

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: The Changing Roles of Women in Magazine Advertisements Over the

Last Twenty Years

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ABSTRACT

This study is a replication of previous research conducted by Courtney and Lockeretz in 1971, a study called "A Woman's Place: An Analysis of the Roles Portrayed by Women in Magazine Advertisements". A history of the women's rights movement and women's changing roles is discussed to confirm the need for advertising changes since 1971. Advertisements were selected from the eight original magazines, People, Life, Newsweek, The New Yorker, Saturday Review, Time, U.S. News and World Report, and Reader's Digest and from four additional magazines, Ms, Good Housekeeping, Sports Illustrated, and GQ. The role of the adult appearing in the advertisement was identified as either working or non-working. The advertisements were also categorized according to the product that the advertisement was selling. The percentages in various categories were compared and should have changed from the 1971 study in relationship to the actual role changes of women. For example, there are

more women working in today's society so there should be more women portrayed in working roles in advertising. The 1971 study found that nine percent of the adult women in advertisements were portrayed in working roles while this study found 43 percent of the adult women were in working roles. Overall, the results from this study revealed some changes that correspond with the changes in society, but there were still several roles that remained unchanged in magazine advertising.

THE CHANGING ROLES OF WOMEN  
IN MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS  
OVER THE LAST TWENTY YEARS

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Division of Psychology  
EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

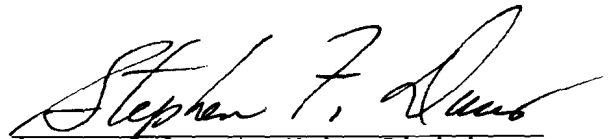
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In Partial Fulfillment  
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Master of Science

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By  
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Thanks again to all these people and to the ones that I left out.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Industry in the United States works on a system called the free enterprise system. The key component of the free enterprise system is competition. The reason competition is so important is because with competition the better products (theoretically) survive. As more and more products have been developed and put into the market, competition has become more intense. Since all businesses must sell their products to survive, (Pride & Ferrell, 1985) techniques were developed to assess which new products would do well in the market and what old products would continue to stay in the market. Business later defined these techniques as marketing. Marketing involves looking at three main factors (Pride & Ferrell, 1985). The first factor included in marketing is the buyer. When the buyers change, their wants, needs and desires also change. Because of this, the products they want change. Therefore, marketers must create goods and services to match the buyer's wants and needs.

The second marketing factor includes four major components. These components are product, price, distribution, and promotion. Marketers have to consider the product itself; how it is packaged; and if it is of good quality. Price is the actual cost of the product and how this cost compares to other similar products. Distribution includes warehouses, transportation and other facilities involved between the production of a product and when the consumer buys the product. Promotion can be divided into four methods: personal selling, publicity, sales promotion, and advertising. Personal selling involves the salesperson and client. It



is the most expensive promotion technique, but the most informative. Publicity is transmitted through the mass media in news story form without charge to the business. Sales promotions are activities or materials that add incentive for the client (consumer or resellers) to buy the product. An example would be the widely used coupons distributed. Advertising is nonpersonal, paid promotion that is transmitted through television, newspapers, mail, and other media.

The third factor of marketing is environmental forces. There are political, legal, and regulatory forces such as laws, commissions, acts, agencies and bureaus. All of these forces control and affect businesses in many ways. One of these such ways is price regulation. Consumers have come together to create a societal force that influences marketing decisions. There are also other types of societal forces, as well as economical and technological environmental forces. Examples of economical forces are buying power, willingness to spend, spending patterns, and general economic conditions. Examples of technological forces are anything involved with growth and progress. The computer has affected businesses a great deal. Marketers have to consider all six of these environmental factors when making business decisions.

#### Women's Rights Movement

The female buyer in the last twenty years has been the major purchaser (Scott, 1976). Because females are the major purchasers, marketers have had to look closely at them when considering marketing techniques. The typical woman buyer has undergone many role changes in the last twenty years (Venkatesh, 1980). This is largely due to the changes brought about by the women's rights movement. This movement has

been called many other things like the female rebellion, new feminism and the women's liberation movement. All terms seem to be used interchangeably, thus are synonymous and refer to women who believe they are discriminated against solely because they are women (DuBrin, 1972). There were many small historical instances which started the revolt of American women. However, the one major contribution was when American women won the right to vote in 1920 through the Nineteenth Amendment. The work of trying to get this amendment passed for women to vote started in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848.

Because of the civil rights movement in the 1950's, women became reinterested in women's rights. The civil rights movement was not the same as the women's rights movement, but if black people could get certain rights, then women should also be able to get certain rights. However, in the 1950's people argued that the needs of women were less pressing than those of blacks (Ferree & Hess, 1985). In the 1960's women got tired of waiting. Several significant events happened in the 1960's which caused women to become more persistent in their fight for equal rights. One of these things was the publishing of a book, The Feminine Mystique, written by Betty Freidan in 1963. This book has provided the historical beginnings of the women's movement and started much of the research done in the area of female concerns. It provided a knowledge base for women's discontent.

The 'feminine mystique' is the role that women are supposed to play in a male dominated world. This is a role of passivity, docility, and contentment with homemaking as a fulltime occupation (Freidan, 1963). Betty Freidan thought that being a housewife obstructed a woman's psycho-

logical growth particularly her search for self-fulfillment. She called women to arms against traditional ideas. Betty Freidan's book is cited as the impetus for directed research on women's roles in advertising (Courtney & Whipple, 1983). The main reason for this is that Freidan wrote that the people involved with business wanted women to stay at home so that they could become better consumers. The way to keep women in the home is through advertising since this is the way business talks to consumers.

Another occurrence that pushed the women's rights movement forward was President Kennedy's establishment of the Commission on the Status of Women in 1963. President Kennedy may have established the commission because of the growing concern for women's rights, but the establishment of the commission had a "backfire" effect. This commission alerted the public to the needs and problems of women. Recommendations from this commission led to altering the proposed civil rights act to include the word sex along with race, color, religion, and national origin. More specifically this act states it would be unlawful for employers and/or labor unions to discriminate against any individual in any fashion in employment (Dye, 1984). The civil rights act also established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) which was to enforce non-discrimination in employment. Even with the laws and the commissions supporting women, nondiscriminatory programs were not always successful. It took time to change people's attitudes and the employment situations.

Generally speaking the women's movement was very unorganized. There were several small groups fighting in different areas for similar, but slightly different causes. In 1966 NOW was founded by Betty Freidan.

NOW stands for the National Organization for Women whose goal is for the equality of women. This organization is the largest and best-organized women's organization in the country. In 1972, DuBrin stated that NOW had 3,000 members, 100 men, among 35 chapters. There have been other women's movement groups that have developed with different and even more radical ideas than those of NOW (DuBrin, 1972). Some of these groups want total feminine supremacy over men. These groups have made it even harder for people involved with NOW to deal with discrimination. These radical groups have caused men to start myths that women involved with the women's movement are men-haters, lesbians and just plain rebels when realistically, the women involved in the movement are just discontented and dissatisfied women. They are more aggressive, more independent and more intelligent than the average female (DuBrin, 1972). The women involved in the movement are usually in their twenties or thirties, college educated and live in larger cities.

NOW is still very much involved in the women's movement today. It supports women who have been discriminated against. It has helped to change insurance policies, pension plans and other discriminating regulations stemming from a male dominated society. NOW still adheres to their goal of equality for women. The women's movement is not talked about as much as it once was, but it is still active in fighting against discrimination. It has made gains for women, but there are still changes that could be made.

### Women's Role Changes

As a result of the women's movement, there has been a change in women's roles. Traditionally women have been identified in terms of

derived status. Their lives were defined in terms of whose daughter they were and whom they married (Bartos, 1982). Women have been traditionally thought of as housewives and mothers and that is all. One of the major changes in the female role has been more women in the work force.

In 1940, 25 percent of the work force was women, but by 1980, 42 percent of the work force was women (Bartos, 1982). The women of today want self-fulfillment and they want careers of their own (Walsh, 1982). In 1980, 52 percent of women worked and 3 out of 5 women said they would work even if money were not a factor in maintaining a household. There are many professional women that fit into this 52 percent. Actually, in the 1980's the number of working women exceeds the number of housewives (deleting school girls and grandmothers). Fifty-nine percent of women are working women while 41 percent are housewives (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1982). Because of the civil rights act and the EEOC, women can now work and get the rights that they deserve. Because of the women's rights movement, it is now acceptable for women to work or to be housewives. It is a choice women can make and not a forced role.

Another change in women's roles is that they are having their children later in life. They are getting married later in life or not getting married at all (Ziff & Elkind, 1982; Spain & Bianch, 1983). Traditionally, a woman's only choice was to get married and have babies. As a result of the movement, women can now be what they want to be. This includes having careers not families. Some women still want a family, but they are getting some career self-fulfillment first. Women are presently accepted on their own worth not their derived status.

For women to obtain careers and self-fulfillment, they are realizing

that they need to be better educated (Bartos, 1982). Women are now competing in a man's world and need to be as well educated as men. Women are also becoming more knowledgeable about world problems and political concerns (Walsh, 1982). There are more women in political offices and more women involved in activist groups. This change started with the women's movement, women realized they could speak out and get something accomplished. Husbands used to speak for their wives. But in the civil rights movement and women's movement, women had to speak for themselves and their concerns.

More women working has caused other problems for women's traditional roles. One of these problems is time management. The woman that is working full-time does not have time to spend cooking, cleaning, and shopping (Scott, 1976; Bartos, 1982). This is especially true if children are involved. Another change which relates to the women's movement and a woman's desire for self-fulfillment is a woman's concern for health. In the past a woman's body was for the pleasure fulfillment of a man, but now a woman's body can be what she wants it to be. Women are demanding more rights overall. Even women that are not working are wanting more self-fulfillment and more rights.

#### Additional Research

Betty Freidan's publication of The Feminine Mystique marked the beginning of a new wave of feminism and was followed by a large number of books and articles (Courtney & Whipple, 1983). Freidan herself wrote for McCall's Magazine and became interested in the way women's magazines in general, portrayed the United States female. She found magazines reflected and actually fostered a limited lifestyle for women (Freidan,

1963). The first study, using Freidan's ideas to study the portrayal of men and women in print advertising was by Courtney and Lockeretz (1971) "A Women's Place: An Analysis of the Roles Portrayed by Women in Magazine Advertisements". They selected eight general audience magazines: Look, Life, Newsweek, The New Yorker, Saturday Review, Time, U.S. News and World Report, and Reader's Digest.

Courtney and Lockeretz analyzed the number and sexes of adults in the April, 1970 advertisements from the selected magazines. They also examined the adults occupations and activities as well as the products being advertised. In the 1970 advertisements 45 percent of men were shown working outside the home while only 9 percent of women were shown working outside the home. Of this 9 percent, 58 percent were female entertainers and the other 38 percent were low-status jobs. No women were portrayed as high-level business executives or professionals. Of the 55 percent of men in nonworking roles, 22 percent of these were with families, 56 percent were in recreational settings and 22 percent were in decorative roles. Of the 91 percent of the women in nonworking roles, 23 percent were shown with families, 46 percent were in recreational settings and 31 percent were in decorative (i.e. models) roles. When the advertisements were divided into product categories, Courtney and Lockeretz found that women were portrayed as buyers of cleaning aids and cosmetics, but men were shown as buyers of expensive items such as cars, bank services, and industrial goods. In conclusion, they found that few ads could be considered offensive but the total picture reflected some traditional views that were felt to be changing.

A replication of Courtney and Lockeretz's (1971) study, called "A

Women's Place: A Follow-up Analysis of the Roles Portrayed by Women in Magazine Advertisements" was done by Louis Wagner and Janis Banos (1973). This study was done two years later than the original and it found 21 percent of the women in working roles versus the 9 percent found in 1970. The women in nonworking roles were shown in more decorative settings and less family ones. However, there were few women shown in higher executive business positions. Women were still not shown alone in business settings, but were still shown in roles dependent on men. This was also the case when the purchases being made were not home items, such as cleaning products and food products or if they were expensive purchases, such as cars or travel plans.

In 1976, Ahmed Belkaoui and Janice Belkaoui decided Courtney and Lockeretz's original study needed data prior to 1970. They collected data from 1958 and then compared this to the 1970 and 1972 data. The percent of women in working roles changed from 13 percent in 1958 to 9 percent in 1970 and 21 percent in 1972. The working role in 1958 and 1972 for women was secretarial while in 1970 it was as entertainers. Nonworking roles went from real strong family roles to decorative ones. The type of products men and women were shown buying changed very little from 1958 to 1972. The authors concluded that even with the women's movement advertisements had not changed that much in the way they portrayed women's roles.

While these have been the primary studies in the area of women's roles in advertisements, it appears as if no current replications or follow-ups have been published. However, there have been related studies. There have been studies that have used magazines other than



general audience magazines such as, Sexton and Haberman (1974) who used Sports Illustrated, Good Housekeeping, TV Guide, Look and Newsweek. Venkatesan and Losco (1975) used the general audience magazines and added four women's magazines and four men's magazines. McKnight (1974) studied trade magazines. Pingree, Hawkins, Butler, and Paisley (1978) developed a sexism scale and compared magazine advertisements with that scale. The conclusion of all these and other studies are basically the same. Magazine advertisements presented a stereotyped view of both the sexes. This is especially true of labeling women as decorative sex objects working only in the home and dependent on men.

If companies want to stay in business, they will need to adapt their advertising strategies to these role changes. Courtney and Lockeretz (1971) addressed women's roles in advertising. They found that few ads were offensive to women, but the roles portrayed were not paralleling the changing roles of women in 1971. For example, more women were working in the 1970's compared to the previous decades. Courtney and Lockeretz (1971) stated, "... 33% of the fulltime workers in the United States are women: however, only 12% of the workers shown in ads were female" (p. 93). Because advertisements of 1971 failed to portray the changes in women's roles adequately, the question still remains, what about advertisements in today's magazines?

Because of the problem of advertisements failing to portray women's roles adequately, this present research duplicated the Courtney and Lockeretz study by utilizing their 1971 method of categorizing and describing advertisements for 1986 magazines. The purpose of this research was to examine primarily the female buyer in the last twenty

years by focusing on the marketing component called promotion and the advertising component of promotion. The effects of women's role changes on advertising are the primary concerns in evaluating magazine advertisements for this research project. By comparing the data from 1971 and 1986 this study assessed for the changes in the portrayal of women's roles in magazine advertisements since 1971.

The importance of this study rests in the fact that it can be an aid to business professionals who need to know how to best advertise their product to keep it on the market. By indicating how women have been portrayed in advertisements, an indication of advertising affects on social values can be highlighted (Busby, 1975). Berman (1981) summarized the impact of advertisements by the statement, "... advertising says more than it states. Many of its critics believe that advertising is a form of 'social control'--advertising may or may not use ideas to persuade us of much more than good reasons for consumption " (p. 39). Warren (1978) discusses not only how advertising affects society, but how it affects women,

The presumption is that advertising is determined to undermine the sexual revolution. It neutralizes feminism by depicting women with a new sense of assertion and aggressiveness, but [while] still confined to a household environment. It represents the female body only in order to suggest that each part must be deodorized, sprayed, or depilated. It suggests that women are infantile and to some degree auto-erotic or capable of finding satisfaction principally through the embrace of commodities. In short, advertising is an instrument of 'power and repression' (p. 172).

This last statement would suggest that the majority of advertisements up to 1978 portrayed women in traditional decorative roles. However, because of the change in women's roles it was hypothesized that the percentages would be higher in portraying women in working versus nonworking roles in 1986 in comparison to 1971. Secondly, it is hypothesized that the percentages should be higher for women in high-level business executives versus lower working occupations for the 1986 study. Finally, the percentages were hypothesized to be higher for the number of women portrayed in non-home related product advertisements in 1986 in comparison to 1971.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHOD

#### Magazines

The eight magazines selected were People, Life, The New Yorker, Saturday Review, Time, U.S. News and World Report, and Reader's Digest. The March 24, 1986 edition was used for those magazines that were published weekly and the April edition was used for those magazines that were published monthly. These were the same magazines (different edition) that Courtney and Lockeretz used in the 1971 study, except that People magazine was substituted for Look magazine, which is no longer published. These magazines were selected because it was felt the magazine advertisements from these magazines would show a wide variety of roles and because these magazines are written for a general audience. Four additional magazines were selected to look at advertisements in magazines not written for a general audience. GQ, Sports Illustrated, Good Housekeeping, and Ms magazines were the four selected. GQ is written for a male audience and has a liberal style. Sports Illustrated is also written for males, but portrays a masculine traditional style. Ms magazine is written for a female audience and has the liberal feminist style, Good Housekeeping is written for females, but depicts the more traditional homemaker style.

#### Advertisements

The advertisements containing adults were collected from each magazine. An adult is defined as a person over 18 years of age. Since only the advertisements with adults were used, the advertisements that contained no people or only children were not used. Also, the adver-

tisements that contained just partial people were not used (i.e., an advertisement with just a person's hands, just their legs or if there is just part of their face were not used). An advertisement was only used if there was a person's complete face and some other part of their body in the advertisement. Advertisements that contain crowd scenes were not used because of the inability to identify individual roles. This is the same reason partial people were not used. Advertisements that used cartoon people were not used. If the people in the advertisements were very faint and small as in off in the distance, or if they were shadowed and obscured in such a manner that the role of the person could not be determined then these advertisements were also not used. Advertisements from the twelve magazines totaled 391. Only 141 of these advertisements were actually used in this study as a result of the guidelines listed above.

### Categories

The advertisements collected were then divided into categories. The first category was working versus nonworking roles (Tables 1 and 2). The advertisements were divided into the number of males and females that work in specific occupational categories: High-level business executives, Professional, Entertainers, sports (athletes), Sales, middle-level business, semi-professional, Nonprofessional white collar, Blue collar, Soldiers, and Police. These numbers were then converted into percentages. These percentages were based on the amount of total workers in the advertisements. A definition of a worker and of the individual occupational categories can be found in Appendix A.

### Procedure

The following skeleton tables are examples of how the 1971 and 1986 data is categorized.

Table 1

Occupations of Working Men and Women

Shown in Advertisements<sup>a</sup>

	Percentage	
	Males	Females
Percentage shown as workers		
<b>OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES</b>		
High-level bus. executives		
Professional		
Entertainers, sports		
Sales, middle-level bus., semi-professional		
Nonprof white collar		
Blue collar		
Soldiers, Police		
<b>TOTAL</b>		
Number of workers shown		

<sup>a</sup>Based on number of adults shown

Table 2 shows the nonworking categories. Nonworker and the roles of nonworkers are defined in Appendix B. A subcategory, called romance, of the recreational nonworking role was added that was not in the original 1971 study. This subcategory was added to make the recreational role more specific in light of changing roles. Each of the nonworker roles was divided into different divisions; males alone or with other males and males with other females and; females alone or with other females and females with males. The percentages were based on the actual number of males and females pictured in the advertisements, not the number of advertisements.

Table 2

Nonworking Activities of Men and Women

Shown in Advertisements<sup>a</sup>

		Percentage			
		Males		Females	
		Alone or With Males	With Females Total	Alone or With Females	With Males Total

Percentage  
Portrayed as  
Nonworkers

Roles of Nonworkers  
Family  
Recreational  
Romance  
Decorative

Number of  
Nonworkers shown

<sup>a</sup>Based on number of adults shown. Note that some ads showed mixed groups containing unequal numbers of males and females

The third and final method of categorizing the advertisements was to divide the ads according to the products they advertised (Table 3). For each product, the advertisements were then divided into whether there were males or females in the advertisement. A ratio was then also computed to compare the number of ads showing males versus females for each product category.

Table 3

Product Categories and Sex Roles

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	Sex portrayed most often <sup>a</sup>	Ratio of ads showing males/ads showing females <sup>*</sup>
Cleaning products		
Food Products		
Beauty Products		
Drugs		
Furniture		
Clothing		
Home Appliances		
Charity		
Travel		
Cars		
Alcoholic Beverages		
Cigarettes		
Banks		
Industrial Products		
Entertainment, media		
Institutional ads		

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<sup>a</sup>Based on number of adults shown

<sup>\*</sup>Based on number of advertisements

Analysis

After the magazine advertisements were categorized utilizing Courtney and Lockeretz's (1971) method, the results from the general audience magazines were compared to their results. The non-general audience magazines were compared to each other. The percentage of males in specific categories were compared to the percentage of males in the 1971 study and the female percentages were also compared. When comparing the 1971 data and the 1986 data, the percentages are reported as larger or smaller than one another and by what amount of difference. Table 2



and 3 data were compared to the 1971 study. Finally, the romance sub-category was included in the recreational category to compare the 1986 data to the 1971 data.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESULTS

The number of adults in the magazine advertisements were counted and categorized. There were 391 total advertisements in the eight magazines, Life, People, Newsweek, The New Yorker, Saturday Review, Time, U.S. News and World Report, and Reader's Digest. There were 729 total advertisements in Courtney and Lockeretz's 1971 study. Of the 391 advertisements in the present study, 141 of them met the criteria for categorization. Courtney and Lockeretz's study was able to use 312 advertisements. There were 310 people in the 141 advertisements used in this study; 179 of the 310 people were male while 131 were female. In the 1971 study, there were 675 people, 397 males and 278 females.

The first category that the advertisements were divided into was working men and women. Table 4 shows the proportion of adults that were shown in working roles in the 1971 study as compared to this study (i.e. the percentages in parenthesis are from the 1971 study). There is also a breakdown of occupational categories. The total number of male workers decreased while the total number of female workers increased from 1971. The percentage of both males and females in worker roles increased from 1971. The percentage of males in worker roles increased by 7 percentage points while the percentage of females increased by 36 percentage points. It should be noted that the males started at 45 percent being portrayed as workers while only 9 percent of the women were portrayed as workers in 1971. When comparing the various occupational categories most men and women were shown in entertainment roles. In fact, 68 percent of the women were shown in entertainment roles while there were no women portrayed in professional, or blue collar roles.

Table 4

Occupations of Working Men and WomenShown in Advertisements<sup>a</sup> of the Original Magazines

	Percentage			
	Males		Females	
	1986	(1971)	1986	(1971)
Percentage shown as workers	52	(45)	43	( 9)
<b>OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES</b>				
High-level bus. executives	11	(10)	10	( 0)
Professional	3	( 9)	0	( 0)
Entertainers, sports	39	(20)	68	(58)
Sales, middle-level bus., semi-professional	11	( 7)	18	( 8)
Nonprof white collar	6	( 2)	2	(17)
Blue collar	20	(40)	0	(17)
Soldiers, Police	10	(12)	2	( 0)
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
Number of workers shown	94	(176)	56	(24)

<sup>a</sup>Based on number of adults shown

The four additional magazine advertisements--Ms, Good Housekeeping (GH), Sports Illustrated (SI), and GQ--were also counted and categorized. There were 419 total advertisements in the four magazines. There were 35 in Ms, 164 in Good Housekeeping, 27 in Sports Illustrated, and 193 advertisements in GQ. Of the 419 total advertisements, only 177 contained adults and were used in this study. Sixteen advertisements were used from Ms, 46 from Good Housekeeping, 5 from Sports Illustrated and 110 from GQ. The number of males portrayed in the four magazines totaled 207. Twenty-one of these were in working roles and 186 were in non-working roles. There were 135 total females in the advertisements. Eleven were in working roles and 124 were in nonworking roles.

Table 5

## Occupations of Working Men and Women

Shown in Advertisements<sup>a</sup> of the Additional Magazines

	Percentage							
	Males				Females			
	GH	SI	GQ	MS	GH	SI	GQ	MS
Percentage shown as workers	46	50	4	11	12	17	0	13
OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES								
High-level bus. executives	0	0	17	0	0	0	0	0
Professional	33	13	33	0	29	0	0	0
Entertainers, sports	50	0	33	100	57	0	0	100
Sales, middle-level bus., semi-professional	0	0	0	0	14	10	0	0
Nonprof white collar	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blue collar	0	50	17	0	0	0	0	0
Soldiers, Police	0	37	0	0	0	100	0	0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	0	100
Number of workers shown	6	8	6	1	7	1	0	3

<sup>a</sup>Based on number of adults shown

Table 5 shows the proportion of adults that were shown in working roles in each of the four additional magazines. Sports Illustrated showed the largest percentage of both males and females in working roles. From all four magazines there were only 32 males and females shown in working roles out of the 342 adults shown in all the advertisements. There were no females shown in the occupational categories called high-level business executive, non-professional white collar or blue collar.

The second category looked at men and women portrayed in nonworking roles. Table 6 shows the percentages of males and females in nonworking roles (i.e. the percentages from the 1971 study are in parenthesis). Results indicated that as the percentage of males and females in working roles increased from the 1971 study, the percentage of males and females

Table 6

Nonworking Activities of Men and WomenShown in Advertisements<sup>a</sup> of the Original Magazines

	Percentage					
	Males			Females		
	Alone or With Males	With Females	Total	Alone or With Females	With Males	Total
Percentage Portrayed as Nonworkers	37 <sup>b</sup> (37)	54 (71)	48 (55)	64 (90)	53 (92)	57 (91)
Roles of Nonworkers						
Family	4 (18)	7 (24)	6 (22)	12 (21)	10 (25)	11 (23)
Recreational	32 (35)	60 (65)	52 (56)	3 ( 9)	51 (64)	29 (46)
Decorative	64 (47)	33 (11)	42 (22)	85 (70)	39 (11)	60 (31)
Total	100 100	100 100	100 100	100 100	100 100	100 100
Number of Nonworkers shown	25 (68)	60 (153)	85 (221)	34 (86)	41 (168)	75 (254)

<sup>a</sup>Based on number of adults shown. Note that some ads showed mixed groups containing unequal numbers of males and females. <sup>b</sup>Numbers not enclosed by parenthesis reflect 1986 data while numbers enclosed by parenthesis reflect 1971 data.

in nonworking roles decreased since the 1971 study. The percentage of people portrayed in family nonworking roles decreased greatly from the 1971 study. When females were shown alone or with other females, they were usually shown in decorative roles, i.e., 85 percent. Sixty-four percent of the total women shown alone or with other females were shown in nonworking roles. More women were shown with other males in working roles, (i.e. 47 percent) than alone or with other females, (i.e. 36 percent). Fifty-two percent of the males were shown in recreational roles in contrast to women who were usually shown in decorative roles, i.e., 60

Table 7

Nonworking Activities of Men and WomenShown in Advertisements<sup>a</sup> of the Additional Magazines

	Percentage																								
	Males												Females												
	Alone or With Males				With Females				Total				Alone or With Females				With Males				Total				
	GH	SI	GQ	MS	GH	SI	GQ	MS	GH	SI	GQ	MS	GH	SI	GQ	MS	GH	SI	GQ	MS	GH	SI	GQ	MS	
Percentage Portrayed as Nonworkers	0	20	95	0	86	64	97	89	54	50	96	89	87	0	100	100	90	83	100	75	88	83	100	87	
Roles of Nonworkers																									
Family	0	0	0	0	29	0	0	0	28	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	45	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0
Recreational	0	100	0	0	29	14	3	88	28	25	1	88	2	0	0	18	22	20	4	89	6	20	4	50	
Decorative	0	0	100	0	42	86	97	12	44	75	99	12	91	0	100	82	33	80	96	11	81	80	96	50	
Total	0	100	100	0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number of Nonworkers shown	0	1	96	0	7	7	67	8	7	8	163	8	43	0	2	11	9	5	45	9	52	5	47	20	

<sup>a</sup>Based on number of adults shown. Note that some ads showed mixed groups containing unequal numbers of males and females

percent. Although men were more often portrayed in recreational roles, more men in this study were shown in decorative roles than in the 1971 study, (i.e. 42 percent compared to 22 percent).

Table 7 shows the same nonworking role categories as Table 6 only with the four additional magazine advertisements categorized. As in the results from the original magazines, the percentages of people portrayed in family roles was small. The nonworker role percentages for all four magazines were high. People were most often shown in decorative roles except in Ms magazine where males were more often shown in recreational roles while females were shown equally in decorative and recreational roles.

The romance category which was added, but included in the recreational category for comparison to the 1971 study. This romance category did not seem to be as large as originally thought. Seven of the 141 advertisements from the original magazines fit into this romance category. Each romance advertisement had one male and one female. Therefore of the 85 male nonworkers, seven were in the romance category. Seven of the 75 female nonworkers were in the romance category. Each one of the additional magazines had one advertisement that fit into the romance category.

The third and final category is the product category. The advertisements were divided into the product type of the advertisement in relationship to and whether males and females were pictured in the advertisements. Table 8 shows the product categories according to which sex was portrayed most often and the ratio of ads showing males versus ads showing females. Only two product categories, travel and entertainment, changed from showing a male most often in 1971 to now showing a female most often. Over half of the categories stayed the same for which sex

was portrayed most often. Three product categories--cleaning, food, and home appliances--changed from females being shown most often to males being shown.

Table 8

Product Categories and Sex Roles of the Original Magazines

	Sex portrayed most often <sup>a</sup>		Ratio of ads showing males/ads showing females <sup>b</sup>	
	1986	(1971)	1986	(1971)
Cleaning products	male	(female)	1.00	(.00)
Food Products	male	(female)	1.20	(.45)
Beauty Products	female	(female)	.43	(.60)
Drugs	female	(female)	.50	(.66)
Furniture	----	(male)	.50	(.71)
Clothing	female	(female)	.86	(.76)
Home Appliances	male	(female)	7.00	(.86)
Charity	male	----	2.00	(1.00)
Travel	female	(male)	.46	(1.30)
Cars	male	(male)	1.45	(1.37)
Alcoholic Beverages	male	(male)	.89	(1.63)
Cigarettes	male	(male)	2.17	(1.90)
Banks	male	(male)	2.50	(2.11)
Industrial Products	male	(male)	.00	(2.17)
Entertainment, media	female	(male)	1.00	(2.33)
Institutional ads	male	(male)	1.75	(2.50)

<sup>a</sup>Based on number of adults shown

<sup>b</sup>Based on number of advertisements

Table 9 shows the same product categories as Table 5 only using the four additional magazines. The table is somewhat inconclusive because of the limited number of advertisements from these magazines. Females were the sex shown most often in all the product categories for Ms magazine, while males were the sex shown most often in all the product categories



in Sports Illustrated. GQ magazine had several categories that showed high ratio of advertisements showing males versus advertisements showing females.

Table 9

Product Categories and Sex Roles of the Additional Magazines

	Sex portrayed most often <sup>a</sup>				Ratio of ads showing males/ads showing females <sup>b</sup>			
	GH	SI	GQ	MS	GH	SI	GQ	MS
Cleaning products	male	0	0	0	.75	--	--	--
Food Products	female	0	--	0	.33	--	1.00	--
Beauty Products	female	0	male	female	0	--	4.00	.33
Drugs	male	0	0	0	.33	--	--	--
Furniture	0	0	0	0	--	--	--	--
Clothing	female	0	male	female	.11	--	4.60	0
Home Appliances	female	0	male	0	.50	--	0	--
Charity	male	0	female	0	2.00	--	0	--
Travel	0	0	female	--	--	--	0	1.00
Cars	male	male	0	female	0	1.50	--	.50
Alcoholic Beverages	0	0	--	--	--	--	1.00	.50
Cigarettes	0	0	male	female	--	--	0	0
Banks	0	0	0	female	--	--	--	0
Industrial Products	0	male	0	0	--	0	--	--
Entertainment, media	male	0	male	female	2.00	--	0	.50
Institutional ads	0	male	--	0	--	1.00	1.00	--

<sup>a</sup>Based on number of adults shown

<sup>b</sup>Based on number of advertisements

## CHAPTER 4

### DISCUSSION

Results of this study indicate that the portrayal of women's roles in magazine advertisements have changed in some ways but have not changed in other ways since 1971. The results show how and where these changes have or have not occurred. As hypothesized, the percentage of women portrayed in working roles is higher for this study than in the 1971 study. This finding coincides with the increase in the number of working women in our society.

It was also hypothesized that the percentage of women in high-level executive positions would be higher in this study than in the 1971 study. This was shown by an increase of 10 percent. But there were still no women shown in professional working roles. Because of this, it appears as if advertisements are presenting an inaccurate picture of working women. Women have been receiving more education and there are more female doctors and lawyers (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1982) than in 1971, but the advertisements are not showing women in these roles.

The final hypothesis was that the number of women portrayed in non-home related product advertisements, (i.e. travel, cars, alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, banks, industrial products, entertainment, and institutional advertisements) in 1986 would be greater than the number of women portrayed in non-home related product advertisements in the 1971 study. This was only the case for travel and entertainment product categories and in these cases the women were most shown in decorative roles.

The working category called entertainers and sports seemed to be a popular category in the 1971 study and the percentages increased for both

males and females in this study. Since the percentage is so large for this category, it might be interesting to break the category down into different areas to tell more about it. There did not seem to be as much need for the romance subcategory as originally thought. Some advertisers are using a romance technique, but it does not seem to be the way to go right now. The romance category may develop further in the future depending on what other role changes occur. Cigarette and alcoholic beverage companies still seem to use mostly men when selling their products. They have a few more women in their advertisements and should continue to add women to their advertisements in the light of changing roles to keep up with changing marketing strategies.

The decrease in the total number of advertisements from the 1971 study could have been caused by several factors. Printing costs have increased, therefore making some magazines smaller than in 1971. There are less pages and less advertisements. Most all of the advertisements from the 1986 study were full-page advertisements while in 1971, there were more half and quarter page advertisements.

The four additional magazines that were added to this study portrayed some interesting findings. The two which were thought to carry a more traditional style, Good Housekeeping and Sports Illustrated, had much higher proportions of people shown as workers for both males and females. GQ showed almost only decorative roles and seemed to be a clothes modeling magazine. Ms showed people in more recreational roles than the other three magazines. Good Housekeeping did seem to fit into a more traditional housewife style as far as the products being sold were concerned. It showed food and drug products. The other three magazines

did not show either of these categories. Neither Good Housekeeping or Sports Illustrated showed travel, cigarettes or alcoholic beverages as the other two magazines did, thus reflecting their more traditional style. It seems the additional magazines each depicted an individual style rather than the masculine/feminine or liberal/traditional styles which this researcher had originally assumed.

If advertisers are going to keep up with the changes in the female buyer, there are several changes they should make. Advertisers should show more women in working roles. This study shows that the advertisers are showing more women in working roles. Advertisers also need to show more women in higher business or professional positions. This study found that the advertisements showed women in some types of executive roles, but not in other types. Some of the women in the advertisements in this study were shown with expensive products but many were not. Advertisers need to keep in contact with the changing roles of both males and females to create advertisements that will sell their products. Advertisers should be showing women with more expensive and more business products (i.e. cars, travel, industrial products).

Some problems occurred in trying to recreate the 1971 study. One problem was in using the same categories as the 1971 study. Many of the advertisements have changed so much that they do not fit exactly into the 1971 categories. There are more new products that did not exist in 1971. The addition of the romance category was made in an attempt to account for the advertisement differences. Adding the romance category did not seem to be the answer, however. It is possible that a total revision of the categories is necessary. In the future, a study should be done with

the categories used in this study and then at the same time done with revised categories. The data should be compared to see if a revision of the categories would change the results. Another problem was Look magazine which is no longer being published. Also, some of the magazines may have changed their style, such as Reader's Digest, to the point where they have different types of advertisements now. This change in style could account for some of the advertisement differences between 1971 and 1986.

From the various changes found in this study relating to advertising, this researcher feels that the advertisers are aware that advertisements need to be changed to reflect a changing society. They are trying some new techniques, but they still are keeping some of the old ideas until they find out which techniques work and which do not. One technique which this researcher observed used was the use of a well-known entertainer in a decorative role, which is illustrated by the data results. This researcher also feels that because of advertising always being in a transitional state, a similar study should be done in another 10 to 15 years. Finally, while there have been many steps taken to match advertising to the changes in society, many more steps need to be taken in order to make advertising truly correspond to changes in society.

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## APPENDIX A

### Worker



## Definitions of Worker and Occupations

### Worker

Persons that have a paid job or occupation. This includes entertainers, executives, clerks, secretaries, food preparers, etc. This does not include housewives or models. Models are considered to be nonworking-decorative, drawing attention to the product in the advertisement.

### High-level business executives

Persons in suits in business offices. Suits and surroundings are very expensive.

### Professional

Persons who have great skill in their job. They have a high level of education. These people include doctors, lawyers, and educators.

### Entertainers, professional sports

Persons that are well-known personalities, common to the average person.

### Sales, middle-level business, semi-professional

Persons that sell the product. Persons that are business executives but not of as high importance as the high-level. People with some education but not usually advanced degrees.

### Non-professional white collar

Persons with very limited education, maybe vocational training. Persons that have self-owned businesses.

### Blue collar

Persons that are unskilled labor workers, industrial workers. Semi-skilled workers such as welders or construction.

### Soldiers, Police

Persons in uniforms of our local law enforcement and country defense systems.

**APPENDIX B**

**Nonworker**

## Definitions of Nonworker and Nonworker Roles

### Nonworker

Persons in nonpaid positions other than those being paid to solicit the product, as in models.

### Family

Persons including mothers, fathers, and children, just one at a time or all together. This section includes housewives.

### Recreational

Persons playing sports other than celebrities. Sports can include cards, games or traditional sports.

### Romantic

Persons that are creating a romantic setting. Usually a man and a woman. This will be a subcategory of recreational.

### Decorative

Persons that are strictly decoration for the product in the advertisement, such as models. An example would be a lady in a slinky dress lying on the top of a car, her main function is decoration for the car.

APPENDIX C  
Frequency Data

Data for Table 4 and Table 7

Occupations of Working Males and Females for Each Magazine

	Magazines												
	News week	Life	Time	New York	Saturday Review	U.S. News & World Report	Reader's Digest	People	TOTAL	Good House.	Sports Illus.	GQ	Ms
Number of male workers	19	6	32	6	0	5	16	10	94	6	8	6	1
Total males	22	24	38	19	2	11	42	21	179	13	16	169	9
Number of female workers	7	0	21	4	1	0	4	19	56	7	1	0	3
Total females	10	13	24	16	4	2	24	38	131	59	6	47	23
Male workers													
High-level bus. exec.		1	2	3	1		3		10			1	
Professional			1	1		1			3	2	1	2	
Entertainment sports	10	1	15			9	2		37	3		2	1
Sales, mid-level bus. semi-prof.			6		1	3			10				
Nonprof. white collar				2	1	1	2		6	1			
Blue collar	8	3	4		2	2			19		4	1	
Soldiers/Police	1	1	4				3		9		3		
Female workers													
High-level bus. exec.				4				2	6				
Professional									0	2			
Entertainment sports	7		12		1		2	16	38	4			3
Sales, mid-level bus. semi-prof.			8				2		10	1			
Nonprof. white collar								1	1				
Blue collar									0				
Soldiers/Police			1						1		1		

Proportion shown as workers = # of workers/Total workers

Percent in Category = # in each category/# of workers

Data for Table 5 and Table 8

Nonworking Activities of Males and Females for Each Magazine

	Magazines												
	Number of	News week	Life Time	New York	Saturday Review	U.S. News & World Report	Reader's Digest	People	TOTAL	Good House.	Sports Illus.	GQ	Ms
Nonworking males alone	1	5	2	5		4	5	3	25		1	96	
Family nonwkg. males alone						1			1				
Rec nonworking males alone	1	1				3		3	8		1		
Dec nonworking males alone		4	2	5			5		16			96	
Total of males alone	13	8	11	10		9	11	6	68	5	5	101	
Nonworking male w/female	2	13	4	8	2	2	21	8	60	7	7	67	8
Family nonwkg. male w/female		1		2		1			4	2			
Rec. nonwkg. male w/female	2	12	3	2	2	1	6	8	36	2	1	2	7
Dec. nonwkg. male w/female			1	4			15		20	3	6	65	1
Total males with females	9	16	27	9	2	2	31	15	111	8	11	68	9
Total nonwkg. males	3	18	6	13	2	6	26	11	85	7	8	163	8
Nonworking females alone	2	9	1	5	1		4	12	34	43		2	11
Family nonwkg. females alone		1					1	2	4	3			
Rec. nonwkg. females alone								1	1	1			2
Dec. nonwkg. females alone	2	8	1	5	1		3	9	29	39		2	9
Total females alone	2	9	1	9	2		4	26	53	49		2	11

Data for Table 5 and Table 8 Continued

Nonworking Activities of Males and Females for Each Magazine

Number of	Magazines												
	News week	Life	Time	New York	Saturday Review	U.S. News & World Report	Reader's Digest	People	TOTAL	Good House.	Sports Illus.	GQ	Ms
Nonwkg. female w/male	1	4	2	7	2	2	16	7	41	9	5	45	9
Family nonwkg. female w/male		1		2		1			4	4			
Rec. nonwkg. female w/male	1	3		1	2	1	6	7	21	2	1	2	8
Dec. nonwkg. female w/male			2	4			10		16	3	4	43	1
Total females w/males	8	4	23	7	2	2	20	12	78	10	6	45	12
Total nonwkg. females	3	13	3	12	3	2	20	19	75	52	5	47	20

Proportion portrayed as nonworkers = number of nonworkers/Total workers

Percent as roles = number in each role/number of nonworkers



Data for Table 6 and Table 9

Product Categories for Each Magazine

		Magazines												
		News week	Life	Time	New York	Saturday Review	U.S. News & World Report	Reader's Digest	People	TOTAL	Good House.	Sports Illus.	GQ	Ms
Cleaning products	**M							6		6*	3			
Number of ads	F							2		2	4			
Food products	M							7		7*	3		1	
Number of ads	F		2					4		6	14		1	
Beauty products	M			1	2				1	4			13	1
Number of ads	F	1	1	1	2				3	7*	20		2	3
Drugs	M				1			1		3	1			
Number of ads	F				1			1	3	5*	4			
Furniture	M							3		3				
Number of ads	F		1					2		3				
Clothing	M				6			1		7	1		145	
Number of ads	F			1	2			1	6	10*	17		30	3
Home appliances	M	1	3		2			2		8*	1		1	
Number of ads	F	1	2		2			1		1	2			
Charity	M				1			2		3*	2			
Number of ads	F				1			1		1	1		8	
	M							1		2	2			
	F							1		1	1		1	

Data for Table 6 and Table 9 Continued

Product Categories for Each Magazine

		Magazines												
		News week	Life	Time	New York	Saturday Review	U.S. News & World Report	Reader's Digest	People	TOTAL	Good House.	Sports Illus.	GQ	Ms
Travel	M	1	4	1	4	1				11				2
	F	1	4		8	1				14*			2	2
Number of ads	M	1	1	1	2	1				6			2	1
	F	1	4		7	1				13			2	1
Cars	M	4	7	5	1		2	11	4	34*	1	10		3
	F		3		1		1	6	1	12		5		6
Number of ads	M	1	2	2	1		2	7	1	16	1	3		1
	F		2		1		1	6	1	11		2		2
Alcoholic beverages	M	2	2	2	2		2		4	14*			3	2
	F	1	1	1	2				4	9			3	2
Number of ads	M	1	1	1	1		1		3	8			3	1
	F	1	1	1	2				4	9			3	2
Cigarettes	M	3	6	1		1	3		5	19*			4	
	F		1	1		1	1		2	6				2
Number of ads	M	1	5	1		1	2		3	13			3	
	F		1	1		1	1		2	6				2
Banks	M			5			1	4		10*				
	F			6				3		9				1
Number of ads	M			2			1	2		5				
	F			1				1		2				1
Ind. prod. (Comp. Ins)	M	2		1			3	2		8*		1		
	F									0				
Number of ads	M	2		1			2	2		7		1		
	F									0				
Entertain media	M	8	1	14				1	4	28	2		1	1
	F	7		12		2		1	19	41*	1			4
Number of ads	M	4	1	6				1	3	15	2		1	1
	F	3		5		2		1	4	15	1			2
Institution (military)	M	1	1	8				2	3	15*		5	1	
	F			3				2		5		1	1	
Number of ads	M	1	1	3				1	1	7		1	1	
	F			2				2		4		1	1	
TOTAL	M	22	24	38	19	2	11	42	21	179	13	16	169	9
	F	10	13	24	16	4	2	24	38	131	59	6	47	23

\* Indicates largest number; \*\* M indicates male and F indicates female