we see is not defined by her gender at all. Such portrayals are present in the discrepancy set. In these cases the background is vague, if any is even shown. She may be attractive, but is unlikely to be wearing makeup. She may be nicely dressed, but tends not to be sexualized or reduced to a womyn playing a man's role or even in a man's world. Unlike a Level I womyn, the first thing we see about *The Individual* is not her gender, but even when we cannot help but notice it, these advertisements do not invite evaluation on a gendered basis. We see not a womyn thrown into a man's world, but rather a person *being* regardless of gender identification. Of course the potential problem with this classification is that because we see the womyn as simply being, apart from her background or work environment, she can also plausibly be construed as Level I.

*The Manwomyn* is a womyn thrown into a man's role. First, she is implicitly superior to her male counterpart, which creates a gender dichotomy not generally evident when an *Individual* is portrayed. This classification context requires a coder to compare a womyn's position to a man's, and vice versa. An advertisement might, for example, show a womyn in a business suit in an office.

One problem with this classification is its inherently paradoxical nature: even when a womyn is judged as evidently superior, she is nonetheless always already contained within the visual limits of a "man's world." This problem is sometimes true with the final classification, *Nonwomyn*, as well. This portrayal shows a womyn who is superior in any setting other than in a home or a womynly activity. Again, this womyn must be then thrown into a man's world, but the difference between *Nonwomyn* and *Manwomyn* portrayals is that the former typically enacts a sort of role reversal (where a traditionally feminine role is abandoned). These descriptions

imply that a womyn at home or in a “womanly occupation” is the norm and for her to be in a different role is a role reversal. This classification thus creates an implicit norm for womyn, which normalizes them at home or doing womyn’s work.

Each of these classifications creates a potentially difficult coding situation and complicated the determination of where in the Consciousness Scale a womyn fits, a problem only partly resolved by breaking the original definitions into three. But subdividing the original definitions three ways at least starts the process of pluralizing feminine subjectivity in a way more fully in line with contemporary culture. Simply put, these womyn do not have to be fit into a narrow box that too-narrowly specifies the nature of their independence. And so, although only a beginning, this three-classification model permits a more nuanced evaluation not solely on sex or gender. It is thus used throughout the following discussion of specific advertisements, although simply looking at the ads also helps reveal the work done by coders and the discrepancies they were finding.

Portrayals of womyn coded as *powerful individual* generally fit into the role reversal category (*Manwomyn*), and mainly show womyn in something other than a “traditional” role. Many of these advertisements did not include men. These portrayals (*powerful individual*) thus included womyn who are business womyn/owners (a role traditionally reserved for men), professional golfers (a field dominated by men and where many womyn who play are assumed to be gay), and womyn using financial advisors (caring for financial matters, specifically investments, has again been generally reserved for men). By contrast, portrayals coded in the discrepancy set generally portray *Individuals*, where the visual portrayal is not simplistically based on gender (one exception is that some of the advertising copy discusses issues normally thought of as gendered, e.g., breast cancer).

If one assumes that traditional womyn's roles keep them in the house as wife or mother, or in the workforce occupying stereotypical roles (e.g., teacher, nurse, flight attendant) then the portrayals found of the *powerful individual* obviously represent a *role reversal*. Because there are no men in these ads, it is difficult to identify these portrayals as *Manwomyn*. The *powerful individual* in a role reversal can also reasonably be coded as non-stereotypically showing *Individuals*. However, because in 1976 these portrayals were probably scarce (maybe even nonexistent), these womyn would probably not have been regularly identified as individuals (by today's standards). As their appearance was rare, they would still have been judged on their gender (even if that judgment was that they were portrayed as a womyn in a "nontraditional" role). Breaking up the Level V descriptions into three classifications helps explain how womyn can be portrayed as Level V and yet be judged as having little or no power (as we'll see later, it also helps explain how advertisements which could have been coded as Level I were coded as Level V.)

The *powerful individual* subset of advertisements most often depicted womyn as employing *legitimate* power. These womyn occupy roles traditionally held by men, and hence their power is legitimate, i.e., working in office positions traditionally held for men automatically bestows a certain power on womyn who are in them. Yet womyn in the discrepancy set were most often coded as employing *referent* or *reward* power, forms of power regularly thought possible in traditional gender roles of womyn. By looking at the implications of Consciousness Scale level, power, and power type, this example reveals a world where, if a womyn is to be legitimate, she must be like a man.

In sum, then, womyn portrayed in the discrepancy set often fit into, the *Individual* typology, but not often in the categories *Manwomyn* or *Nonwomyn*. This finding is consistent

with some contemporary feminist theories about gender. Recall that the category *Manwomyn* positions a womyn as she relates to men; *Nonwoman* positions a womyn as she relates to other womyn. And the *Individual* does not position her as a traditional womyn at all. A traditional reading sees a womyn as occupying a Level V role when she *breaks out* or is *different*, which is consistent with *Manwomyn* and *Nonwoman*. A more modern reading of Level V includes these portrayals, but does not necessarily position them as *different*, since it does not code womyn as *non-men* or as *in-a-man's-world*, but as individuals within the world.

It is important to reiterate that these issues do not arise out of coding error. Coders reasonably placed womyn in the *powerful individual* set. The womyn in the discrepancy set simply represent different ways of interpreting Level V that are consistent with the definitions first given by Butler and Paisley and Pingree et al. in 1976.

#### *Analysis of Discrepancy Set By Product*

The product types revealed in the discrepancy set are not distinguishably different from those found in the *powerless object* or *powerful individual* set. In almost every case, the matter of portrayal controls the coding, not the nature or use of the product. The discrepancy set included forty-one advertisements. But it is still helpful to explore product types and portrayals to determine if, for example, all clothing advertisements in the discrepancy set look the same. Do all medical advertisements portray womyn in the same manner? If yes, what is the relationship between product and portrayal? And what, if any, common themes crop up as shared factors within the discrepancy portrayals, both in related product types and overall?

This section explores product category portrayals. To get a better feeling for how those portrayals are used and were coded, advertisements from the *powerful individual* and *powerless object* set are again used as the basis for comparison in the final section of this chapter.

### Beauty Products

Advertisements in the discrepancy set include some marketing beauty products, including skin care, hair care, and makeup. An advertisement for Proactive (Fig.3) is consistent with a traditional reading of Level V as the womyn in the advertisement portrays a doctor, a patient, and a spokesperson. The Organic Root Stimulator (Fig.4) advertisement is consistent with a Level IV read as it portrays a man, a womyn, and a child suffering from dry scalp. One can easily see why the Consciousness Scale level was chosen and the lack of power is indirectly communicated by virtue of the fact that the consumer requires the product to solve some problem (such as acne or a dry scalp).

The Oil of Olay (Fig. 5), Dove (Fig. 6), and Frizz Free (Fig.7) advertisements are more difficult to code, as they can be seen to represent elements both Levels I and V. These advertisements share several characteristics. First, these womyn are wearing little or no makeup. They exemplify a type of beauty that is popular today, the so-called natural look. Second, the womyn do not appear to be explicitly posing for the audience

Finally, This Dermatologist's Acne Treatment That Makes Blemishes Disappear, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!

**AFTER**

Each Week, You'll See a Visible Difference in Your Skin! You'll See How Soft and Smooth Your Skin Becomes! You'll See How Your Skin Becomes Softer and Smoother!

**BEFORE**

Each Week, You'll See a Visible Difference in Your Skin! You'll See How Soft and Smooth Your Skin Becomes! You'll See How Your Skin Becomes Softer and Smoother!

**proactiv<sup>®</sup>**  
**SOLUTION**

☒ A Fine Grained, 9-in-1 Acid Treatment  
☒ Exfoliates Skin, Soothes, Softens, Moisturizes, and  
☒ Clears, Cleans and Tones (Regulates) Skin's Natural Oil Balance, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!

Dr. Robert M. Guttman, a dermatologist, has been practicing for over 20 years. He is a member of the American Academy of Dermatology and the American Society of Dermatologists. He has been named "Dermatologist of the Year" by the American Academy of Dermatology and the American Society of Dermatologists. He has also been named "Dermatologist of the Year" by the American Academy of Dermatology and the American Society of Dermatologists.

**Dr. Robert M. Guttman, M.D.**

Dr. Robert M. Guttman, a dermatologist, has been practicing for over 20 years. He is a member of the American Academy of Dermatology and the American Society of Dermatologists. He has been named "Dermatologist of the Year" by the American Academy of Dermatology and the American Society of Dermatologists. He has also been named "Dermatologist of the Year" by the American Academy of Dermatology and the American Society of Dermatologists.

**CLEAR, SMOOTH, HEALTHY SKIN CAN BE YOUR LOT IN LIFE.**

1. Exfoliates Skin, Soothes, Softens, Moisturizes, and Clears, Cleans and Tones (Regulates) Skin's Natural Oil Balance, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!
2. Exfoliates Skin, Soothes, Softens, Moisturizes, and Clears, Cleans and Tones (Regulates) Skin's Natural Oil Balance, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!
3. Exfoliates Skin, Soothes, Softens, Moisturizes, and Clears, Cleans and Tones (Regulates) Skin's Natural Oil Balance, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!

**PROACTIV SOLUTION**

Exfoliates Skin, Soothes, Softens, Moisturizes, and Clears, Cleans and Tones (Regulates) Skin's Natural Oil Balance, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!

**FREE**

Exfoliates Skin, Soothes, Softens, Moisturizes, and Clears, Cleans and Tones (Regulates) Skin's Natural Oil Balance, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!

**FREE**

Exfoliates Skin, Soothes, Softens, Moisturizes, and Clears, Cleans and Tones (Regulates) Skin's Natural Oil Balance, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!

**FREE**

Exfoliates Skin, Soothes, Softens, Moisturizes, and Clears, Cleans and Tones (Regulates) Skin's Natural Oil Balance, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!

**FREE**

Exfoliates Skin, Soothes, Softens, Moisturizes, and Clears, Cleans and Tones (Regulates) Skin's Natural Oil Balance, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!

**FREE**

Exfoliates Skin, Soothes, Softens, Moisturizes, and Clears, Cleans and Tones (Regulates) Skin's Natural Oil Balance, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!

**FREE**

Exfoliates Skin, Soothes, Softens, Moisturizes, and Clears, Cleans and Tones (Regulates) Skin's Natural Oil Balance, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!

**FREE**

Exfoliates Skin, Soothes, Softens, Moisturizes, and Clears, Cleans and Tones (Regulates) Skin's Natural Oil Balance, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!

**FREE**

Exfoliates Skin, Soothes, Softens, Moisturizes, and Clears, Cleans and Tones (Regulates) Skin's Natural Oil Balance, Leaves Your Skin Softer and Smoother!

Figure 3 Proactiv

[illegible]

Figure 4 Organic Root Stimulator



the new  
body language

even tone

smooth texture

radiant

resilient

Words usually reserved for your face are now possible all over your body

Let your skin say the very best things about you. After just one shower, you'll have radiant skin. After one wash, dry skin becomes supple, radiant, with more even tone. It does what you never thought a body wash could do. It actually moisturizes for a full 24 hours. New Olay Renewal Moisturizing Body Wash.

OLAY RENEWAL  
Moisturizing Body Wash

44 F

Figure 5 Oil of Olay

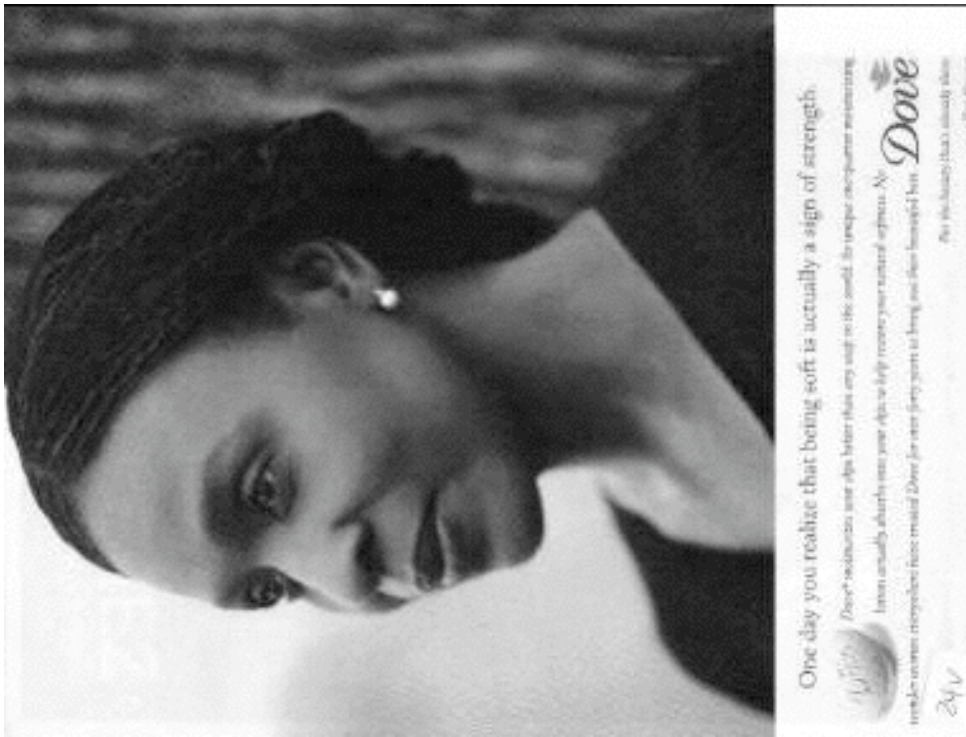


Figure 6 Dove



Figure 7 Frizz Free

or another person in the ad. Instead, the images seem to capture womyn as they are, doing whatever is normal for them. They are neither saying *look at me I am beautiful*, as some beauty advertisements do, nor *look at me, I can fit into a man's world*, as one would expect to see in a traditional Level V portrayal. Third, these womyn are not smiling. While that may seem a minor point, it conveys an overall impression (judged by looking at the image alone without reading the copy) of womyn who are self-contented and who do not need a product to make them complete.

The discrepancy set womyn are not wearing makeup, but in one case portrays a look popular among womyn of color, the so-called *natural look*. A Frizz Free ad markets a product to help womyn of color straighten their hair (and yes, that is an “unnatural” intervention) but the image of the womyn appears more natural than her typical Level I counterpart. Ironically, if they had displayed a womyn who actually used the product, thus eliminating the addition of “natural” beauty, this advertisement would more likely have been coded at Level I. For all these reasons, these specific portrayals are better situated as Level V than Level I, since they show individuals, not womyn who need beauty products to make them whole. They can thus be plausibly seen as *Individuals*.

One coding directive in the Butler and Paisley study instructed coders to distinguish between portrayals where a womyn is simply there to *improve the appearance* of a product, as opposed to a woman whose presence adds *information about* the product. Coders for this project were not given that direction, which also would have affected their Consciousness Level rating. But even if given this direction, the *powerful individual* ads would also be scrutinized by this rule, and may have been not in Level V.

The three beauty advertisements in the discrepancy set each portray black womyn and this seems interesting in a more sustained way. The important topic of race is examined later in the thesis.

### Financial Planning

A look at the *powerful individual* financial planning advertisements again finds portrayals where the presence of womyn provides no *more information* about the product (although the copy provides information, the image does not show the product in use). To be fair, how one would portray financial planning to demonstrate *use* in a single image frame is unclear. The one financial advertisement in the discrepancy set, for Scudder (Fig. 8), portrays people on an amusement ride (a county fair swing) and codes them as employing no power. One cannot clearly see any of the people in the ad because the image size is too small, but of the six people we can fairly assume five are womyn based on their dress and hairstyle. This very gender ambiguity, curiously, means that for coding purposes these pictures are best categorized as showing individuals (Level VA) since they show generic individuals, not discernibly female. And womyn who are in charge of their own financial security fit the category I have called *Nonwoman* due to the historical domination of the financial planning sector by men.

The Scudder advertisement can thus be read in two ways. The reader might associate the freedom of flying (on a swing) with the financial freedom of having an IRA.

Or, one could see the riders as trapped on the swing, where the reader might associate their freedom from the swing (or the financial ride they are on) as the freedom they will get from an IRA (security).

Why, if the ad shows a world of apparent financial freedom (at least in the sense that the consumer has a real choice), did coders identify these persons as lacking power? The discrepancy set advertisement portrays passive womyn (“going for the ride”). One apparent difference accounts for why the discrepancy advertisements coded womyn as powerless. The womyn coded as the *powerful individual* appear to have already used or invested in financial services, whereas the womyn in the Scudder advertisement seem to be waiting for someone to direct them to the right financial advisor. The womyn in the *powerful individual* set are reaping the benefits of financial freedom, but the discrepancy set advertisement shows a womyn lost without the financial help of a company like Scudder. Though shown as an individual, having to

wait on help from a financial advisor implies powerlessness, whether the role is filled by a man or a womyn.

### Medical Products

Medical products create coding difficulties for the Consciousness Scale. To be in need of a medical product reasonably presumes some degree of powerlessness. And critiquing a beauty advertisement for enticing womyn to buy the product to be made happy or complete is different than critiquing a medical advertisement which entices a womyn to purchase a product to be healthy or pain free. Wanting to be beautiful and wanting to be healthy are clearly two different things, although advertisers often use similar marketing techniques. Having a migraine and having brown hair are both beyond a person's control, but to alter a migraine is to provide medical relief and to alter a hair color is to provide a physical appearance change. Beauty and medical products both help a womyn change how she appears and functions, but what they change is the difference between necessity and desire. Given all this, it would be unusual to find a medical advertisement that portrays a womyn as having total power, since a perceived need for a medical product indicates from the start that a womyn lacks power over certain medical conditions (on the other hand, one might say a womyn gains power by preemptively fighting a medical condition to prevent its fuller onset). For the sake of a fuller exploration of images, feminine hygiene portrayals will be separately assessed, though medical issues facing mainly females, like breast cancer, will remain in this category. Nine of the magazine advertisements in the discrepancy set market medical products, and four of those products are female<sup>5</sup> specific (two relate to breast cancer, one to osteoporosis, and one to PMS products). The other five are for

---

<sup>5</sup> The use of the terms female and sex here indicate that these medical issues are not based on socially constructed gender, but on biology of male and female (sex).

non-sex specific medical issues (migraine headaches, a bath cleaning system especially made for the physically disabled, diabetes, a contact lens cleaning solution, and insurance).

**Non-Female Specific Products.** The portrayals of womyn in this ad set vary from a womyn considering her own health, to a womyn in pain, to another given relief by use of a medical product. The Comfort Bath advertisement (Fig. 9), a bath cleaning product, is a clear example of a Level V portrayal, as both men and womyn might need the product, both are shown as somehow disabled, and a womyn is seen helping another womyn. This advertisement shows the Individual as both womyn and man are disabled and could need the product, yet gender doesn't appear to be the central issue.

The other medical problems (and cures) in this advertisement set are not gendered, because males and females alike experience migraines, diabetes, contact lens problems, and have to make insurance choices. Two of the advertisements picture the womyn's face (or part of it), and none of the womyn appear to be wearing makeup. The womyn in the Migraine Ice (Fig.10) advertisement is clearly contented (the product has eased her migraine) but she also has a face marked with natural wrinkles, and her face does not appear to be airbrushed beyond all possible reality. In each case, gender is a non-issue.



**All Those Who Can't Bathe Or Shower,  
Take Comfort.**



**Introducing New Comfort Bath Cleansing System.**

It's a revolutionary new flush-free, full-body cleanser and moisturizer that was developed for hospitals... and is now available for home use.

No more slippery, uncomfortable sponge baths. New Comfort Bath can be microwave'd to provide a warm, soothing bath. Dermatologist-tested Comfort Bath cleanses skin and soothes itchy skin. It's safe for use on all ages and skin types.

Look for it in drug and discount stores. For the nearest store, call toll-free 1-877-9-COMFORT.


**Comfort Bath. Take Comfort.**

[www.comfortbath.com](http://www.comfortbath.com)

7N 301

Figure 9 Comfort Bath

**Ice your migraine.**



Nothing can stop the agony of a migraine. But your relief has arrived. Migraine Ice, and your pain reliever, can help you manage the pain. Migraine Ice is a long-lasting cooling headache pad that gives you soothing relief every time you apply it. It's safe, easy to use, and it's available in different sizes to fit your head. So you can get the relief you need when you need it.

**MIGRAINE ICE**  
COOLING HEADACHE PAD  
Available in different sizes to fit your head.

**THE NEW WAY TO MANAGE YOUR MIGRAINE.**  
For more information, call 1-877-2-800-0000 or visit [www.migraineice.com](http://www.migraineice.com)

7TG

Figure 10 Migraine Ice



In the Glucophage (Fig. 11) and the BlueCross BlueShield (Fig. 12) advertisements, the womyn is disembodied, which is a traditional marker for sexism in advertising (the logic is that only showing body parts denies a womyn identity as a fully formed human being) but it should be noted that the disembodied womyn are not sexualized. In the Glucophage advertisement, two hands symbolize the choice (where one weighs one against another) between using a pill or an injected medicine. The contact cleaner advertisement (Fig. 13) shows only a clear eye, which makes sense, as it is marketing a contact cleaner. We can safely assume it is a womyn's eye by the long, darkened eyelashes, but gender seems irrelevant to the product. These four products are advertised in magazines aimed at womyn, so presumably womyn have been used in the ads to create identification with the reader, but not as a social marker since either men or womyn would normally use these products. The most logical reason why these womyn have been coded with little or no power is that they require the use of a product to cure their internal medical problems, as opposed to a non-medical treatment she could more directly control.



**NEW OPTION  
FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES!**

# If your **DIABETES** is uncontrolled... **GLUCOPHAGE** can help.

**GLUCOPHAGE** (pronounced "glue-ko-fay") is the most prescribed pill for type 2 diabetes. And now **GLUCOPHAGE** has been approved for use together with insulin. New studies have shown that **GLUCOPHAGE** added to insulin lowers blood sugar better than insulin alone.

- **GLUCOPHAGE**® (metformin hydrochloride tablets) lowers blood sugar and may reduce the amount of insulin you need. With diet and exercise, it can be used alone, with pills called sulfonylureas, and now with insulin.
- **GLUCOPHAGE** treats the root causes of type 2 diabetes: it makes better use of your body's natural insulin, lowers sugar production, and reduces sugar absorption.
- With **GLUCOPHAGE** your weight should stay the same or you may even lose some. Controlling your blood sugar is important because it can prevent or delay complications such as blindness and amputations. So ask your doctor if **GLUCOPHAGE** is right for you. For more information, call 1-800-427-5141.

**ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT**

**GLUCOPHAGE**  
PREPARED BY **BRISTOL-MYERS SQUIBB**

**THE MOST PRESCRIBED DIABETES PILL**

If side effects occur they are normally minor ones such as diarrhea, nausea, and upset stomach. The most serious side effect associated with **GLUCOPHAGE** is called lactic acidosis. Lactic acidosis associated with **GLUCOPHAGE** is rare and has occurred in one in 33,000 patients on **GLUCOPHAGE** over the course of one year. If lactic acidosis occurs, it can be fatal in up to half the cases. You should not take **GLUCOPHAGE** if you have kidney disease or dysfunction, if you are 80 or older, unless you have first had your kidneys tested; if you are taking medication for congestive heart failure, if you have a history of heart disease, or if you drink alcohol excessively. There is some evidence that some oral diabetes drugs may increase the risk of heart problems. Please see additional important patient information.

**Bristol-Myers Squibb Company**  
100 Morris Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
© 2000 Bristol-Myers Squibb Company. All rights reserved. 10-0000

[www.glucophage.com](http://www.glucophage.com)  
NADA 141-103  
10-0000

Figure 11 Glucophage

**www.hmo?ppo?psa?  
I just don't know.com**

Confused about your health care options? No problem. That's where we come in. Blue Cross and Blue Shield have a really easy-to-use, powerful source of information and advice to help you make the right choices for your health care needs. To make sure you have the information you need, we've created a website that will help you find the answers you need. So, don't just ask questions. Ask a website or health care professional. It's just that easy. You can also find us at [www.hmo?ppo?psa?](http://www.hmo?ppo?psa?) or call 1-800-368-8686. We're here to help you make the right choices for your health care needs. **Blue Cross Blue Shield** is a member of the American Cross and Blue Shield Companies.

**www.bluecross.com**  
It feels good to know.

Figure 12 Blue Cross Blue Shield

**Finally, lens wearers have a solution  
for end-of-day dryness.**

**Only COMPLETE® protects your eyes  
all day with a cushion of moisture.**

All lens solutions clean your contact lenses. But only COMPLETE® Brand Multi-Purpose Solution helps keep your eyes moist and protected all day long. That's because of our exclusive **COMPLETE Pro-Tec® System**, a unique combination of ingredients that cleans, lubricates and surrounds your lenses with a cushion of moisture. So your eyes stay protected from dryness and irritation throughout the day.

**If it doesn't protect your eyes,  
it isn't COMPLETE®**

Always recommended for all soft contact lenses.

© 2004 Bausch & Lomb. www.bausch.com

Figure 13 Contact Cleaner

*Female Specific Products.* Can any portrayal marketing a product that can only be used by a female be coded as Level V, given that the person in the advertisement will almost inevitably be female? And if she is not Level V, where else would she fit in the Consciousness Scale? I mentioned earlier that when a womyn needs a product to make her complete, she is more than likely not Level V (a major example of this would be a makeup ad), but when a womyn has the power to chose a product, this freedom to choose enables a coding at some level other than I. The four medical products in this category do not claim to make a womyn whole or even happy (except perhaps for the Tums (Fig. 14) advertisement). But they do portray womyn as in control of her internal body and promise to make her medically healthy (or in one case to potentially prevent or detect breast cancer early (Fig. 15, 16). To see these womyn as victims would be inconsistent with many feminist philosophies, and denies them an authentic source of empowerment. To label them as victims is only slightly less debilitating than taking note of the fact that they have breast cancer or osteoporosis (Fig.17). These ads neither put womyn down nor attempt to keep them in their place.

Are these womyn then better coded at Level II? The womyn in these advertisements appear in either non-existent or intimate environments (a fact consistent with the medical issues raised). However, they are not portrayed as employed in traditionally womynly occupations or shown as mother or housewife. These medical conditions do not discriminate between housewife and board executive. She also does not fit into Level III because her profession, whether identified as homemaker or board executive, is never clear. Perhaps, then, she is best coded at Level IV, since men can get breast cancer and osteoporosis, although both disproportionately affect womyn. To place the womyn into Level IV would be to create a world



**SURPRISING NEWS  
ABOUT THE PERIOD  
BEFORE YOUR PERIOD.  
FROM TUMS.<sup>®</sup>**

*Yes, Tums.*

**Tenderness. Anger. Irritability. Mood swings.**  
It's like riding a roller coaster every month.  
But now, finally, there's some good news.

**Feel like yourself again.** It has been suggested that calcium levels in your body can actually affect how your hormones function. And this could affect how balanced, or imbalanced, you feel during the period before your period. And that, amazingly, a recent study of women showed that taking 1,200 mg of calcium daily can actually help you maintain your physical and emotional balance.

**The calcium used in this study was none other than Tums.**  
That's right, Tums... pure, natural, safe Tums.

**66% saw changes.** Most of the women in this study were actually more able to maintain their physical or emotional balance... after only 3 months of using Tums.

**Just twelve weeks.** Many participants who took 1,200 mg of Tums calcium... that's 2 Tums EX<sup>®</sup> every morning and 2 every evening... began to see changes after only 12 weeks. Chances are you will too.

**Even more reason to take your Tums<sup>®</sup> calcium.** Every day you take your Tums, you will be taking the calcium supplement doctors recommend to keep your bones stronger, healthier, longer... to help reduce the risk of osteoporosis.

**Isn't it incredible...** Try it something as little as Tums can do so much. And give Tums 3 months, and you'll see for yourself how incredible it is.

Visit [www.tums.com/period](http://www.tums.com/period). Tums is a registered trademark of J. J. Heide & Sons, Inc. © 2004 J. J. Heide & Sons, Inc.

4/3

Figure 14 Tums

[illegible]

Figure 15 Breast Cancer Drug (Nolvadex)



*If you care about breast cancer,*



*care more about being  
a 1.7 than a 36B.*

Know your breast cancer risk assessment number.  
Know that NOLVADEN<sup>®</sup> (tamoxifen citrate) could reduce your  
chances of getting breast cancer if you are at high risk.

This new risk assessment test is a  
simple set of questions your doctor will ask  
you. The results will give you a number that  
estimates your chances of developing breast  
cancer over the next 5 years. A score of 1.7 or  
above is considered high risk. Most likely you  
won't be at high risk, but you owe it to  
yourself to find out.

Knowing your number gives you power,  
and knowing about Nolvadex should give you  
hope. Because even if you are at high risk,  
Nolvadex has been proven to significantly  
reduce the incidence of breast cancer in  
women at high risk.

The proof? In a landmark study of  
women 35 years or older and at high risk of  
breast cancer, women who took Nolvadex had  
fewer breast cancers than women taking sugar  
pills. Nolvadex decreases but does not  
eliminate the risk of breast cancer, and did  
not show an increase in survival.

Call your doctor and ask for your Breast  
Cancer Risk Assessment test. For a free video,  
call 1-800-998-8423 to learn more about  
Nolvadex and the Breast Cancer Risk  
Assessment test.

**Nolvadex<sup>®</sup>**  
TAMOXIFEN CITRATE

*There is something you can do*

© 2003, 2004

Figure 16 Breast Cancer Drug (Nolvadex)



Figure 17 Osteoporosis Prevention (Merck)

where breast cancer and osteoporosis are equal opportunity diseases, when they clearly are not. And of course no man included in the image to facilitate an “equal” comparison. But again, can she fit into Level V? Though these womyn were coded as possessing little or no power, “their opportunity for power has increased” with the product.

The Tums advertisement is an interesting product in this set. Like breast cancer or osteoporosis, a menstrual cycle and its effects are not something a womyn can completely control (though so-called home remedies would likely work better for this than for controlling the effects of breast cancer or osteoporosis). Tums, a product traditionally used for acid indigestion, is now marketing its calcium content as able to regulate a womyn’s hormones or the effects of menstrual cycle. The copy even defends Tums as a calcium supplement useful in reducing osteoporosis risks.



Womyn do not use products to diagnose or treat these medical conditions for the sake of beauty, but rather as a matter of life and death. These portrayals, while seemingly out of place in Level V, are therefore just as inappropriate to Level I. If we try to place them somewhere within the classification created earlier, the issue is more clearly seen. In these instances, she is evaluated as female, and therefore, must be compared to either men or other womyn. What is unique, then, about these portrayals is their very existence. The broader culture treats breast cancer as mainly affecting womyn, and thus as a private issue between her, her body, and her doctor. These advertisements open up these issues for wider consideration, as issues all womyn face.

These womyn are not victims of their bodies, but actively work to control or manage the problems they by use of the product. The recent publicity of these issues resembles the publicity recently seen relating to HIV/AIDS. These advertisements help to inform consumers about issues they may unknowingly have or could be exposed to as a means to reduce or eliminate their effects. Of course, they attempt to persuade the consumer to pick their product, but their presence is also important to make womyn think about this issues that may face them.

### Feminine Hygiene Products

The difficulties of coding female-specific medical products are the same encountered when coding feminine hygiene products. Such products are only for females and actually showing the product in use would be difficult if not impossible (only insinuating use is really possible). Two advertisements for feminine hygiene (for products relating to menstruation and bladder control) products were included in the discrepancy set. The Poise (Fig. 18) advertisement portrays a womyn who is concerned with going about her daily business and who

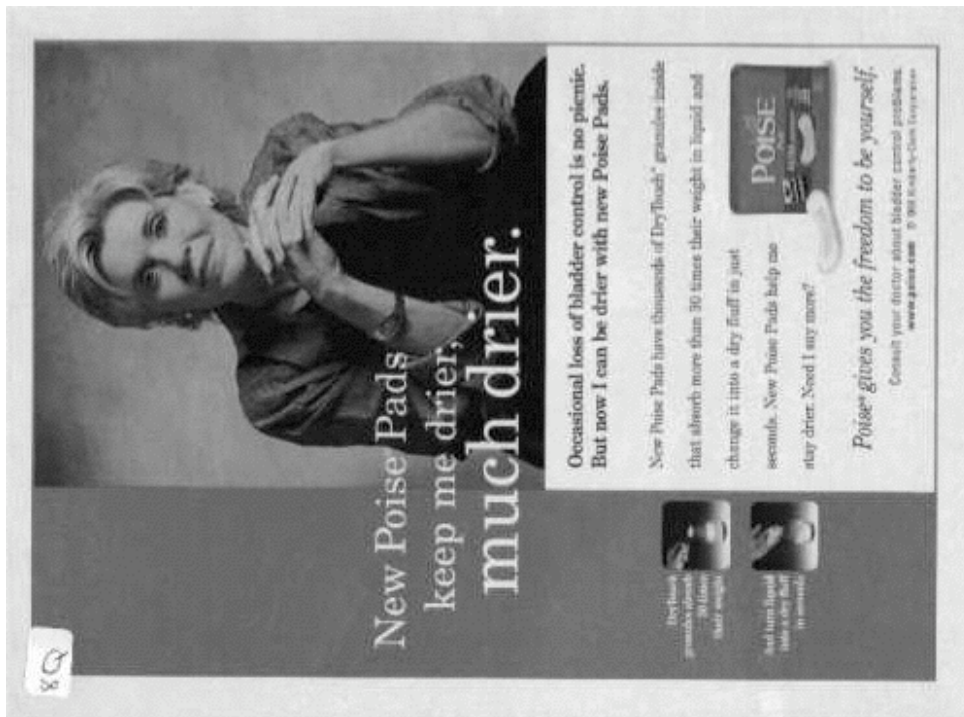


Figure 18 Poise

wants a product that will help her retain her normal daily activities. The Poise copy reads, “New Poise pads keep me drier, much drier,” and “Poise gives you the freedom to be yourself.” The womyn in the Poise advertisement is an older womyn wearing black under a gray tweed jacket with the sleeves rolled up. She sits with her hands intertwined and her elbows on her knees, as if she is about to speak candidly with the audience. Had the Poise womyn been shown in an office setting, she could have been easily coded with more power.

The Always (Fig. 19) advertisement pictures half of a womyn’s face with a slight smile and the copy reads, “If you ask me, everyone is entitled to have secrets.” In this case, a womyn should be allowed to keep her menstrual cycle a secret, as she says, “I’ve found that Always is great at keeping mine.” The womyn has a short bob haircut, pulled back in the front with a small barrette and she is wearing green glasses and little makeup. The womyn is attractive, though she represents an alternative kind of beauty not often seen, which itself is powerful. However, what



Figure 19 Always

makes this image appropriate for Level V other than her *individual* style is her expression. The slight smile is a Cheshire grin – she has a secret and she is not telling anyone, *but* she wants you to know she has a secret. This advertisement is not as obviously Level V as the other feminine health product in the discrepancy set, but this womyn still has individualities (her chosen accessories) and her secret gives her some superiority over others (in the sense that she seems to hold her secret over their heads). All the womyn in the medical and feminine hygiene product sections would be classified as *Individuals*, since these products don't explicitly raise gender issues (they neither elaborate her position relative to men nor compare her identity to that of traditional gender expectations).

### Diet Products

Diet products epitomize goods sold to make a womyn happy by coercing a change in her external appearance. Not surprisingly, no *powerful individual* coded advertisements for diet ads were found, the discrepancy set included only one, and the *powerless object* set included several. When evaluating the discrepancy set (where womyn were coded as having little power; *reward* and *referent*) advertisements for Weight Watchers (Fig. 20), the most obvious image is their spokesperson, the Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson. The other womyn in the advertisement appears to be someone complimenting her friend's new "trimmer" look. As a member of royalty, Sarah inhabits a role where men and womyn are both superior and inferior to each other, coded in this project's scheme at Level V, *Manwomyn*. And for Sarah to be a spokesperson for any product is definitely not the traditional role for a Duchess, which puts her in Level V, *Nonwoman*. Second, the womyn in these portrayals are not sexualized. Both are wearing simple black clothing and little or no makeup, and their gender is a non-issue (thus Level V, the *Individual*). Sarah may be posing in such a way as to show off her slimmer form, but her body is completely covered and the clothing is neither flashy nor tight.



Figure 20 Weight Watchers

## Food

Food – its purchase, preparation, and presentation in the home – is stereotypically connected with womyn's work. Though many famous chefs are men, womyn are usually assumed to cook and buy the groceries. It would thus be logical that most advertisements marketing food would fit into Level II or Level III of the Consciousness Scale, with portrayals showing a womyn's place is in the home. Three advertisements for food products are found in the discrepancy set (most food products were in fact coded as Level II or III).

The three advertisements in the discrepancy set are each distinctive. The womyn in the salad dressing (Fig. 21 Kraft) advertisement is smiling and eating, apparently engaged in conversation. She seems to have just arrived at home (Kraft isn't served in most restaurants)

from work (she still wears a dress shirt, though her sleeves are rolled up) to sit down to a meal with a partner or another family member. The visual image does not make an issue of her gender, which for coding purposes makes her an *Individual*. She is in the home, but not presented as a housewife/mother. Nor is she presented so as to put her work in competition with that role. She is presumably employed, but her occupation is not identified and so we cannot judge whether she works in a place traditionally reserved for men or not. The copy above the womyn reads: “I had a daydream about salad dressing. Is that weird?” If she were portrayed as a womyn in a traditional setting, she would not question whether a daydream about salad dressing was weird, as “traditional” womyn are portrayed as talking to toilets and to a bald man who appears only when the floor is mopped.

The other two products, though each in the food category, are not as traditional as salad dressing. The 151 Bar (Fig. 22) advertisement portrays a womyn eating a vitamin/energy bar, smiling, and her hand is extended towards the audience, apparently pushing someone away. Why she is pushing them away is not made obvious in the advertisement, though she seems to intend to push away another person trying to share the energy bar. Based on the ad copy, she has become “addicted to delicious nutrition.” If a womyn’s traditional role is to provide (purchase, prepare, and present) food for others, for her to deny someone food would imply a very non-traditional role, even if that denial results from an addiction. The bar and salad dressing advertisements portray womyn enjoying food and the experience of eating (after all, both are smiling while they eat).

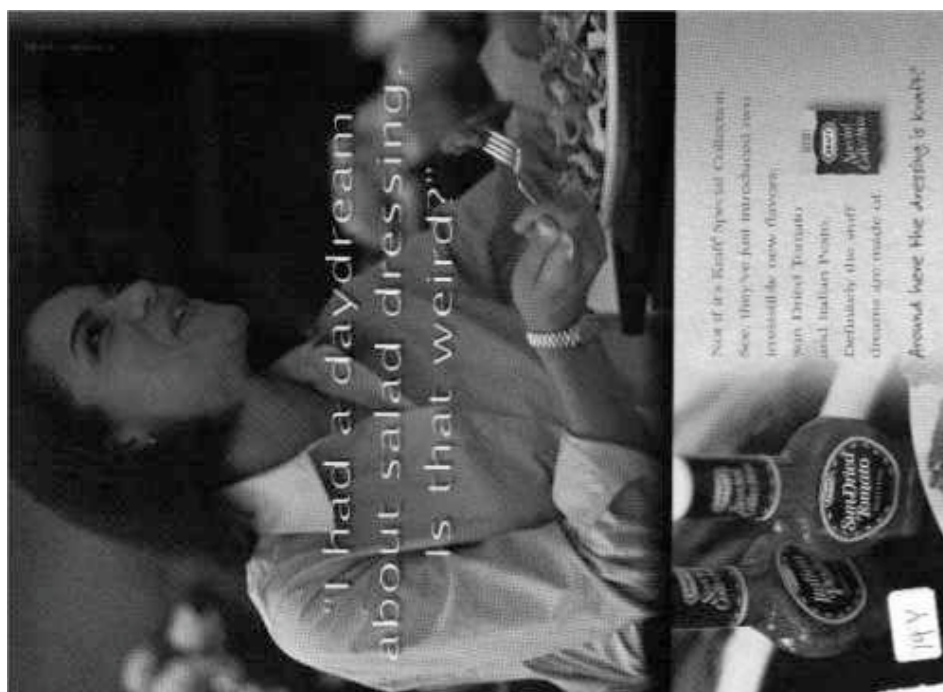


Figure 21 Kraft



Figure 22 151 Bar



The final food product in this set is an Altoids (Fig. 23) advertisement, which portrays an older woman, dressed in 60's style "high class" attire, holding a box of Altoids. The copy reads, "She had been hurt before, but not like this." At first glance, this advertisement is a Level I portrayal, but a Level V reading of this advertisement requires prior knowledge of this Altoids advertising campaign. The advertisements are all shot in Black and White, mocking in a tongue-in-cheek retro manner the 1960's. She can be understood as insulted (since, after all, someone has given her breath mints), or the opposite, so hurt by someone else's breath that she finds it necessary to hand over a box of breath mints. The curious nature of the entire campaign as well as the potentially oppositional reading of this portrayal help better explain how this advertisement may have been coded as Level V.



Figure 23 Altoids



## Cigarettes

The advertising of cigarettes is highly criticized by many scholars, most notably Jean Kilbourne (1992). In many cases, smoking advertisements portrays an idealized person who the audience can imitate by using tobacco (in that respect, all the womyn in smoking ads have some power). But unlike makeup, medical product or clothing advertisements, here is an instance where actual consumption of the product is deadly. Cigarette advertisements have a history of telling womyn they can become independent (Level V) by smoking. However, within the last twenty years, smoking has made a radical change in American society. A product that once made womyn independent now makes them, in real life, outcasts. This new reality is reflected by the fact that no portrayals of womyn were coded as *powerful individual* in a smoking advertisement. Smoking no longer marks an independent womyn so much as it might mark a "bad-girl."

Because smoking is no longer allowed in many public places (such as office buildings) and smoking near children or in the home would be taboo, advertisements are limited to show places where they can realistically picture someone smoking (and this constraints their Consciousness Scale rating as well). The environments seen in the two advertisements are invariably either outdoors or in a club/bar.

The first advertisement in the discrepancy set, for Winston cigarettes (Fig. 24), is consistent with a Level V reading. The womyn looks completely bored with the man talking to her. As the copy informs us, she "wanted a light, not his life story." "No Bull," reads another part of the copy. If womyn are stereotypically talkers, then this portrayal exhibits a role reversal, since the man here apparently will not stop talking though the womyn just wants someone to light her cigarette. The "No Bull" attitude is stereotypically male, which this advertisement

manipulates, creating a scene where the role reversal is obvious and consistent with the overall Winston ad campaign. The second advertisement, for Newport cigarettes (Fig. 25), shows three womyn pushing a man into a pool. The womyn are in bathing suits, laughing, yet they possess the power in this scenario, even if its enactment is only playful. This is the only advertisement in the discrepancy set where the portrayal is rated as possessing both *coercive* and *referent* power. In the advertisement, womyn are superior to the man, consistent with a Level V *Manwomyn* classification. If these womyn had been shown in pants and a shirt with serious looks on their faces, rather than laughing in their bathing suits (i.e., as if they were seriously angry with the man) the womyn would probably have been coded with greater power.

The discrepancy set advertisements also tell audience members they can change by smoking, though not necessarily that they will become more sexy. The womyn in the Newport and Winston advertisements are not dumb blondes or victims or simple sex-objects. Rather, their images (and the copy) show womyn who think (and in both cases look smarter than men) even if they are also portrayed as "bad-girl" instead of as independent womyn.



## Liquor

Like cigarette advertising, alcohol ads have also been criticized, since they market/glamorize an addictive and potentially deadly product. Cigarette and alcohol advertisements sell independence and maturity, and in the discrepancy set, no *powerful individuals* advertisements were marketing liquor. This is a product that can be portrayed only in limited environments since drinking in the office or around children has become a social taboo. The discrepancy set included two advertisements for liquor: Amaretto and Whiskey.

The Disaronno Amaretto (Fig. 26) advertisement features two womyn in a romantic embrace, sharing a glass, located in an indeterminate but indoors location. The original Consciousness Scale and its theoretical worldviews could have never imagined this portrayal in a magazine advertisement. As with breast cancer advertising, this portrayal also carries a political meaning. Traditional relationship portrayals would typically show a man and a womyn (of the same race), a fact which makes this portrayal non-traditional (even beyond the fact that the ad shows a non-traditional same-sex relationship). This advertisement asks the reader to judge those portrayed not by their gender (as described by Level V) while it places two womyn in a romantic situation, which remains numerically rare. Ads like this (perhaps more than even the Benetton advertisements in the clothing section) exemplify a non-stereotypical, non-traditional relationship, which is more complex than a simple Level I code would imply. While these images do portray apparently sexual relationships, and in the case of the Amaretto ad do not seem aimed at a male audience, the very existence of these portrayals invites viewers to concentrate mostly on the novelty of the image and not to evaluate it in a sexualized manner.



Figure 26 Disaronno

The second liquor advertisement, for Glenlivet whiskey (Fig. 27), also shows a womyn in a non-traditional role. The copy tells us the whiskey is made in a remote location “great for making whiskey. Not so good for meeting women.” We see a dance hall where two men wait as one womyn (the one single womyn in the town?) dances with another man. The womyn (based on her attire) is probably about fifty years old, and the men vying for her attention range from their mid-20’s to their 60’s. For a womyn her age to have numerous men of varying ages waiting for her, while not impossible or unheard of, is certainly a little uncommon, and hardly the norm for the average womyn. Reversing the genders would create a more normal story, if only because a fifty-year old/twenty-year-old relationship is more common when the man is older. As with the same-sex Disaronno advertisement, this womyn is portrayed in a non-traditional sex role. In both cases, the non-traditional and uncommon nature of the advertisement make a Level V code more likely and more consistent with a liberal reading of the scale.



Figure 27 Glenlivet

### Clothing

A diverse range of clothing – shoes, suits, hosiery, and bras – was included in each advertising set. Like beauty products, clothes can be used to make people look more attractive, yet clothing is also functional. The discrepancy set included advertisements for shoes, business attire, bras, hosiery, Dockers pants made of Lycra, and two advertisements where the specific article of clothing is not named or identified.

The Sketchers (Fig. 28) shoes advertisement shows five diverse young women dressed in various clothing, all laughing and talking. These women were coded as Consciousness Scale Level V and with little power, and the power they had was described as *referent* power. The women in the Sketchers advertisement are attractive but not sexualized, portrayed as dumb or victims, but as *Individuals*.



Figure 28 Sketchers

Only one ad in the discrepancy set markets underclothes, specifically a bra by Playtex (Fig. 29) made for full-figured womyn. The womyn in the advertisement is wearing a skirt and a denim shirt, which is open to reveal her “Body Language Bra.” She is smiling, and wind is blowing her hair, as well as blowing her shirt open, though she is not trying to hide herself or cover up. What makes this advertisement unique is not the fact that she is showing her bra, or that a womyn in a bra is shown, but that she is a full figured model apparently happy with her body. She is liberated not by flaunting her body, but thanks to clothes that actually fit her and by a company that accommodates something other than the so-called norm. The copy reads, “your body has its own language.” When bra advertisements sexualize womyn, as would be the case in an advertisement from the *powerless object* set, it often presents the underclothes not as functional, but as an additional tool for womyn to make themselves look sexy. The womyn in





Like bras, hosiery is another product generally marketed at womyn. These womyn-only products can be easily dismissed as oppressive, since only womyn are *expected* wear a bra or hosiery, and because they are clothes meant to restrict/control womyn's bodies. Because of this, advertisers use various techniques to make them more attractive to womyn (since the idea is they have to wear them anyway). As seen with the bra advertisements, many companies sexualize the product while others claim the product empowers a womyn to be herself and flaunt her true nature. These techniques are also used in the hosiery advertisement for L'eggs SilkenMist (Fig. 30) which features a black womyn in front of a painting of four black womyn. The "real" womyn wears a short dress that blends into the artwork, making the audience believe she is part



painting and part real life. The copy reads, “Your look says ‘I am friend, mentor, manager, mother, sister. You’ve got it together. Don’t cover it up.’” The advertisement sells independence, telling womyn to be themselves, since L’eggs has the product that suits them (on this point the copy is explicit: “shades to suit you”).



Figure 30 L’eggs SilkenMist

Three of the other beauty ads in this set seek to sell the same independence. Benetton (Fig. 31), Esprit (Fig. 32), and Elisabeth Arden (Fig. 33) each tell womyn they can be independent persons who embrace their identity rather than having a product embrace them. Two of the companies, Esprit and Benetton, have a history of running politically aligned advertising that advocates non-stereotypical portrayals, or, in the Benetton case, ads that are politically controversial because of how they juxtapose portrayals of race and identity. This



Figure 31 Benetton



Figure 32 Esprit

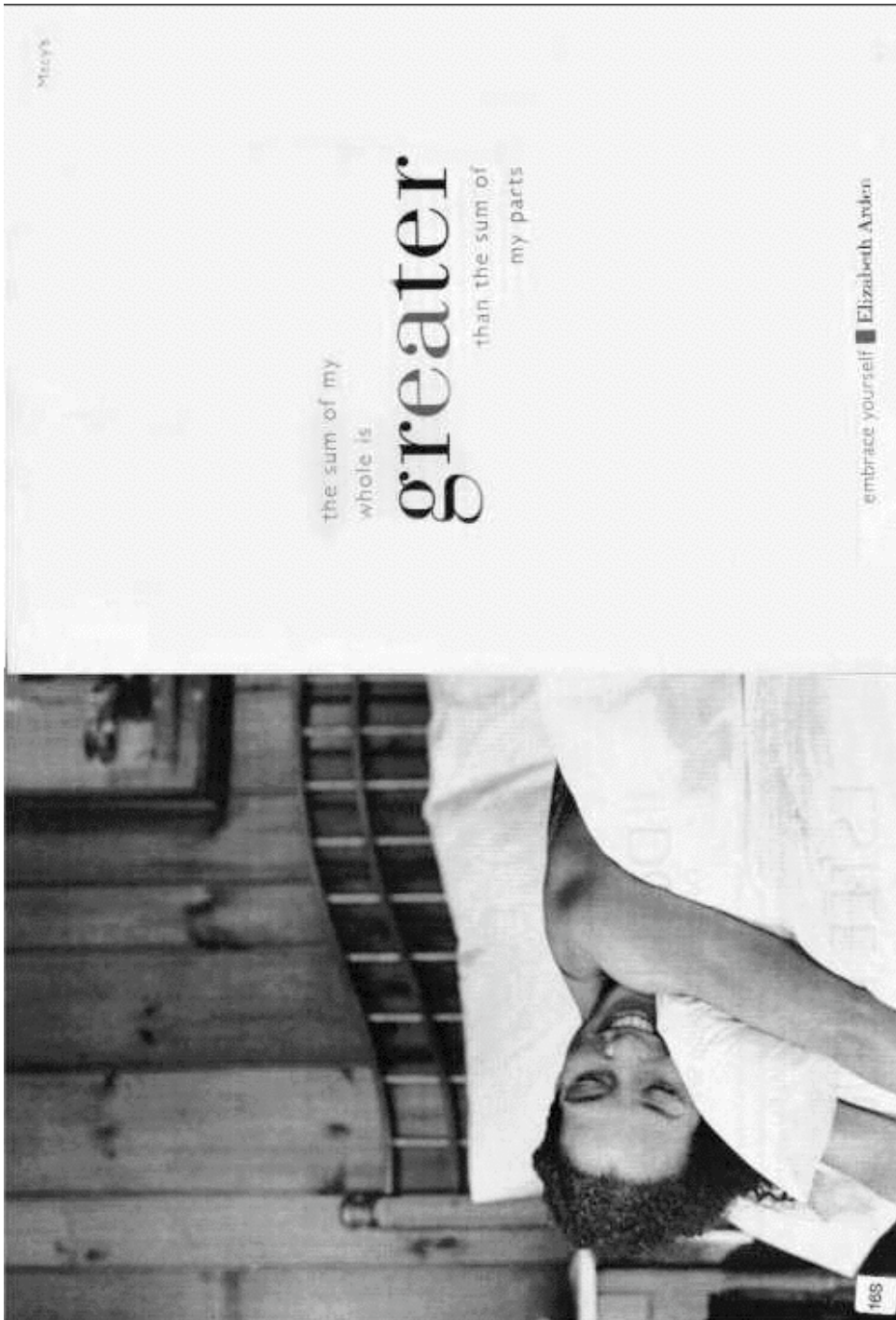


Figure 33 Elisabeth Arden

particular Benetton ad pictures two semi-androgynous nude womyn (shown shoulder up) embracing each other. As mentioned The womyn in the Benetton advertisement, however, looks at the audience as if almost as if she intends to provoke a reaction from the viewer. These images portray womyn involved in a non-traditional relationship, and which requires a viewer to come to terms with it. These portrayals show womyn who are individuals in non-stereotypical relationships and very frank about it.

The Esprit advertisement portrays a womyn in a business suit (or a wool jacket and red sweater) wearing a small, non-descript necklace. She is wearing little makeup and her hair is very simply styled. The suit sleeves are too long and one side of her collar is turned up, while the other is not. The womyn is attractive but she isn't heavily made-up or highly sophisticated in appearance. The way her hands are posed imply childlike shyness, but her dead-on stare and posture portray a womyn who is unapologetically an individual. Her appearance is not sexualized. She is not a dumb blonde or a victim, nor is Esprit trying to "keep her in her place." This womyn is a representative *Individual*.

It's unclear what the Elizabeth Arden advertisement is marketing, except for the name *Elizabeth Arden* and an idea that womyn are powerful. The womyn is lying on a bed, wearing a tank top, eyes closed, smiling. She wears no makeup and her hair is simply pulled back. The copy reads, "The sum of my whole is greater than the sum of my parts." This advertisement, especially as conceptualized by the copy, directly confronts Level I portrayals. It says a womyn is great as she is (*the Individual*), rather than seeing her as a member of a group. These three advertisements, as Cortese argues, recognize a savvy and cynical audience and adapt to its needs and expectations (1999, p.8). They say to the reader, "here are products that allow you to be yourself."

Whether they sell independence, or help a womyn to gain independence, or simply help a womyn show off the independence she already has, they stand out in comparison to similar products in the *powerless object* set.

The last advertisement in this set is for Lycra and Docker khakis (Fig. 34) made with Lycra. It features a womyn in Dockers and a white dress shirt tied at the waist. She is being pulled into the air by a set of balloons. This womyn was identified as powerful by coders, described as enacting *referent* and *reward* power. This womyn does not appear to be wearing makeup and her hair is pulled back in a ponytail (somewhat uncommon in advertising). Unlike the three ads just discussed, this advertisement sells independence, but in a more subtle manner. The copy reads “add style, fit and freedom of movement to Dockers Khakis. And something more to you.” The pitch is not blatant, but it does feature a womyn who is not sexualized (*the individual*), and who is given a pair of pants that match the freedom she already has.

Because womyn have made considerable strides, and often enjoy opportunities that go well beyond the traditional domains of the home, business attire is regularly advertised to womyn. Only one business suit advertisement appears in the discrepancy set, Collectables, by Casual Corner (Fig. 35). This womyn is photographed from the chest up, gripping the lapels on her jacket (a very masculine gesture) while she slightly smiles. This clothing line also sells independence to womyn. The copy tells womyn their clothes make “life easier” for womyn who lead “multifaceted lives.” This womyn is presented in the unusual role of businessperson, and therefore is attributed *legitimate* power by the coders. One wonders then, why she was rated as having little power, but a number of things about this portrayal lend themselves to such a rating, including her smile, the fact that her top shirt button is unbuttoned, and that she is wearing makeup.



### Figure 34 Lycra Dockers

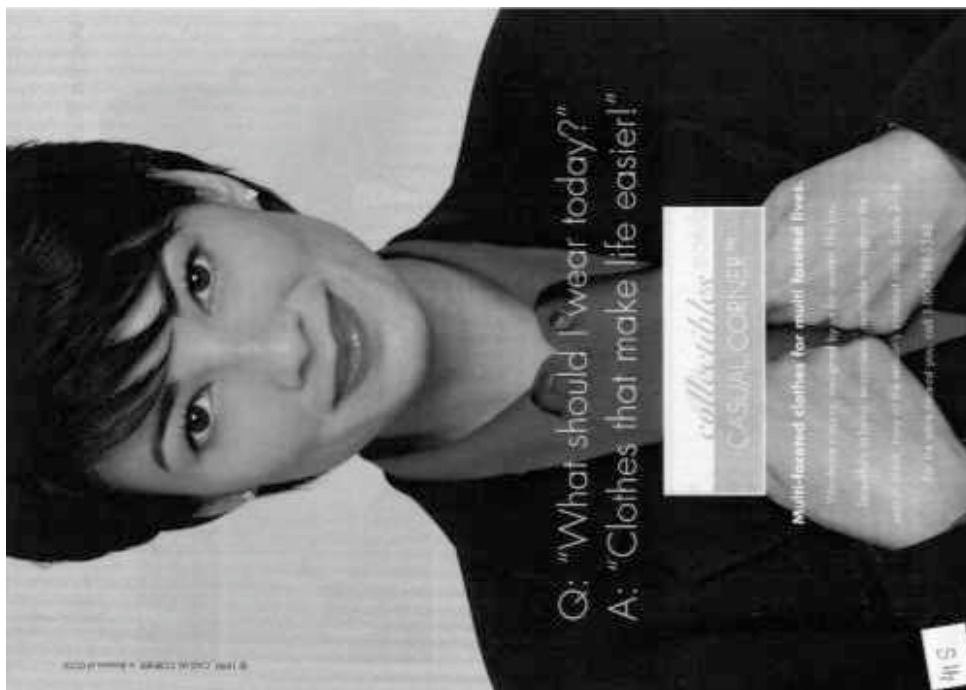


Figure 35 Casual Corner

## Technology

The last product category containing a number of advertisements (*Other* will be discussed last) is technology, which encompasses software, telephone/collect calling services, internet and e-mail services, and home theater equipment. In this world of technology the young are typically advantaged and traditionally men have been in the lead (though both of these are changing as technology begins to encompass many aspects of life not previously encumbered with technology).

The software advertisement includes a portrayal of a senior womyn confidently smiling. We can assume from the copy that she uses *The Grown-Up's Guide to Computing* (Fig. 36) to manage everything from communication with her grandchildren to investing and finance, or as the copy says, "you've got the world on a string." This ad shows an older womyn using and perhaps mastering a product stereotypically used most comfortably by young men, or in Consciousness Scale terms, in an unusual role enabled by the product. The other internet or computer related product, Pocket e-mail (Fig. 37), portrays a womyn on a New York street sending an e-mail to her boyfriend telling him "No cybersex. Headache." This comment raises a specific notion of gender, because without it, the womyn could be any person on the street sending an e-mail or using a payphone. The copy plays off of the stereotype of a womyn who asserts a headache to decline sex, but the new technology gives the portrayal something of a twist. The womyn is not a sex object, and she is not in bed saying "no" to her partner. It is difficult to make an argument that she is an individual since the reference is, after all, stereotypically sexist. But the womyn's mastery of technology, even if it is used to tell her partner no, is nonetheless non-traditional. As with the other ads surveyed here, this



**You've got the world on a string.**

Life's rich possibilities never cease to amaze us. And with the Grown-Up's Guide to Computing, you'll discover that the assets and opportunities that make life richer are all just a click away. Use email to keep in touch, manage your stock portfolio, plan and book your next vacation. The guide shows you how to get started and use your PC to get it done. It's your guide to living large with computers and the Internet. Get the Grown-Up's Guide to Computing. And get going.

**Microsoft**

© 1997 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, the Microsoft Dynamics logo, and the Microsoft Dynamics logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries.

**10/97**

Figure 36 The Grown-Up Guide to Computing

**E-MAIL FROM NEARLY ANY PHONE FOR ONLY \$9.95/MONTH.**

No more phone bills. No more expensive wireless services. Now with a simple toll-free call you can send and retrieve unlimited e-mails for only \$9.95/month. PocketMail devices by Sprint® and JVC® available at Staples®, OfficeMax® and Office Depot®. Call 1-877-EMAIL-HERE or visit us at [www.pocketmail.com](http://www.pocketmail.com)

**PocketMail**

© 1997 Sprint Nextel Corporation. All rights reserved. Sprint, the Sprint logo, and JVC are either registered trademarks or trademarks of their respective owners.

**7/97**

Figure 37 Pocket e-mail

advertisement plays to the young, savvy, and sarcastic reader as it pokes fun at traditional ideas about sex, and gender, and even technology.

The Toshiba DVD (Fig. 38) advertisement shows a womyn's hand placing a DVD into the player. The audience sees inside the DVD player to a view of what looks like a movie theater. The copy tells us, "Toshiba redefines home theater." Other than the non-descript, though presumably male figures on the movie screen (an inference justified by the environment), the only clearly identifiable person in the ad is the womyn whose hand is inserting the DVD. The manicured and painted nails identify the hand as belonging to a womyn. Her use of media technology, and the idea that a womyn has control over what she watches breaks out of more stereotypical portrayals where men are presumably superior in the presence of high tech toys.

The last advertisement in the set is also the most eye opening, an advertisement for 1-800-COLLECT (Fig. 39). It shows a young womyn who, the copy informs the reader, has just gotten a tongue-ring and has "news" to tell. Presumably she will dial 1-800-COLLECT to call her parents. The look on her face is defiant but ambiguous too: she may be participating in the childish gesture of sticking out her tongue, but her gesture also seems to say "look at me, I put a hole in my tongue." Many collect calling service ads on TV and in print target a young, trendy audience (who, if they are still in college or recently graduated would need such a service to call their parents). Presumably those persuaded by an ad like this are a part of this savvy, sarcastic, and cynical audience. One look makes clear the piercing is not a recent one (if she had just had her tongue pierced her tongue would be significantly swollen and discolored). But the audience members who would notice this fact are not the targeted audience. Instead, while the ad targets young defiant people to some extent, it is not an extreme enough image to completely repulse



Figure 38 Toshiba DVD



Figure 39 1-800-Collect

those who would insist on a more traditional appearance (after all, the womyn appears to have no other piercing, her hair is a natural shade, and it looks as if she is wearing overalls and a t-shirt). This image (as well as this womyn whose tongue is pierced) is a gesture of defiance and readers make the connection that defiant young people use 1-800 COLLECT, but the defiance is normalized since the womyn, no matter how defiant, stills calls home to tell mom and dad. Like the clothing advertisements, the product coaches audience members to be a very limited independence where the bills are paid, but by a guardian.

### Other

The final advertising in the discrepancy set is categorized as *other*, and encompasses advertisements which cannot be grouped with others in the set. Included in this group are single ads for organizations, movies, furniture, and automobiles. The movie, the mattress, and the organizational advertisements are unique examples of their product type marketing. For an accurate comparison, an advertisement for the same movie or the same organization would be necessary, but this is not available given the limits of the data set.

The only other *legitimate* power advertisement is found in this set, an ad for the Executive Women's Golf Association (Fig. 40). The womyn in this advertisement are portrayed in golf attire either talking on a golf course, or smiling as they hold a golf ball. Golf remains an activity considered mainly masculine, and although many young womyn play the game well, the stereotype lingers that womyn aren't usually involved. Businessmen and senior citizens traditionally play golf. The copy even reads, "For years, golf has been the businessman's sport." These womyn are portrayed as classification C, *the Manwoman*, but are coded with little power. The image is complicated by the fact that the womyn could easily have been shown as more

powerful (e.g., if they had been shown playing golf, swinging the club or gauging distance on the green), rather than talking to one another on the course, even if this too is a part of the game.

The advertisement for the movie *The Best Man* (Fig. 41) features a wedding party in various positions and most of the actors/actresses are looking at the audience. Although they wear traditional wedding clothes, their portrayals evoke many traditional assumptions about womyn. Two of the womyn seem to be staring at the audience in an almost flirtatious way. Another is looking as one of the men in the advertisement while cradling his head, and the last is the bride, at the center of the image, standing out from the black tuxedos surrounding her. A man, presumably the groom, has his head placed in her lap, and her hand rests on his head. The men in the ad are also smiling, and looking for the most part at the audience. A range of portrayals regarding womyn appear here, and in the case of the bride, for instance, she may have power over the man resting in her lap (if just sexual), which could render this advertisement Level V.



Figure 40 Executive Women's Golf Association

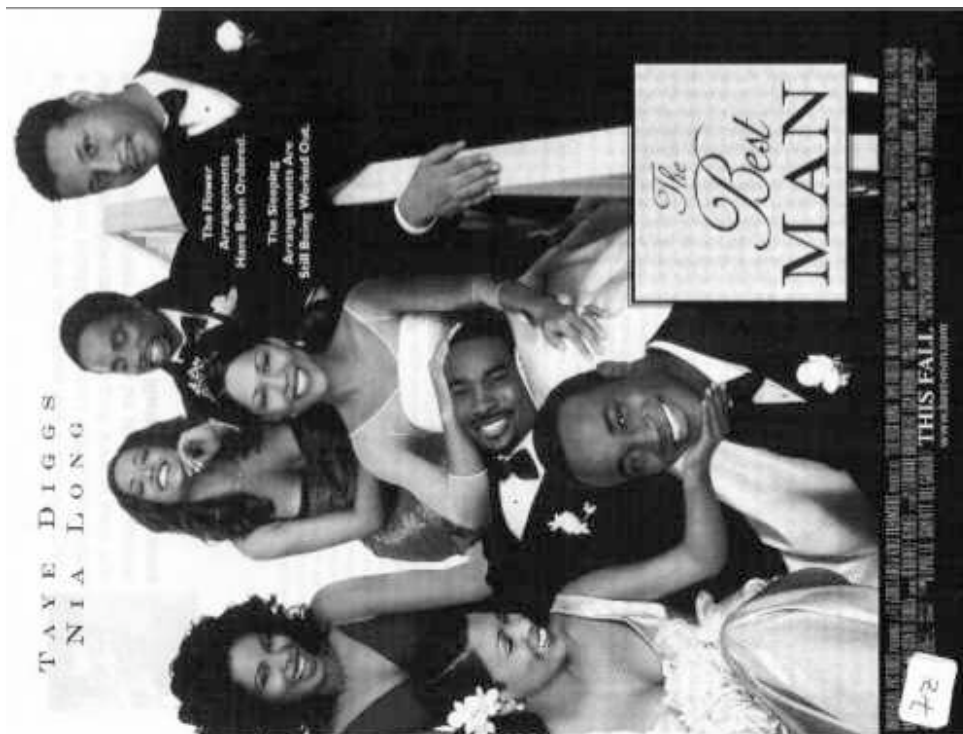


Figure 41 The Best Man

However one cannot easily assess movie portrayals, since their ads are in most cases literally single frames taken from a much larger narrative, the movie. For those who have seen the movie and know its plot, an ad's code may be very different than if the image is marketing a dry cleaning service and the viewer has never seen the models before.

The mattress (Fig. 42) advertisement shows two womyn, both lying on the marketed mattress (each alone in a different frame) and apparently asleep. They cannot be reasonably described as either superior or inferior, since they are both contextually isolated from a broader interpretive context. If a man were lying next to either one of these womyn, also asleep, this advertisement would likely have been coded at Level 4. In neither case is the womyn sexualized. One womyn wears a form-fitting outfit, but it seems to have been used simply to show how the mattress better suits the human form rather than revealing a sexually suggestive pose. These womyn are Level V because they are *Individuals*.

The last advertisement in the discrepancy set is a Saturn car (Fig. 43) advertisement. This two-page advertisement features the image of a womyn in a rain jacket standing in a flooded parking lot, next to her Saturn. We know she is a womyn only by her long hair, feminine facial structure and her name on the second page, which is a letter to Saturn. The letter contains her description of the flood that hit her town, where the only car in the parking lot whose ignition was not also flooded was hers. Gender is relevant here because Saturn is attempting to market their cars to the female market, but the ad does not accomplish this by sexualizing the product. This womyn is an *Individual*.



ADVERTISING

NATURESLEEP® PLATINUM

# "For years I had trouble sleeping restfully—now I know the problem was in my mattress!"

Naturesleep® Platinum features comfort zones that match your body's shape and pressure needs, for sleep-specific sleep.

• A support, high-pressure, gentle massage for your comfort, to help sleep.

• Comfort zones with gentle daily massage built-in for better support, reduce spinal stress and feel less back.

The zones of comfort zones in Naturesleep® Platinum have been designed to help you sleep better. They include sleep zones, support zones, and pressure zones. They also have a soft, gentle massage built-in for better support, reduce spinal stress and feel less back.

## Psychiatrist Says

I had a backache. My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back. My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back. My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back.

My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back. My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back. My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back.

My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back. My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back. My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back.

My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back. My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back. My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back.

My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back. My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back. My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back.

My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back. My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back. My doctor said I was getting into the habit of sleeping on my back.

**Scientific solution.** Academic Sleepers' studies have shown that a mattress and pillow can be designed to support a patterned and anatomically correct posture (muscle and bone) and to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture.

The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture. The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture.

The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture. The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture.

The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture. The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture.

The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture. The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture.

The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture. The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture.

The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture. The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture.

to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture. The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture.

The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture. The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture.

The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture. The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture.

The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture. The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture.

The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture. The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture.

The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture. The Naturesleep Platinum mattress and pillow are designed to provide a gentle massage to help the muscles and bones develop in the correct posture.

Naturesleep® Platinum

Double

Queen

King

Call us today to learn more.

800-992-9666

800-992-9666

800-992-9666

800-992-9666

800-992-9666

800-992-9666

800-992-9666

800-992-9666

800-992-9666

converted  
mattress

800-992-9666

800-992-9666

800-992-9666

800-992-9666

Figure 42 Mattress



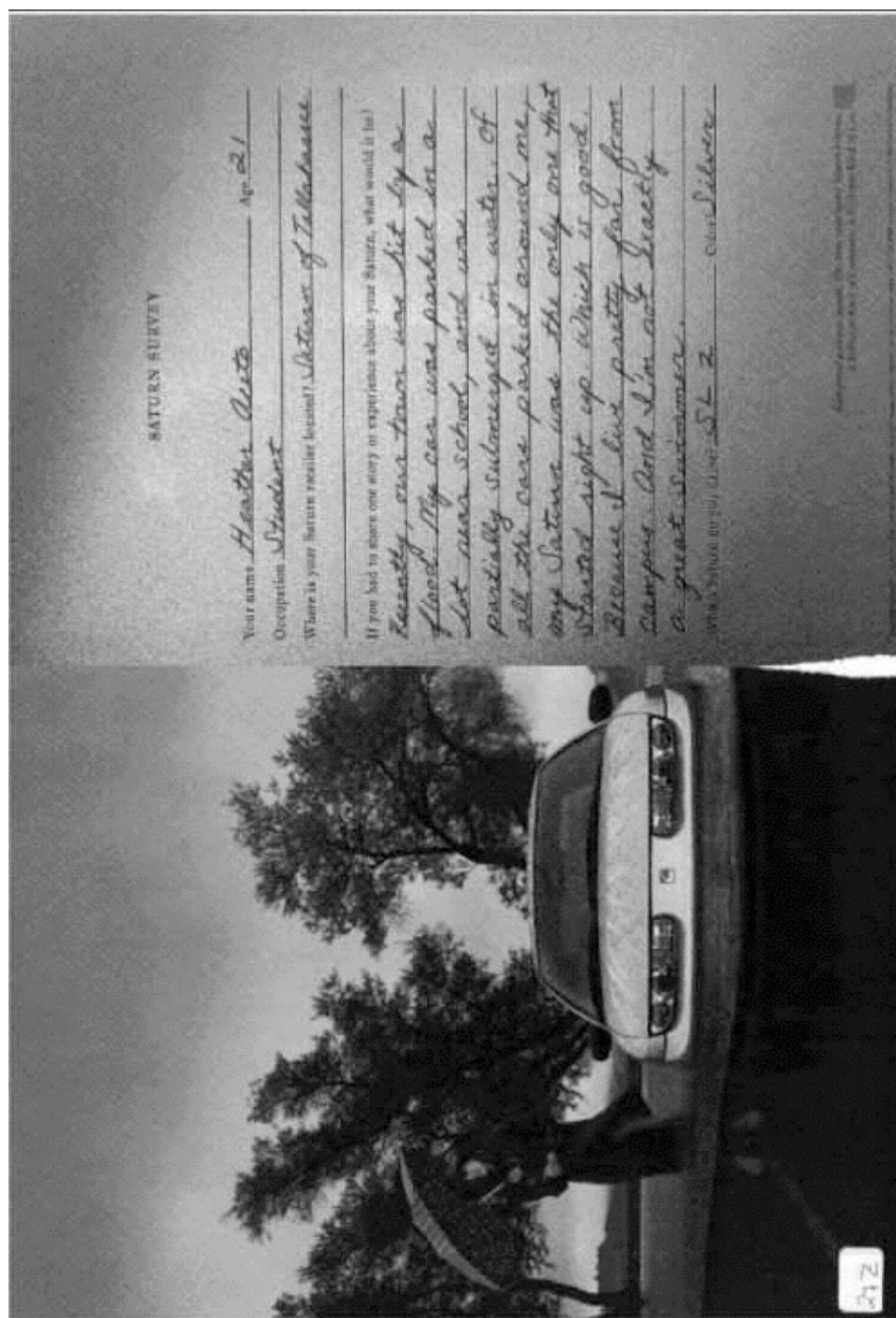


Figure 43 Saturn

### *Discrepancy and Non-Discrepancy Ads Compared*

A review of the imagery in the discrepancy set reveals signifiers that predictably cause coders to see the womyn portrayed as *Individuals*, even when they are also coded as mainly

powerless. Adding the variable of power to the Consciousness Scale thus enables a fuller understanding of why the scale fails to reconcile the challenge of ads showing powerless individuality. The comparison also makes a few key issues apparent: race, body size, sexuality, age, and ultimately control over one's own body. Ironically, these same issues are cited by many feminists as reasons why traditional feminism must be modified to account for the diverse experiences of womyn in a modern world.

### Race

Two sets of comparisons can be evaluated to further explore how race complicates the Consciousness Scale: hosiery and beauty product advertisements.

The *powerless object* advertisement for L'eggs SheerEnergy (Fig. 44) features one whole womyn, and the real arms of two imaginary womyn. The real womyn appears to be holding hands with the imaginary womyn. Like the discrepancy set advertisement, the womyn in this ad are wearing short skirts and are shown smiling. But the copy and the background denote a difference. The *powerless object's* background is an unreal sea of blue adding nothing to denote her identity or her reality, unlike than an identity – empowering background of the discrepancy set advertisement. The copy in the *powerless object* advertisement reads, “Share the vibe,” and “sheer energy, the more you got, the more you give.” The discrepancy set advertisement is selling pride in one's identity, asking a womyn to display her true self. The discrepancy advertisements would not be classified as identity enhancing or carry the same meaning if a white womyn wearing makeup in a traditional environment were marketing the product. Like the beauty product advertisements, race is identified as part of her identity. Though both ads show a womyn in a traditionally non-powerful body stance, the racial identity (and the ads'

ability to draw attention to it) adds an element of individuality. While race has often been used as a marker of exoticism, a fact which might produce a Level I rating, here race is explicitly acknowledged. By normalizing a non-sexual racial identity, a Level V rating is justified instead.



Figure 44 L'eggs SheerEnergy

Three of the discrepancy set advertisements features a “natural” Black-American beauty. The Clarins (Fig. 45) *powerless object* advertisement shares many of the characteristics of the black womyn from the discrepancy set. Although the use of some makeup is apparent, she does not appear overly made-up, especially in comparison to another *powerless object* portrayal in the Loreal (Fig. 46) advertisement. Neither of these womyn are showing off for the audience. Finally, though the womyn in the Clarins advertisement has a contented look on her face (not unlike the womyn in the Dove advertisement), neither of these womyn are smiling. The greatest difference is race. The womyn in the Loreal advertisement is black, but does not display the

“natural” beauty of the womyn in the discrepancy set. The womyn in the Clarins image seems to display a sense of natural beauty, but is white. The combination of natural beauty and race is important.

Both these product sets display black womyn who possess a natural beauty and apparent pride in their racial identity. If these womyn had been displayed overly made-up and with straightened hair, such as the womyn in the *powerless object* set advertisement, they would have been more likely coded as Level 1. Their individuality stems from not only their naturalness, but because natural beauty has traditionally been eliminated in media portrayals. Shown as naturally beautiful, and thus comfortable with their race, these several womyn are coded as *Individuals*, even if they lack power.



Figure 45 Clarins

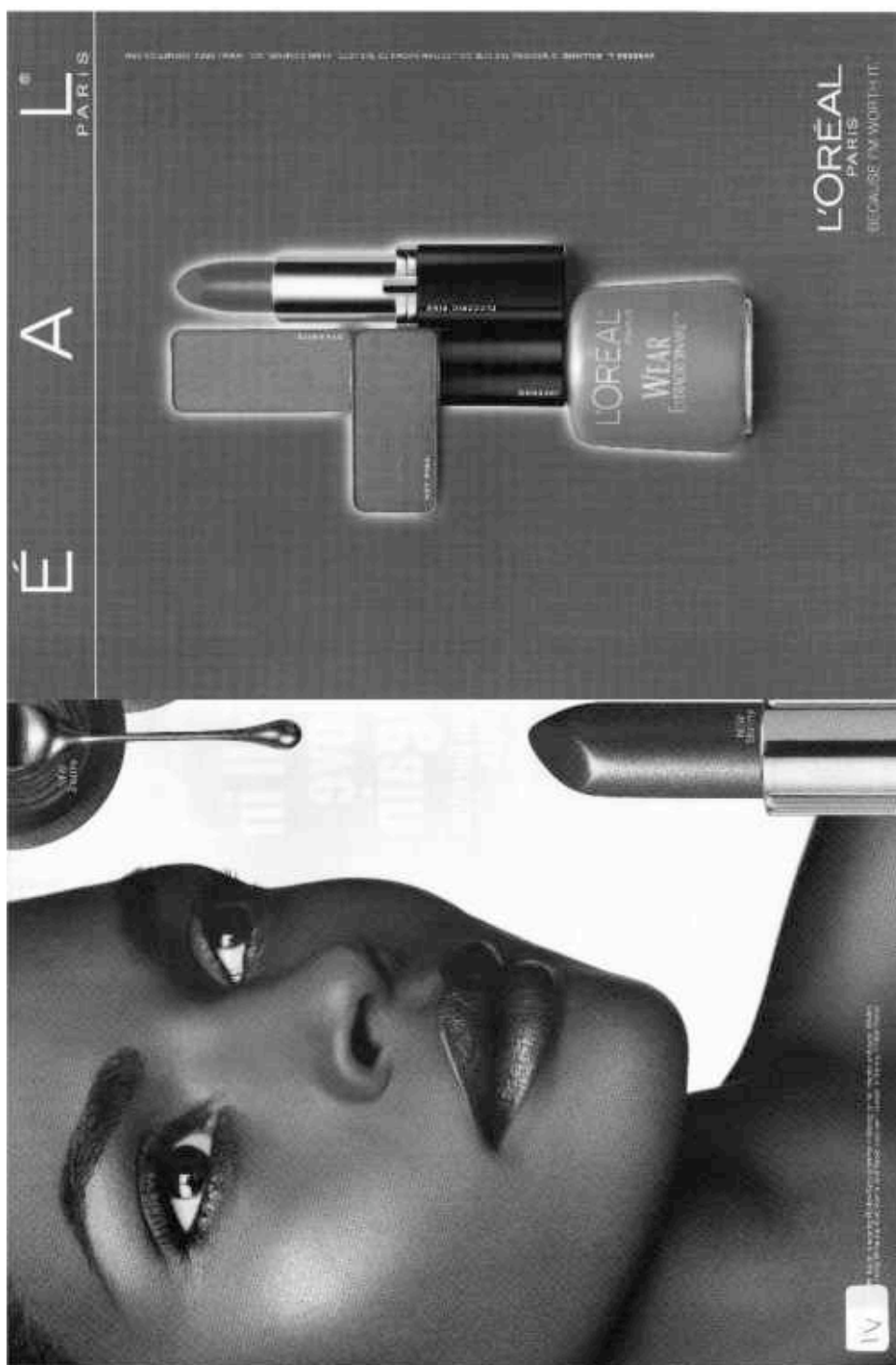


Figure 46 Loreal

### Body Size

The Playtex Body Language bra ad is the discrepancy set shows a womyn who would arguably otherwise be coded as Level I, except that she is a full-figured model. She is happy and content in her identity as a womyn, and comfortable with her size. Conversely, the *powerless object* advertisement for a Bali bra (Fig. 47) portrays a womyn on display, either asleep, hurt, or dead, simply on display. She lets the “Bali Embrace” her, as the copy reads. She is thin and tanned and more closely aligned with the culture's “traditional” notion of beauty, and she thus uses her clothing to accentuate her attractiveness.

The womyn in the Playtex advertisement is also using, to some extent, a bra to make her more attractive, but she also flaunts a more realistic image of beauty. She may be flaunting her favorite features, but larger womyn are not often shown in this positive a manner. The media are often criticized for relying on images of unrealistic bodies, especially in advertising, where companies create unrealistic images and sell us products to help us attain the impossible. The Playtex ad runs counter to this tradition, since it recognizes real womyn, and aims to sell a product which works with their actual body. Can a womyn selling a bra really be coded as Level V, especially when she is also judged powerless? In this case, yes, for the womyn is saying she is an *Individual*, comfortable with who she is.





Figure 47 Bali

### Age

Many of the womyn portrayed in the discrepancy set are older than traditional models (over 40), a fact potentially consistent with a higher Consciousness Scale rating. A womyn over 40 would, especially today, more often have passed through the non-thinking sex-object phase, and would no longer be expected to stay at home to raise a child or simply to remain at home doing housework. This is not to deny that womyn over 40 are sometimes sex objects or mothers or housewives or that many happily work in traditionally female occupations, but rather to acknowledge how our concept of womyn over 40 has changed. Many of the womyn in the *powerful individual* set inhabit the world of traditional male privilege, such as the womyn in the Visa (Fig. 48) or PaineWebber (Fig. 49) advertisements, who would by the typology used in this project be coded as either *Manwoman* or *Nonwoman*.





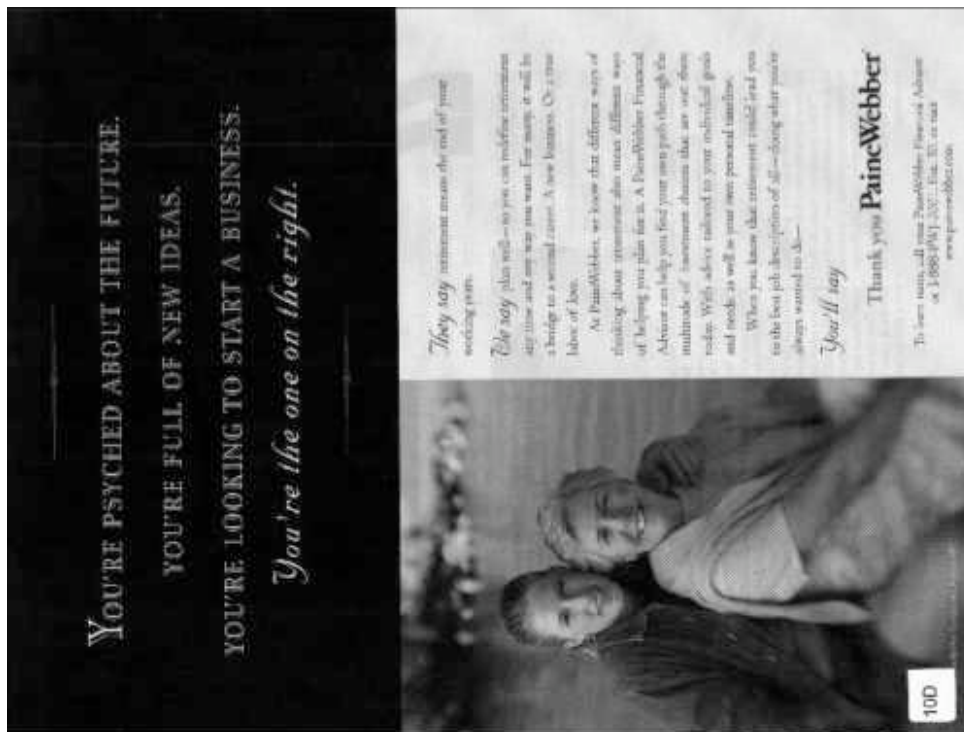


Figure 49 PaineWebber

## Sexuality

The other sets of advertisements do not display even ambiguous same-sex relationships. In the product specific discussion above, many of the issues with this type of imagery were explored, even if at first glance the only similarity of the two ads was their common display of sexuality. The Disaronno Amaretto advertisement creates an almost voyeuristic view of a loving same-sex embrace. The Benetton advertisement, conversely, displays an embrace that seems to challenge the viewer to react. As with the portrayal of a naturalized Black-American beauty, this display is rare and non-traditional, even if natural beauty or a same-sex couple is not rare in the real world.

The original Consciousness Scale gave coders the direction to code all romantic relationships as Level II. They argue that a romantic relationship is a status quo situation, which

serves to keep her in her place. Coders for this project were not given such a direction. This direction would have relegated the same-sex relationships to a Level II coding. However such a placement would completely miss the politics at work in such an advertisement. The same-sex portrayals, while perhaps partially entrenching the status quo of womyn in relationships, do not keep her in her place.

The assumptions made by the Consciousness Scale creators are thus again challenged, since the Consciousness Scale could have never anticipated such a view in mass media depictions. These womyn are not sex objects, though the Disaronno advertisement read as inferring a sexual politics. Their place is not in the home or in womynly occupations, and the advertisements do not even invite this speculation. Coders are thus required to determine at which end of the Consciousness Scale these womyn fit: are they sex-objects/victims, or individuals? While one can imagine coding these womyn as sex objects (especially the Disaronno couple), their display is decidedly non-traditional and individualized. In these cases, it would be almost impossible, if not entirely, to separate the politics of same-sex relationships with their display in mass distributed publications. A sex object ranking at Level 1 would then deny that politics, where as a Level V ranking takes it into account. They have no power in the display, but their power of their political statement cannot be separated from the portrayal.

### Control of Their Bodies

Several of the aforementioned categories include portrayals of womyn who assert a kind of control over their bodies, even if that control is aided by a product. The womyn in the Dove and Oil of Olay advertisements take control, rejecting modern views of Black-American beauty. The womyn in the Playtex advertisement says "my body is as it is," said as if she refuses to allow

the larger society to control her self-image. The older womyn use a product to control ailments that otherwise might afflict them. The same-sex womyn announce their sexual orientation to an audience, take it or leave it. The womyn in the 1-800-COLLECT advertisement engages in a form of popular body mutilation, and the womyn in the medical ads use modern products to control their bodies.

The womyn of the discrepancy set are womyn who, even if seemingly powerless in their portrayals, represent a more complex kind of womyn who defies convention and sometimes attains a kind of power precisely because she is willing to disregard the society's ideas about sex. The coders saw these womyn were individuals, though they saw them as possessing much power. The *Manwoman* and *Nonwoman* who predominately inhabit the *powerful individual* set primarily appear in magazines like *Working Woman* or *Time* and *Newsweek*. *Powerless objects* primarily inhabit magazines like *Cosmopolitan* and *Playboy*. Significantly, the womyn of the discrepancy set are found everywhere from *Cosmopolitan* to *Working Woman*.

By separating the Consciousness Scale's original descriptions of Level V into three categories, it becomes clearer that most of the womyn of the discrepancy set are non-stereotypical *Individuals*. Whether these womyn are challenging modern notions of race, body image, age, or sexuality, they reject the media's dominant idea of a "normal" womyn. They are who they are, asserting with the as the Arden advertising copy, that "the sum of my whole is greater than the sum of my parts."

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

As originally formulated by Pingree et al., Level V portrayals were supposed to “provide opportunity” and reveal the progress made by womyn as portrayed in the media. But that apparent opportunity has come at a cost. In the 1970's, Level V womyn were unusual in the uniqueness of their position of authority, or they enacted a role reversal, since at that time independent feminity was the exception. Thus, coders had to operate within the frame or context of “traditional,” “normal,” or “stereotypical” gender portrayals in order to recognize the exceptional portrayal when they encountered it.

This project replicated the original Consciousness Scale study, while expanding the range of magazines surveyed and by adding the variable of power. By adding power to the coding tools, coders were able to provide both a Consciousness Scale ranking and to evaluate how much and what type of power relationship was portrayed there. Then, by sorting out those portrayals where a coding discrepancy existed between rank and power, a group of advertisements were culled that reveal in a detailed way the complex and perhaps overlooked richness of Consciousness Scale depictions. These culled images I have referred to as the discrepancy set. Whether the portrayals were of *powerful objects* or *powerless individuals*, they seemed to run counter to the original assumptions of the Consciousness Scale.

This study identified 41 magazine advertisements from a variety of sources that reflected a coding discrepancy. The original hypothesis was that the coders would find a discrepancy set

rich with *powerful objects*, resonating with the recent but already pervasive cultural idea that a sex object can also enact or assert power, such as Madonna. But what this study found instead was the opposite, a discrepancy set portraying *powerless individuals*, which showed womyn who were coded as Level 5 *individuals* but who also seemed to wholly lack power.

The fact that no womyn coded at Level I were coded as enacting anything more than very limited power (and fewer than 2% were coded with that) confirms traditional ideas about sex roles. The sex object or the mother or the secretary is still viewed as having little or no power, even though the power a mother has over her child, whether *referent* or *reward*, is still power. By contrast, Madonna, although a sex object in many respects, also has power, a fact confirmed by her aggressive display of sexuality over the last twenty years to create a multi-million dollar fortune for herself.

The difficulty with the mother or the sex object characterization is that they occupy spaces normally held for traditional womyn. The coding scheme thus reflected the traditional disparagement of womyn's agency by devising two distinct worlds, one where a womyn occupies traditional womyn's roles and has little or no power as the *powerless object*, and another where womyn occupy non-traditional so-called men's roles and enjoy the benefit of great or total power as *powerful individuals*. These portrayals fit comfortably within the traditional uses of the Consciousness Scale.

If we compare the portrayals in the four magazines used in both the original Consciousness Scale study and again in this project, Level V portrayals are now the largest percent of all advertisements coded there. In every magazine except *Playboy*, Level IV and

Level V portrayals make up over half of the advertisements coded, as compared to less than a quarter in 1976.

The most notable change from 1976 to 2004 is the forty percent drop in Level II portrayals. It seems that advertisements now more fully dichotomize the experience of womyn, either as Level I or Level IV or V. This change is logical since womyn occupy fewer traditional roles than they did in 1976. While many womyn still occupy those roles in real life, such portrayals are less frequent in magazine advertisements today. The working womyn or the womyn at university is common, or at least such portrayals are now as normalized as the mother/housewife image was in 1976.

What, then, explains the notable absence of change in Level I portrayals? In the last chapter, advertisements were categorized by product type and a comparison drawn between the discrepancy set, the *powerless object*, and the *powerful individual*. Even though womyn have carved out new places for themselves, they are still expected to be attractive. Industries selling cosmetics, fashion, hair care, and diet foods will not disappear as womyn make *new traditions*, but rather, in many cases these firms will adapt, such as with the bra and hosiery advertisements found in the discrepancy set. The brassiere, which has at times symbolized female oppression (and sometimes even burned as an act of public protest), is now marketed as able to enhance self expression. There will always be beautiful womyn and the expectation for womyn to live up to that idea of beauty is likely to persist if for no other reason than fashion is a billion dollar business and industries will not easily forfeit their anticipated profits.

But as businesses become more market savvy and attempt to reach modern and perhaps more cynical consumers, they must make their portrayals of womyn more complex. No longer are consumers satisfied with advertising solely obsessed with presenting traditional mothers or

womyn defined simply by their participation in a man's world. Consumers, and the businesses that seek their money, want to imagine womyn in a much more complicated world. What this analysis reveals is that the original Consciousness Scale no longer defines the universe of gendered portrayals, and it falls short in explaining newer, more complex, and arguably true to life portrayals of womyn. As Condit found, while coders may understand the "intended" meaning of an image, what emerges as an apparently oppositional reading (revealed by the assignment of codes reflecting the possession and use of power) offers insight into why coders are sometimes able to see even a caricatured portrayal (of, say, a nearly topless womyn) as enacting individuality. This research implies that the social climate in which such advertisements appear and are coded is importantly different than that which characterized the period when the original Consciousness Scale was published. A 1970's worldview cannot be superimposed on a modern image and with the expectation that a consistent coded response can be obtained.

Ironically, then, the Consciousness Scale as originally defended thus requires a coder to participate in stereotyping. The ordinal ranking of the Consciousness Scale requires that coders evaluate a mother or womyn working in a so-called womynly occupation as lesser in value (and power) than a womyn who would occupy a traditionally male occupation. In a world where enacted power and occupational role were tracked more clearly, such stereotypes might have been defensible, and the numerical discount undone by simply reversing the scale. But today's more complex intermingling of power and occupational dynamics subvert the explanatory force of the Consciousness Scale in more fundamental ways since it is no longer exceptional to see a man cook or a womyn perform surgery.

It is interesting to note that most womyn in the discrepancy set were coded as having *referent* power. If womyn in the discrepancy set do inhabit a new multidimensional world, then perhaps coders projected their own personal desire to be an *Individual* (or their personal identification as an *Individual*) as the womyn's *referent* power. That is to say, the coders identified with the *Individual* womyn within the discrepancy set as representative of the reality in which they live (or would like to live). The coders perhaps wish to see a world where a full-figured womyn is accepted as beautiful without the normalized constructs of beauty. The power the womyn in the discrepancy set hold is the ability to make the coder want to be like them because they are ideally a modern portrayal of a womyn as an *Individual*.

Womyn now enter every occupational world. Forty years after the civil rights movement historically marginalized groups have made inroads into occupational categories that would have been unheard of a century ago. As Americans live longer both men and womyn remain in the work force and remain consumers longer. As society accepts a healthier (even if full-figured) body image, and as same-sex relationships become more open, male and female, white and non-white, young and old, hetero and homosexual persons continue to break out of stereotypical places to occupy the modern world. The creators of the Consciousness Scale hoped for such changes, and as they slowly emerge, the media are beginning to portray the multidimensional world we inhabit. The point of this research is not that the Consciousness Scale is now wholly useless, but rather it sheds light on how the Consciousness Scale must be adjusted to the social dimensions of an increasingly multidimensional world.

A few shortcomings of this project can perhaps be avoided in future attempts to reconceptualize the Consciousness Scale. The sheer volume of advertisements made coding a challenge. A total of 518 advertisements required coders to rank and assign power and power



type to hundreds of portrayals. While the range of magazines coded helped shed light on the range of gender enactments, reducing the number of magazines while looking at ads published over a longer period of time might have yielded the same results without over-extending the coders.

The coding scheme used to identify power emphasized the variable as relational; this scheme made sense for this project since in the majority of cases the advertisements enact gender portrayals in explicitly relational contexts (e.g., by showing womyn interacting with men in particular ways). Still, use of this scheme does present other challenges. In some cases, for instance, the coding scheme required coders to judge a portrayal as lacking power (because there was no explicitly relational dynamic), even though through the display of sheer assertiveness a portrayal might be otherwise described as showing audiences a powerful womyn. Thus, while the types of power identified in this project were beneficial as a way to identify a discrepancy set and were consistent with the relational comparisons of the Consciousness Scale, perhaps a coding measurement based on self-assertive power would have identified how many of the so-called *Individuals* are powerful (such as the womyn in the Playtex brassier advertisement). Additionally, a coding scheme able to identify self-assertive expressions of power may have resulted in the identification of Level I sex objects who might also have been seen as powerful (recall that in the data set presented here no ads fit into that category).

It is important to address the relatively low intercoder reliability generated by this project. Though coding resulted in a distinctive and analytically productive discrepancy set, a few factors might have caused a skew there resulting from the experimental design: the training method, coder demographics, and the omission of two coding instructions.

The training method for the coders was basic. Coders were separately given the coding tool. After reviewing the tool, coders were guided through advertisements to discern their understanding of the coding scheme and their ability to accurately place the portrayal on the Consciousness Scale. Lengthy sessions were not used with these coders, which could explain a diminished level of intercoder reliability.

Coders A and B were both womyn and Coder C (the coder used to resolve discrepancies) was a man. Their ages ranged from 25 to 30. Although the coders overall included both genders, using one male and one female as Coders A and B and using the second female as Coder C would have been more appropriate. Each of the coders had at least some graduate experience (one was a master's degree student, one had completed the M.A., and the other had an earned Ph.D.) in the communications field, though none specializes in gender and communication studies. While use of the Consciousness Scale should not require such a specialization, perhaps it would have provided additional insights, especially with respect to the type of power the womyn show in modern advertising, to have clarified the procedure in those ways.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, two directions given to coders in the original Consciousness Scale were purposely not given to coders in this project. First, coders were not directed to code every romantic relationship as Level II ("keeping a womyn in her place"). Second, coders were not asked specifically to delineate between portrayals solely enhancing the product (coded as Level I) and portrayals giving more information about the product (coding as portrayed). The absence of these two directions, more than the training method and the demographics of the coders, likely resulted in the lower intercoder reliability. Both directions specifically direct a coder to place a portrayal in a lower section of the Consciousness Scale, and required no

additional analysis by the coder. Portrayals included in the discrepancy set would likely have been identified as Level II had coders been given these instructions. But these directions, while they would have clearly simplified the job of the coder, would have needlessly obscured the nuanced reactions elicited by contemporary advertising.

Although intercoder reliability was relatively low, it was not so low as to hinder the ultimate the purpose of the project. Since the current project was not aimed at simply replicating the Consciousness Scale using modern images (something already available in the literature), and the purpose was to identify a discrepancy set able to call attention to portrayals problematizing the Consciousness Scale, that aim was achieved even given lower than ideal intercoder reliability.

With all of this in mind, it would seem that the Consciousness Scale will continue to contextualize gendered portrayals, especially if modern *Individualized* portrayals are taken into account. Taking the original descriptions of the Consciousness Scale Level V and subdividing them into three categories based on power (*Manwoman*, *Nonwoman*, and *Individual*) can help researchers better understand how these portrayals function.

Courtney and Lockertz first converted gendered portrayals into categories. The Consciousness Scale and the work that followed took those initial categories and generated a seemingly clearer and more rigid coding scheme. Simply defining Level V as “women and men as individuals” while seemingly eliminating a separation of gender, still calls this separation to a coders attention. By simply breaking out the original levels into three subcategorizes, the dichotomy of gender is not only identified but also problematized. It recognizes womyn are portrayed as *Manwoman*, *Nonwoman*, or an *Individual* (and names those portrayals) rather than simply believing womyn can simply be placed under a large umbrella called *Individual*.

The production of subcategories is also more desirable a solution than a complete rejection of the ordinal scale, since such rejection would also abandon much of what the Scale has to offer. While the ordinal nature of the Consciousness Scale does continue to perpetuate false hierarchies, though, a richer scheme adds considerable explanatory power.

In the future, it would be interesting to see if perhaps each Level of the Consciousness Scale might be further divided to allow for more nuanced coding, able for example to account for an image of a working mother who values work and family equally (rather than simply fulfilling the expectation that she should or would value her family first). Or Level I might be refined to more accurately differentiate between a non-thinking object (e.g., a sex-object) and a victim, rather than trying to lump them together as one kind of person.

From this work, a number of issues were cited as indicators of why womyn might be coded at Level V with no power. Issues of race and age were addressed, but additional work using this measurement tool and its results could be done to target these indicators specifically. In Chapter 4 many of the non-discrepancy set advertisements analysed included portrayals of black womyn or womyn over 40. Especially in conjunction with how these issues interplay with gender, future analysis could take a more in-depth look at these modern portrayals.

This project in its replication of the Consciousness Scale attempted to shed light on the potential pitfalls of traditional methods of evaluating womyn in advertising. By adding the element of power, a richer and more nuanced reading of womyn in advertising was enabled. The Consciousness Scale serves as a valuable starting tool but should continue to be evaluated and adjusted to truly capture not only how womyn are portrayed, but also what is at work within an advertisement to result in such portrayals, especially as the modern image of womyn changes. The original authors of the Consciousness Scale argued that their scale could accurately

represent how womyn were portrayed in advertisements, but also conceded that their categorizing scheme often relied on culturally unusual or even abnormal roles (or full fledged role reversals). New gender role evaluations in a societal dynamic where such roles less often enact outright role reversals require a more modern and complex evaluation of gender portrayals in advertising.

## REFERENCES

- Alreck, P.L., Settle, R.B., & Belch, M.A. (1982). Who responds to “gendered” ads, and how? *Journal of Advertising*, 22(2), 25-31.
- Barthel, L. (1988). Putting on appearances. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Belkaoui, A. & Belkaoui J.M. (1976). A comparative analysis of the roles portrayed by women in print advertisements:1958, 1970, 1972. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 13, 168-172.
- Busby, L.J. & Leichty, G. (1993). Feminism and advertising in traditional and nontraditional women’s magazines 1950s-1980s. *Journalism Quarterly*, 70(2), 247-264.
- Butler, M. & Paisley, W. (1980) The consciousness scale. In M. Bulter (Eds.), Women and the mass media: Sourcebook for research and action. (pp. 148-168). New York: Human Science Press.
- Cagan, E. (1978). The selling of the women’s movement. *Social Policy*, 3(9) 4-12.
- Condit, C.M. (1989). The rhetorical limits of polyseme. *Critical Studies in Mass Communications*, 6, 103-122.
- Cortese, A.J.P. (1999). Provocateur: Images of women and minorities in advertising. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers.
- Courtney, A.E. & Lockertz, S.W. (1971). A woman’s place: An analysis of the roles portrayed by women in magazine advertisements. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 7, 92-95.
- Dahl, R. (1986). Power as the control of behaviour. In S. Lukes (Eds.), Power (Readings in social & political theory no.4). (pp. 37-58) New York: New York University Press.

- Ducker, J.M. & Tucker, Jr., L.R. (1977). "Women's lib-ers" versus independent women: A study of preferences for women's roles in advertisements. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 14, 469-475.
- Galbraith, J.K. (1986). Power and organization. In S. Lukes (Eds.), Power (Readings in social & political theory no.4). (pp. 211-228) New York: New York University Press.
- Goffman, E. (1979). Gender advertisements. New York: Harper.
- Kang, Mee-Eun. (1997). The portrayal of women's images in magazine advertisements: Goffman's gender analysis revisited. *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*, 37(11/12), 979-996.
- Kilbourne, W. E. (1990). Female stereotyping in advertising: An experiment on male-female perceptions of leadership. *Journalism Quarterly*, 67(1), 25-31.
- Klassen, M.L., Jasper, C.R., & Schwartz, A.M. (1993) Men and women: Images of their relationship in magazine advertisements. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 33(2), 30-39.
- Lafkey, S., Duffy, M., Steinmaus, M. & Berkowitz, D. (1996). Looking through gendered lenses: Female stereotyping in advertisements and gender role expectations. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 73(2), 379-388.
- Lazier-Smith, L. (1989). Advertising: Woman's place and image—a new 'generation' of images of women. In P. Creedon (Eds.), Women in mass communication: Challenging gender values (pp. 247-260). Newbury Park: Sage Publications.
- Leigh, T.W., Rethans, A.J., & Whitney, T. R. (1987). Role portrayals of women in advertising: Cognitive responses and advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 27(5), 54-63.

- Lewis, C. & Neville, J. (1995). Images of rose: A content analysis of women workers in american advertising, 1940-1946. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 72(1), 216-227.
- Lin, C. (1999) The portrayal of women in television advertising. In M. Meyers (Eds.), Mediated women: Representations in popular culture. (pp. 253-270). Cresskill: Hampton Press.
- Lundstrom, W.L. & Sciglimpaglia, D. (1977). Sex portrayals in advertising. *Journal of Marketing*, 41, 72-79.
- Masse, M. & Rosenblum, K. (1988) Male and female created they them: The depictions of gender in the advertising of traditional women's and men's magazines. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 11(2), 127-144.
- Messaris, P. (1997). Visual persuasion: The role of images in advertising. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Meyers, M. (1999). Fracturing women. In M. Meyers (Eds.), Mediated women: Representations in popular culture. (pp. 3-24). Cresskill: Hampton Press.
- McLaughlin, T.L. & Goulet, N. (1999) Gender advertisements in magazines aimed at african americans: A comparison to their occurrence in magazines aimed at Caucasians. *Sex Roles*, 10(1/2), 61-71.
- Moriarty, S.E. (1987) A content analysis of visuals used in print media advertising. *Journalism Quarterly*, 64(2/3), 550-554.
- Paff, J.L. & Lanker, H.B. (1997). Dress and the female gender role in magazine advertisements of 1950-1994: A content analysis. *Family & Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 26(1), 29-58.



- Pingree, S., Hawkins, R. P., Butler, M., & Paisley, W. (1976). A scale for sexism. *Journal of Communication*, 26(4), 193-200.
- Plous, A., & Neptune, D. (1997). Racial and gender biases in magazines advertising. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 21(3), 627-644.
- Richmond, V. P., McCroskey, J. C., Davis, L. M., & Koontz, K. A. (1980). Perceived power as a mediator of management style and employee satisfaction: A preliminary investigation. *Communication Quarterly*, 28, 37-46.
- Sullivan, G.L. & O'Connor, P.J. (1988). Women's role portrayals in magazine advertising: 1958-1983. *Sex Roles*, 18(4), 181-188.
- Talcott, P. (1986). Power and the social system. In S. Lukes (Eds.), Power (Readings in social & political theory no.4). (pp. 94-143) New York: New York University Press.
- Tuchman, G. (1978). Introduction: The symbolic annihilation of women by the mass media. In G. Tuchman, A. Kaplan, & J. Benet (Eds.), Hearth and home: Images of women in the mass media. (pp. 3-38) New York: Oxford University Press.
- van Zoonen, L. (1994). Feminist media studies. London: Sage Publications.
- Wartenberg, T. (1990). The forms of power: From domination to transformation. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Williamson, J. (1978). Decoding advertisements: Ideology & meaning in advertisements. London: Marion Boyars.
- Wortzel, L.H. & Frisbee, J.M. (1974). Women's role portrayal preferences in advertisement: An empirical study. *Journal of Marketing*, 38, 41-46.

## APPENDIX

Ad Code \_\_\_\_\_

Product or Service Advertised \_\_\_\_\_

Coder (Circle One): 1   2   3

1.) Into which of the following categories does the woman/women's portrayal best fit (choose only one):

- 01 Woman is a two-dimensional non-thinking decoration
- 02 Woman's place is in the home or in womanly occupations
- 03 Woman may be a professional but her first place is in the home
- 04 Woman and man must be equal
- 05 Woman and men are individuals

2.)

a.) Rate the woman/ women's apparent power by circling one number:

1	2	3	4	5
No Power		Moderate Power		Total Power

b.) If you rated the woman/women's as having power (at any level over 1 on the question a), please indicate which of the following kinds of power she is using (choose as many as appropriate):

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 01 The woman/women employ(s) coercive power                 | y | n |
| 02 The woman/women employ reward power                      | y | n |
| 03 The woman/women employ legitimate power                  | y | n |
| 04 The woman/women employ referent power                    | y | n |
| 05 The woman/women employ expert power                      | y | n |
| 06 The woman/women employ a type of power not listed/ Other | y | n |

06 a. What kind of power is she employing? \_\_\_\_\_

3.) If the number of women and or the nature of their portrayal made coding difficult, please indicate by checking here \_\_\_\_\_.

## Directions for Coders

**Ad Code:** In the bottom right or left corner of each add will be a white sticker with a number and a letter. Please write this code in the Ad Code blank.

**Product Advertised:** Please indicate, based on the WORDS in the advertisement, what product is being advertised. (For example, the company would be Honda, and the product would be a Civic).

**Coder:** indicate which coder you are.

### Question 1:

Into which of the following categories does the woman/women's portrayal best fit (choose only one):

#### Determining what to code:

For advertisements with only one woman in one scene, choose which level best describes how the woman is being portrayed in the scene.

For advertisements with one woman in numerous scenes, choose which level best describes how the woman is being portrayed over all.

For advertisements with more than one woman, choose which level best describes how the women are being portrayed as one unit (i.e., how the interaction of women portrays women as a whole).

#### The Consciousness Scale:

*01 Woman is a two-dimensional non-thinking decoration.*

This portrayal includes the depiction of the quintessential dumb blonde, sex object, or victim. This woman is essentially decorative for the marketed product, and less than a person.

*02 Woman's place is in the home or in womanly occupations.*

This portrayal includes mothers, wives, secretaries, teachers, and nurses or other womanly occupations. Woman/ women are shown in "traditional" womanly roles.

*03 Woman may be a professional but her first place is in the home.*

This portrayal includes woman/women shown as wives and mothers, but also portrayed as professionals. The premise of this level is that though she may be seen in the work force, her first place is in the home.

*04 Woman and man must be equal*

This portrayal includes depictions of man and womyn as equal.

05 Woman and men are individuals

This portrayal includes woman/women who are not portrayed based simply on their sex, but are shown as individuals, with common representations including role reversal.

## Question 2:

## A.) Rate the woman/ women's power:

Power will be defined by Max Weber as:

the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his/her own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests.

In other words, if the woman/women in the advertisement CAN carry out her/their will, despite whether she has resistance from someone/something or whether she ACTUALLY carries out her will, she can be seen as having some power.

If she does not have power, indicate this by placing an X on the 1 (no power). Additionally, if it appears that she is BEING controlled, indicate this by placing an X on the 1 (no power).

If she has ANY power at all, you need to determine how much power she has, then rate it on the scale. Place an X on the scale where at the level of which you think the woman/women has power, with 1 indicating no power, 3 indicating moderate power, and 5 indicating total power within the advertisement.

B.) If you indicated the woman/women's as having power (as any level over 1 on question a), please indicate which of the following kinds of power she is using (choose as many as appropriate):

The standard bases of power are coercive, reward, legitimate, referent, and expert. This question also allows for a base that may not be fit into one of these categories. You can answer yes to more than one base of power she employs. Indicate whether the woman/women use this as a base of their power. The bases are defined here for clarification, by French and Raven:

## 01 The woman/women employ coercive power

Coercive power is based on an individual's expectation that he/she will be punished by another (in this case the woman/women in the advertisement) if he/she does not conform to that person's influence attempt.

## 02 The woman/women employ reward power

Reward power is based on an individual's perception of another's (in this case the woman/women in the advertisement) ability to mediate rewards for him/her. This can either be the ability to administer positive valences OR to remove or lessen negative valences.

## 03 The woman/women employ legitimate power

Legitimate power is based on an individual's perceptions of another's right to influence or prescribe behavior for him/her. Typically associated with hierarchical organizational power.

04 The woman/women employ referent power

Referent power is based on an individual's personal relationship with another, specifically for the less powerful to identify with the and please the more powerful person.

05 The woman/women employ expert power

Expert power is based on an individual's perceptions of another's competence and knowledge in very specific areas. The strength of someone's Expert power depends on the perception, by other's, of their competence in that specific area.

06 The woman/women employ a type of power not listed/ Other

This allows you to indicate that the woman/women in the advertisement have some of level of power that cannot be defined by one of the 5 bases of power mentioned above.