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Does Sex Still Sell? Comparing Sexuality in Advertising in Men's and Gay Men's Magazines

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Does sex still sell? Comparing sexuality in advertising in men's and gay men's magazines

by

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A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

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Program of Study Committee:
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ABSTRACT

This study uses a content analysis of advertisements in gay men's and men's magazines to better understand how gay men are portrayed in these advertisements and determine if they contain more sexuality than images of men and women in advertisements in men's magazines. Previous studies have addressed gender cues and gender stereotyping in magazines, as well as sexuality being used in advertising and few have looked at how LGBT people are portrayed in magazines. This study provides a starting point for more research in the area of LGBT magazines and LGBT advertisements. It also provides a much-needed entry into the literature on media and its depiction of LGBT people. Future research should address the content and themes found in LGBT magazines and advertisements in other countries and parts of the world, as well as analyze the articles contained in these publications.

CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION

There has been much research done on magazine advertisements and how men and women are portrayed in these advertisements. We know from studies of television commercials that advertisements are split along gendered lines. Women are shown cleaning the household and doing laundry, men are shown mowing the lawn and working on cars. In print advertisements women are relegated to submissive positions and postures while men stare straight on into the camera in a position or posture that suggests they are ready to defend themselves or protect others, mostly women and children, from harm. The content of these advertisements is so well documented that we commonly include them in introductory sociology courses.

Thesis Overriding Questions

Advertisements containing depictions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people, on the other hand, are a relatively new area available for content analysis. This thesis addressed the following questions:

- How are these people portrayed in magazine advertisements?
- More specifically, how are gay men depicted in gay men's magazines?
- Is sexuality used to sell products in ways that are similar to the way sexuality is used to sell products in mainstream men's magazines?
- Are gay men more sexualized than straight men?

In 2011 it is still not common to see many LGBT advertisements in mainstream, or straight, magazines that can be found on bookstore and grocery store shelves. Television ads are not that common either, but some companies add a subtext to their commercials that is inclusive to the

LGBT population. For example, the travel company Orbitz has aired commercials advertising their low price guarantee that shows two men at a hotel. To a straight audience, these men could be two friends on vacation together, but to an LGBT audience they can be two men in a same-sex relationship on vacation. However, There are now LGBT magazines that can be found on bookstore shelves and these magazines contain advertisements targeted to an LGBT audience. These magazines are a great source for a study comparing sexuality in advertising in men's magazines and sexuality in advertising in gay men's magazines.

CHAPTER TWO. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is based on three theories, Goffman's codes of gender, Mulvey's Male Gaze, and Queer Theory. Erving Goffman's study of advertisements focused on how men and women are portrayed differently and how their bodies are even placed differently (Goffman 1976). Goffman takes a non-biological stance and suggests that men and women are taught to act differently, and in this way, they perform gender. Men are shown as strong and ready to defend themselves and others in ads. They are shown as in control and aware of their surroundings. Women are shown as being submissive, in defenseless positions, sitting, leaning and laying down, and they are often shown to be holding themselves and touching their faces and clothes. When women are shown to be touching their faces and holding themselves, we are seeing examples of infantilization, which is the phenomenon of women being portrayed in childlike ways; it has become very common in advertisements today.

Laura Mulvey's theory of the Male Gaze states that when women are watching or consuming media they are seeing women through a man's eye. This phenomenon occurs because men dominate the media, and their idealizations of women are what are shown in films, television, and advertisements. In this way, women are never able to see depictions of themselves with a female eye, despite the fact that they themselves are female and watching a woman. For example, when women are looking at beauty and fashion magazines, they are seeing an idealization of what a woman should be through the lens of a man's or many men's eyes, which includes the ideal curves of a woman's body, her hair style and length, and what her face should look like. Individual photographs and articles may be short and written by women, but the

male-dominated media still limits the influence of female writers and artists. Women are focused on from a male's point of view, and acted on by those males (Mulvey 1975).

The third theory is Queer Theory. Queer Theory revolves around the idea that our identities are not fixed and that they do not define who we are. We also have multiple identities, but even combined they cannot define who we are, and even if categories were acceptable, there are simply not enough to cover each individual person. Queer theory disagrees with the idea that we can talk about groups of people, such as women, men, gay men, lesbians, straight men, and straight women. However, we currently employ these labels and categories to make sense of our world and societies. This study uses the labels of gay men and straight men, but the researcher would like to caution that these are being used because there is not currently a commonly accepted alternative in wide use. Additionally, magazines and their advertisers target specific audiences using these labels and categories.

Queer Theory, especially as theorized by Judith Butler, has stated that the structure of binaries should be broken down and a spectrum of different genders, sexualities, and identities should be represented (Butler 1990). The binary structure is dominant in our society today; we see things in terms of male and female, masculine and feminine, white and non-white, and straight and queer. Butler puts forth the idea of performativity, meaning that gender is an action not a noun. Gender is something that we are constantly doing in our daily lives. Outside of language, gender does not exist.

Are gay men's magazines using sexuality to sell products? LGBT people are already on the fringes in our society, but are their advertisements less guilty of sexualizing the LGBT community? How do the frequencies of sexuality in advertising in gay men's magazines compare to sexuality in advertising in straight men's magazines?

Sexuality And Gender in Advertising

There are a few past studies that have looked at gender and masculinity in gay men's magazines. A recent study looked at images from *Out* magazine and *The Advocate*, two magazines targeted at gay men (Schwartz and Andsager 2011). The study looked at images in the magazines from 1967 to 2008 and found that while the men in the magazines were always muscular and lean, the percentage of body fat decreased over the years, while masculinity increased. The study provided a much-needed entry to the literature on gay men's magazines.

Another recent study looked at *Details* magazine (Draper 2010). According to the researcher, *Details* magazine used to be a gay men's magazine before it transitioned to the men's magazine that it is today. The researcher argued that the magazine used gayness to construct more masculinities and then to present them as legitimate straight sexualities. In this way, *Details* was able to appeal to a larger audience of men.

Yet another study looked at four gay men's magazines, *Out*, *The Advocate*, *Instinct*, and *Genre*, and found that the men depicted in these magazines were sexually objectified similarly to how previous studies had shown women to be objectified (Caron 2008). This is an excellent addition to the body of literature on gay men's magazines, but it does not look at how frequently sexuality is used in advertisements compared to other magazine genres.

A study in the field of art and design education looked at stereotypes of gays and lesbians in the media, and included information on how to use these stereotypes as examples so that students in the field can learn to deconstruct them (Chung 2007). Students were taught to create advertising campaigns that did not include common stereotypes.

A 2006 study looked only at non-commercial use of tobacco in LGBT magazines (Smith et al. 2006). According to the researchers, the smoking rate is higher among the LGBT

population than it is among the general population. They looked at how smoking and the use of tobacco products are portrayed in LGBT magazines. They found that tobacco use is generally seen in a neutral or positive light in these images. This is a very interesting study, but doesn't look at sexuality in LGBT magazines. This was a follow up to their previous research that looked at tobacco and tobacco related advertisements (Smith et al. 2005). They found that lesbian periodicals had more non-tobacco advertisements portraying smoking and less cessation ads than gay men's magazines. They also found that non-tobacco related advertisements were the most frequent advertisements containing smoking.

There is not a large body of research when it comes to sexuality and gender in advertising in LGBT magazines. However, other researchers have carried out content analyses of magazine advertisements in men's, women's, and general interest magazines to understand how sexuality is shown in advertising. Again, in these advertisements men and women are portrayed differently. These researchers focused on how men are dressed traditionally, but women are often shown to be wearing less clothing than you would normally expect to see in everyday life (Soley and Kurzbard 1986). Interestingly, they found that sex in advertisements, which they defined as both undress and verbal sexual references, had increased in general-interest magazines but not in men's and women's magazines.

How have the stereotypes of men and women changed over time? Another study found that the stereotypes of women and their roles as portrayed in print advertisements have changed some since the 1950s (Belkaoui and Belkaoui 1976). With the rise of feminism, women began calling for change in advertisements and the roles presented. This study found that while the roles of women have changed, print advertisements do not include all of the roles that women now play. Print advertisements are still showing women in traditional roles, such as a mother and

homemaker. Women are not shown in roles as leaders despite the fact that this is a role that women fill today. They found that the roles of women have diversified somewhat in advertisements, but the traditional stereotypical portrayals of women in 1950s roles are still present in large numbers.

Much of the previous research in this area has focused on women. Studies that focus on men alone are more rare, but the few that exist have yielded interesting findings. One study examined solo male images and looked at body position, eye gaze and objectification of men (Kolbe and Albanese 1996). The researchers found that the men in advertisements do not portray “everyday men.” The models often had lean, muscular bodies, and other body types were rarely represented. However they did find that the stereotype of a larger, imposing male was absent from the advertisements they analyzed. Instead of headshots, which show the man’s head and shoulders with a gaze directly into the camera, they saw full body shots. This is an interesting deviation from earlier research. However, they did find that men were dressed and adorned in traditional ways. There were not men that had unconventional piercings or hairstyles and the clothes the models were dressed in fit into conventions of everyday apparel.

A more recent study analyzed *Men’s Health* magazine and found that masculinity today is connected to consumption, a traditionally female role (Alexander 2003). The researcher also found that there is a new masculinity, described as a “supermale,” in which G.I. Joe takes on a role akin to Barbie for women. They found that this magazine offers masculinity as a product to be consumed, and that articles and features are a form of covert advertising. Alexander concludes that multinational companies construct masculinity in order to make a profit, at the expense of understanding our social construction of masculinity.

A study by Monk-Turner, et al. (2008) is also very interesting. Their study looked at sexuality in advertising in straight men's magazines, straight women's magazines, and general interest magazines. They defined sexuality as objectification, looking at another in a sexual manner or looking at oneself in the mirror; alluring behavior, which is flirting behavior, touching others or puckering the lips; and a state of undress, which is defined as missing any article of clothing, including a shirt. Their study found that sexuality rates were actually higher in general interest magazines than straight men's magazines, and that the sexuality in men's magazines was higher than in women's magazines. They developed a simple and very useful coding scheme that will be used in this study. This study expands on that by looking at the rates of sexuality in straight men's magazines and gay men's magazines.

All of the aforementioned studies looked at some aspect of sexuality and advertising, but none of them have looked at sexuality in men's magazines and sexuality in gay men's magazines, and how they compare and contrast to each other. This study focuses on this topic to add a much needed entry to the literature on advertising in men's and gay men's magazines.

Differences Between Male and Female Sexuality

There are some differences in men's and women's sexuality that may lead to there being less sexuality in women's magazines than men's. But are there any differences between men's and gay men's sexuality that should be noted? Is there some reason that one magazine genre would have more sexuality than another? The researcher looked to previous research in this area to find out.

Peplau (2003) found that men's sexuality and gay men's sexuality is more similar than it is to women's or lesbian's sexuality. Men and women differ in four key ways. Men have higher

sexual desire, don't view appropriate sexuality as only being expressed in a relationship, and have a less elastic sexuality than women. Men also tie aggression and sexuality more closely than women do. This study noted that both straight men and gay men share the same traits when it comes to sexuality, and both straight women and lesbians share these traits when it comes to sexuality, meaning that there is no observable differences between the groups of gay and straight within the broad categories of men and women (Peplau 2003). This is particularly important for this study because it shows that gay men and straight men still exhibit the same sexuality outside of the sex of their partner partner.

Other research has shown that women dislike sex in advertising more than men (Dahl et al., 2009). The researchers found that women's negative attitudes toward sex in advertising softened when the sex was shown in a committed relationship. However, there was no difference when it came to appealing to men, and whether the sex in advertising was within a committed relationship or not. Since all of the magazines used in this study are men's and gay men's magazines, relationship status should not be an issue. In another study by two of the same researchers, they conducted an experiment to find the spontaneous reactions of both men and women to gratuitous sex in advertising (Sengupta and Dahl 2007). They found that men reacted more positively than women, but that when women had liberal attitudes toward sex, they reacted more similarly to the way that men did. This adds to the body of research that states that men and women differ in some ways when it comes to sexuality in advertising.

Expected Findings

From preliminary work, it has been found that advertisements in LGBT magazines seem highly sexualized, or are often shown displaying sexuality, when it comes to both men and

women regardless of their perceived sexuality. Gay men are shown as being hypersexualized and as taking part in a party lifestyle on cruise ships, in alcohol advertisements, and in tourism advertisements. However, the data have not yet been statistically analyzed.

The researcher's hypothesis is that the gay men's magazines contain advertisements with more sexuality than men's magazines do. Sexuality is defined as exhibiting one of the three behaviors that Monk-Turner et al. (2008) define for the purposes of their coding scheme. These three behaviors are objectification, alluring behavior, and a state of undress. Higher rates of sexuality in gay men's magazines is likely due to the history of limited roles in the media for gay men. Gay men have been relegated to the roles of party animals, promiscuous, non-monogamous young men whose appetites for this lifestyle are never ending. Furthermore, discrimination has kept advertisers and producers from showing LGBT characters in a positive light. Since gay marriage is banned in several states, as is gay adoption, LGBT characters are unlikely to be shown in family roles, as parents, as married couples, and as members of an extended family. This is slowly changing with recent television shows, such as *Modern Family*, but it is still rare.

These magazines also cater to youth, who perpetuate these stereotypes because being young and in your twenties and thirties is generally associated with serial monogamy and the party lifestyle across sexualities in the United States media especially when it comes to young adults attending college or leaving home for the first time. This perception and stereotype of young people is damaging for all sexualities, but it is especially so for the LGBT population because they are already perceived as having limited roles in their lifetime.

CHAPTER THREE. METHODS

The data for this study is drawn from four magazines. The analysis will focus on examining sexuality in advertisements in two magazines directed toward straight males and two toward gay men. There are two magazines for each group to ensure that the themes in the magazines are common and not unique to a particular magazine. The data are print advertisements that are at least half a page or larger, because these are the most noticeable ads, and cost the most with a high price for advertisement space. The themes in these ads are the most likely to be seen and absorbed by the readers of the publication. Smaller advertisements tend to be in the back of magazines and usually in a buyer's guide or directory. These advertisements are usually one-eighth of a page or smaller and are usually in black and white. Their location, small size, and lack of color make it easy for readers to ignore them. The unit of analysis will be individual advertisements containing men or women. Articles will not be analyzed in this study.

The Standard Rates and Data (Standard Rates and Data Services, 2012) will be used as a media resource to determine which magazines have the highest subscription and circulation rates. The Standard Rates and Data keep records on magazine circulation rates and subscriptions. This is to ensure that all of the magazines have similar subscription rates so that comparisons can be drawn. However, with LGBT magazines specifically there is often limited choice. There are more magazines available for gay men than there are for lesbians and gender non-conforming individuals. Also, the LGBT population seems to be smaller than the straight population, although there are not official numbers on this as sexual orientation is not something that is recorded on the census. These factors will probably lead to LGBT magazines having lower subscription and circulation rates.

Even though the LGBT magazines have lower subscription rates, the limited choice of publications means that the advertisements in top LGBT magazines, such as *Out* and *Instinct*, contain the dominant cultural message about sexuality that is delivered to the audience. They are also readily available on magazine shelves nationwide, as opposed to smaller publications that are only available in certain geographical areas of the country. It is also hard to determine which magazines are specifically targeted to straight men as many gay men also read magazines that are considered mainstream, such as *Men's Health* and *Details*.

After taking into account all of the previous concerns, the magazines *Out* and *Instinct* were chosen as the gay men's magazines for the sample. As stated previously, *Out* and *Instinct* are the only two nationally distributed gay men's magazines that are commonly available on bookstore shelves. For men's magazines, *Popular Mechanics* and *Sports Illustrated* will be analyzed. These magazines might fit into the general interest category but they are largely marketed to men.

The researcher examined two years of issues. *Out* and *Instinct* sometimes release double issues but they space their issues out over the calendar year, and issues are published on a monthly basis, double issues making up two months. *Popular Mechanics* is published monthly. *Sports Illustrated* is published weekly throughout the year. For the purposes of this study, the first issue of *Sports Illustrated* for each month has been drawn for the sample. Since these issues were the first of the month they would be compiled during the same timeline as the monthly issues of all the other magazines in the sample, which removes the chance that there has been a major cultural shift during the month that would lead to differences in the advertising. All of the issues to be analyzed are from the years of 2010 and 2011, and months January through December for each year.

This study uses qualitative content analysis and statistical analysis. Content analysis is frequently used when examining cultural artifacts such as magazines and magazine advertisements. A statistical analysis will be run to determine frequencies and distributions. Previous researchers have used similar methods to reinforce the validity of their qualitative findings. The researcher will code advertisements from a previously proved coding scheme (Monk-Turner, et al., 2008) and enter the data into a statistical package to run frequencies and distributions of the use of sexuality in advertising in men's magazines and gay men's magazines. In addition, the advertisements will also be coded and analyzed in terms of gender, product, presence of sexuality, and type of sexuality.

The protocol for this study is drawing issues from January 2010 to December 2011 for all four magazines. As stated previously, since *Sports Illustrated* is a weekly publication, only the first issue of each calendar month will be drawn for the sample. All advertisements half a page or larger and containing people will be scanned as PDFs. Once all the articles are scanned, the researcher will code all the advertisements using the established coding scheme (Monk-Turner, et al., 2008). All data is being entered into Excel. The data will then be imported from Excel into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Once the data is in SPSS, the analysis will be run to determine frequencies and distributions, as well as crosstabs analysis.

This is an exploratory study and is one of the first of its kind especially when it comes to LGBT media and more specifically magazines and sexuality in advertisements. The coding scheme for the quantitative analyses has been previously tested and used in numerous studies, and was originally developed and used Monk-Turner, et al. (2008).

The coding scheme from Monk-Turner, et al (2008) is as follows. The first variable is gender, which they code as (1) male, (2) female, and (3) both male and female. The second

variable is product being sold in which (1) is body enhancing; (2) home; (3) food; (4) automobile, which includes cars, motorcycles, and products for automobiles; (5) technical, which Monk-Tuner et al. define as anything electrical, like televisions, computers, mobile phones; (6) entertainment, including television shows and movies; (7) clothing, which includes sunglasses and watches, (8) alcohol and tobacco products; and (9) other, which is the category for everything that doesn't fit into the previous eight categories. Some examples from what fell into the "other" category included advertisements for charity organization, prescription medications, and festivals. The third variable is whether or not the advertisement contains some form of sexuality, which is coded as either (1) no or (2) yes. Sexuality is defined as displaying oneself as a potential sexual partner, and is shown in one of three forms, which also makes up the fourth variable: (1) object, which means someone in the advertisement is objectified by another, this includes a reflection in a mirror; (2) alluring behavior, which includes flirting, winking, puckering of the lips, or other sexually alluring behavior; and (3) undress, which is any removal of clothing in the advertisement.

Magazine type was added as a variable for this study. The coding is as follows: (1) for *Instinct*, (2) for *Out*, (3) for *Sports Illustrated*, and (4) for *Popular Mechanics*. The purpose of this variable was to help differentiate between types of magazines, gay men's or mainstream men's, and to determine if there more sexuality displayed in one type of magazine over the other. Crosstabs analysis of magazine by sexuality present, and magazine by type of sexuality will be run in SPSS. One thing that should be noted is that the sexuality coding categories are mutually exclusive. This coding scheme does not allow for multiple codes; during coding it became apparent that multiple coding was not needed. For instance, in advertisements that showed undress, flirting and objectification were not present as well. In the advertisements with alluring

behavior and objectification, the models were fully clothed. In this study on the images are coded. The products being advertised as well as the captions are not used in coding.

An advantage of using advertisements is that they are captured in a certain point in time and are not changing. Also, there is no human connection between the photographs and the researcher; so there is no concern when it comes to researcher-participant relationships and their affect on the study. This study has been determined to be exempt from review by the human subjects committee by the Institutional Review Board at Iowa State University because there is no human interaction involved.

CHAPTER FOUR. FINDINGS

A total of 1,664 advertisements that were half a page or larger were coded and analyzed from the four magazines published between January 2010 and December 2011. *Instinct* magazine contained 343 advertisements; *Out* magazine contained 489 advertisements; *Sports Illustrated* contained 364 advertisements; and *Popular Mechanics* contained 468 advertisements.

Table 1

Frequencies and Percentages for Genders Portrayed in Advertisements

Genders	<i>n</i>	%
Only Men	1,218	73.2
Only Women.....	173	10.4
Both Men & Women	273	16.4
Total	1,664	100.0

Table 1 shows the distribution of genders portrayed in the advertisements. As may be expected for men's magazines, most of the advertisements included men. Men were most often (73.2%) shown without women. Interestingly, when women were portrayed, they were more often shown with men (16.4%) than without them (10.4%).

Table 2

Frequencies and Percentages for Genders Portrayed in Advertisements by Magazine

	Magazine							
	<i>Instinct</i>		<i>Out</i>		<i>Sports Illustrated</i>		<i>Popular Mechanics</i>	
Genders	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Only Men.....	274	80	373	76	272	75	299	64
Only Women.....	17	5	46	9	49	13	61	13
Both Men & Women	52	15	70	14	43	12	108	23
Total	343	100	489	100	364	100	468	100

Table 2 shows the distribution of genders by magazine. Men were most likely to be portrayed without women in every case, but the distribution of genders across magazine titles appears to differ substantially. Chi Square analysis indicates a very small but significant relationship between the genders portrayed in advertisements and magazine title (Chi Square=44.3, df=6, $p < .01$; Phi=0.16). Chi Square analysis compares the observed distribution with the expected distribution, under the null hypothesis of no association, and calculates the likelihood of any discrepancy occurring by chance alone. A statistically significant Chi Square suggests that it is very unlikely that the observed distribution of genders portrayed across magazine titles could have occurred by chance alone, in the absence of any association. Phi is a test of Chi Square. Phi is calculated by dividing the Chi Square value by the sample size. You then take the square root of that number to find the Phi value. The higher the Phi value, the stronger the association between two variables. In terms of the proportion of “only men” advertising, the gay men’s magazines have proportionately more of than the mainstream men’s magazines. *Instinct* has proportionally the fewest number of advertisements that portray only women, which may be expected since the magazine caters only to gay men. *Out*, since it is

paired with *The Advocate* for subscription purposes, has a proportionally greater number of advertisements showing only women, but fewer than in *Popular Mechanics* and *Sports Illustrated*. *Popular Mechanics* has proportionally the greatest number of advertisements with both men and women, which may be due to the fact that it appeals to an older and more mainstream demographic of men.

Table 3

Frequencies and Percentages for Products Advertised

Product	<i>n</i>	%
Body Enhancing.....	75	4.5
Home.....	57	3.4
Food.....	46	2.8
Automobile.....	125	7.5
Technical.....	48	2.9
Entertainment.....	144	8.7
Clothing.....	250	15.0
Alcohol and Tobacco.....	106	6.4
Other.....	813	48.9
Total.....	1,664	100.0

Table 3 shows the distribution of products advertised. As may be seen in the table, 48.9% of products advertised were in the *other* category, which was made up of travel ads, festival ads, prescription medication ads, and ads for charity organizations, among other products and services. The second most frequent category was clothing with 15% of the advertisements. This was followed by 8.7% of advertisements for entertainment, 7.5% for automobiles and automobile products, and 6.4% for alcohol and tobacco products. The remaining categories, body enhancement, home, food, and technical, made up less than 5% each of the advertisements. The

other category includes a wide array of different products from prescription drugs, to charities, and travel, but in gay men's magazines this is where the party animal stereotype may be seen. There were numerous advertisements for gay cruises but there were not similar ads for cruises in mainstream men's magazines. There were also advertisements for gay gatherings in different cities around the world, and these advertisements almost always contained sexuality. A major exception was advertisements for gay entertainment awards, such as the GLAAD awards, which showed LGBT celebrities.

Table 4

Frequencies and Percentages for Products Advertised by Magazine

Product	Magazine							
	<i>Instinct</i>		<i>Out</i>		<i>Sports Illustrated</i>		<i>Popular Mechanics</i>	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Body Enhancing.....	20	6	22	4	24	7	9	2
Home.....	0	0	3	1	5	1	49	10
Food.....	0	0	2	1	40	11	4	1
Automobile.....	3	1	4	1	35	10	83	18
Technical.....	0	0	1	0	24	7	23	5
Entertainment.....	37	11	40	8	61	16	6	2
Clothing.....	30	9	154	31	29	8	37	6
Alcohol & Tobacco.....	39	11	53	11	8	2	6	2
Other.....	214	62	210	43	138	38	251	54
Total.....	343	100	489	100	364	100	468	100

Table 4 shows the distribution of product types by magazine. Chi Square analysis indicates a moderate but significant relationship between product type and magazine title (Chi Square=653.57, df= 24, $p < 0.01$; Phi=0.62) In other words, it is very unlikely that the observed

distribution of product types by magazine would have been found by chance alone if the two variables are not associated. The most striking differences include the disproportionate frequency of automobile advertisements in the mainstream men's magazines versus the disproportionate frequency of clothing, alcohol and tobacco ads in gay men's magazine. Furthermore, in gay men's magazines the clothing advertisements contained more sexuality, mainly through undress. It is also interesting to note the disproportionately large *other* category in the case of *Instinct* magazine. In this category, the party lifestyle of gay men was portrayed with advertisements for cruises, gay gatherings and travel to many cities around the world. In contrast, the advertisements that fell into the *other* category for *Popular Mechanics* included mostly advertisements for charities, special commemorative pieces or model motorcycles and the like. All of the magazines contained advertisements for prescription drugs in the *other* category.

Table 5

Frequency and Percentage for Type of Sexuality by Advertisement

	Frequency	Percent
Objectification	57	12.4
Alluring Behavior (Flirting)	118	25.7
Undress	285	62.0
Total	460	100.0

Table 5 shows the results for types of sexuality portrayed in the advertisements. Of the 1,664 advertisements in the total sample, 460, or 27.6%, contained some form of sexuality, e.g. objectification, alluring behavior, or undress. The most frequent form of sexuality was a state of undress, which means part of the person's clothing was missing. This made up 62% of advertisements containing sexuality. In many cases, it was simply a shirt that was missing.

However, in gay men’s magazines it was common, especially in clothing ads, to see men in only underwear or Speedo-type swimsuits. Alluring behavior, or flirting, made up 25.7% of ads containing sexuality, and a person being depicted as an object made up only 12.4%. Losing part of one’s clothing is important in these advertisements and to some extent has implications for sexuality.

Table 6

Frequency and Percentage of Sexuality in Advertisements by Magazine

	Magazine							
	<i>Instinct</i>		<i>Out</i>		<i>Sports Illustrated</i>		<i>Popular Mechanics</i>	
Content	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Sexuality	221	64	186	38	29	8	24	5
No Sexuality	122	36	303	62	335	92	444	95
Total	343	100	489	100	364	100	468	100

Table 6 presents the distribution of sexuality in advertisements by magazine. Chi Square analysis indicates a small but significant relationship between sexual content and magazine title (Chi Square= 447.55, df=3, $p < 0.01$, Phi=0.52). The table shows that highest relative proportion of sexuality in advertisements were found in *Instinct* and *Out*, as expected; 407 of the 460 ads containing sexuality were in gay men’s magazines. One thing that stands out is that *Instinct* is more sexualized than *Out*. This is likely due to the magazine’s audiences. *Instinct* caters strictly to gay men, but *Out* knows that its audience includes lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people since a subscription to a leading LGBT news magazine, *The Advocate*, requires a subscription to *Out*. Because of this, they have a broader audience than *Instinct*, which caters specifically to gay men. Therefore, the advertisers also know that they have to make their products appeal to a wider

variety of people, including women, who as previous research has shown, are not as interested in sexuality in advertising.

Table 7

Frequencies and Percentages for Type of Sexuality in Advertisements by Magazine

Type	Magazine							
	<i>Instinct</i>		<i>Out</i>		<i>Sports Illustrated</i>		<i>Popular Mechanics</i>	
	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Objectification	23	10	25	13	2	7	7	29
Alluring Behavior	52	24	53	28	3	10	10	42
Undress	146	66	108	58	24	83	7	29
Total	221	100	186	100	29	100	24	100

Table 7 shows the distribution of type of sexuality by magazine. Chi Square analysis indicates a very small but significant relationship (Chi Square= 20.29, df=6, $p < 0.01$; Phi=0.21). Interestingly, the biggest differences are seen between the two mainstream men's magazines. Sexuality in *Sports Illustrated* overwhelmingly took the form of undress, whereas sexuality in *Popular Mechanics* most often was shown as alluring behavior. In both *Instinct* and *Out*, sexuality was most likely to be undress, alluring behavior, and objectification respectively.

Table 8

Frequencies and Percentages of Sexuality in Advertisements by Genders Portrayed

	Genders					
	Only Men		Only Women		Both Men & Women	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Sexuality	348	29	39	23	73	27
No Sexuality	870	71	134	77	200	73
Total	1,218	100	173	100	273	100

Table 8 shows the distribution of sexuality in advertisements by genders portrayed. Chi Square analysis indicates no significant relationship (Chi Square= 2.88, df=2, $p < 0.90$; Phi=0.04). In other words, the likelihood that an advertisement would have sexual content did not differ significantly across ads that showed only men, only women, or both men and women. Inspection of the advertisements revealed that men were much more likely to be in a form of undress than displaying alluring behavior, whereas women and mixed gender groups were about equally likely to be in some form of undress or displaying alluring behavior.

CHAPTER FIVE. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Instinct led the magazines in advertisements containing sexuality. It was also found that *Out* and *Instinct* contained the largest proportion of advertisements containing sexuality, as predicted. In these magazines there was a perpetuation of the stereotype that gay men are involved in a party lifestyle. There were few advertisements that showed gay men in their multiple identities. The more frequent form of sexuality across magazines was undress, with the exception of *Popular Mechanics*. This is most likely due to the age of the audience for *Popular Mechanics*. The magazine appeals to older men, and many of the advertisements more frequently showed men and women together. The most common form of sexuality here was alluring behavior. More men than women were shown in advertisements in all of the magazines studied.

Goffman's (1976) theory of gender advertisements says that women and men are shown in different gender roles. Women are the ones that are more often showing sexuality. However, in this study it was found there was no difference between men and women displaying sexuality in advertisements. Queer Theory states that people have multiple identities and that they should be shown with their multiple identities. It is not possible to put one label on a person, and even having many labels does not fully describe and explain the person. In this study, it was rare to find multiple personalities and it was evident from the sexuality in advertisements that the most important thing about a gay man is his body and how he looks, at least, that is what the advertisements portray. The Male Gaze was present as well. This may be due to the fact that straight men and gay men are similar in their sexuality and a preference for visual depictions of potential partners. In this case straight men are objectifying women and gay men are objectifying other men.

Past studies, such as the Monk-Turner, et al. (2008) showed that advertisements in magazines contain frequent sexuality to sell products, and they found that mainstream magazines were now the most sexualized over men's magazines and women's magazines. It is interesting to note in this study that gay men's magazines appear to have more sexuality than mainstream men's magazines. Will the frequency of sexuality in advertising in gay men's magazines decrease in the future? Only future research will allow us to determine the trend in sexuality in men's and gay men's magazines over time.

While the finding that gay men's magazines contain more sexuality was not unexpected it is still troubling. *Out* and *Instinct* are the only two magazines that are targeted to an LGBT audience and specifically to gay men throughout the United States. That means that the ideas and concepts put forth in these magazines are the dominant message out there. Advertising takes up a lot of space in magazines, and their visuals catch the eye quicker than printed word. The dominant message is still that gay men are hypersexual, objectifying each other, exhibiting alluring behavior, or flirting, in advertisements for all types of products, and most commonly being in some state of undress implying that their main value is in their bodies.

There is a typical type for each form of sexuality in the advertisements. The typical ad featuring undress tends to have a lone model who is usually missing a shirt, while pants are the next common article missing. Some of the advertisements contain men in only their underpants(See Figure 1). In the advertisements with alluring behavior or flirting, the models were fully clothed. In one Budweiser advertisement that was in both *Out* and *Instinct*, two men were usually dancing and displaying flirting behavior (see Figure 2), but in some other advertisements there were three male models present. In these advertisements, everyone is always fully clothed. In the advertisements containing objectification, people also tended to be

fully clothed. In one advertisement, two men were fully clothed while standing in their bedroom and one was objectifying the other (see Figure 3). The same patterns can be seen in advertisements in mainstream men's magazines, but with male and female couples. Again, in advertisements featuring objectification and alluring behavior, models were fully clothed. Since these categories are mutually exclusive, it seems that there must be a reason advertisers do not show both undress and alluring behavior or objectification. Why is it that they are limited in this way? These limits would be a good area for a future study on sexuality in advertising.

This study revealed that some trends observed in previous studies are still the norm. The men in the advertisements were somewhat traditional in that they did not have wild piercings or tattoos, and when they were dressed they were dressed in traditional ways (Soley and Kurzbard, 1986). Tattoos were not particularly common in the advertisements. The most memorable advertisement containing a tattoo was an advertisement for a Human Immunodeficiency Virus prescription drug (see Figure 4). The tattoo was meant to symbolize the body, telling you that your T-cells were low and that you needed to start Human Immunodeficiency Virus treatment. The tattoo was used as a metaphor for a bodily signal about your health status.

Soley and Kurzbard (1986) also found that women were often shown to be wearing less clothing than they normally would in everyday life. This was evident when it came to models in advertisements in gay men's magazines, ironically, many times in advertisements for clothing products. Also, similar to the study by Kolbe and Albanese (1996), the present study did not find everyday men, or men of various body types as opposed to only men with lean muscular bodies. All of the models were lean and muscular. These findings also point to the idea of a "supermale" or G.I. Joe figure becoming the norm for advertising directed at men, as Alexander (2003) found.

Caron (2008) found that there was a high amount of objectification in gay men's magazines. But, that is not what was found in this study. The more common form of sexuality was undress. There was objectification, but it was in advertisements that did not show men in undress. In fact, these advertisements always showed men clothed but objectifying each other, and it was mainly for personal care products and alcohol. However, Caron also analyzed content in the magazines in addition to advertisements, which this study did not. There may be higher rates of objectification in images associated with articles. Also, Caron focused on objectification of certain body parts, whereas this study just examined if objectification was present in the advertisements at all. Both studies share similar findings that there is an ideal body type portrayed and there is objectification present. Future research is required to address if there has been a change in the amount of objectification present and if this objectification is based around specific body parts.

The gay men's magazines seem to be out of touch with the reality of LGBT people and their lives today. LGBT people are becoming more visible and gaining ground when it comes to equal rights. Several states have passed marriage equality laws allowing same-sex couples to marry and raise families with the protections that straight men and women have been benefiting from for years. LGBT people are getting married, starting families, starting their own businesses, running for office, and retiring. If the magazines that say they cater to the LGBT population do not show this, then they are out of touch. These magazines have not yet caught up with the reality of LGBT people, especially gay men, today. It's interesting that *The Advocate*, which sells itself as general interest and a news magazine, shows and celebrates getting married and raising families more than *Out* and *Instinct* do. Is there something that allows them to show

lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people getting married and raising families but keeps them from showing gay men doing the same things?

Not only is the perpetuation of common stereotypes of gay men troubling, but it is particularly concerning since LGBT youth rarely see representations of LGBT people in today's media. It can be argued that we see more representations of LGBT people today than in the past, but the dominant media still portrays and represents straight people and straight relationships in television and movies.

The Male Gaze is ever present in the media as well (Mulvey 1975). With the lack of representation in television and film, youth may seek out these magazines, although with their high rates of sexuality and perpetuation of stereotypes in advertisements, LGBT youth are likely to internalize that their value is in their bodies and that their entire identity revolves around their sexuality.

Another interesting aspect has to do with the advertisements that did not contain sexuality. Advertisements in gay men's magazines for the prescription Isentress, a drug used to treat people with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus, did not contain sexuality and depicted people and their multiple identities. For example, gay men were shown as puppy owners, newlyweds, or professionals. Similarly in mainstream men's magazines, advertisements for the prescription drug Viagra did not contain sexuality, but instead often depicted men working on their cars and usually as a lone figure in the advertisement (see Figure 5).

There is one advertisement that should be noted from the men's magazines. An advertisement for Lee Jeans features a man walking down the street being objectified by a woman sitting at an outdoor café (see Figure 6). With the history of objectification of women in advertising, this was something that stood out and seemed different. However, it is a troubling

prospect to think that objectification of both men *and* women is the new equality in the media that we have been seeking. Objectification of men, as well as women, still sends the message that a person's value is in their body and the way they look. It might be a move by the company to appeal to the vanity of men, as they have been doing with women for years, but it could lead to similar consequences that women now face because of unrealistic beauty ideals in the media.

Limitations

This study only examines two magazines under the category of men's magazines and these magazines could also be said to be in the category of general interest magazines, although they heavily target their content and advertising toward men. Additionally, gay men read some magazines that are listed as men's magazines, such as *GQ* and *Men's Health*. This study is also limited by examining only United States magazines. In future research, it would be preferable to examine magazines over a longer period of time so determine long term trends. Another major limitation is that there is only one coder in this study. Having multiple coders would help eliminate some subjectivity in coding and increase the reliability of the findings. This study is also limited by the confusion of the terms sex and gender. Some researchers define the two differently and others use them interchangeably. This can cause inconsistency in the coding.

Future Research

Since there has not been much research on LGBT magazines, this study adds to the body of literature that looks at how LGBT people are portrayed in our society's media. This study also adds to the literature about sexuality in magazine advertisements. Since this is only an exploratory study, further research on sexuality in advertising will need to be done. The findings

of this study are not generalizable outside of the United States or even across magazine genres in the United States. Future research should look at LGBT magazine advertisements in other countries and parts of the world, as well as how these themes and trends may be changing over time. Magazine articles should also be analyzed for content and major themes. Are there positive messages for LGBT people in the articles of these magazines that can counteract the stereotyped and frequent sexuality depicted in the advertisements through the magazines being used to sell a multitude of products? Research incorporating Jean Kilbourne's work including her film "Killing Us Softly" (1979), which compares portrayals of men and women in the media, could also shed light on sexuality in LGBT magazine advertisements. Men's magazines should also be analyzed in the future to see if men are becoming more frequently objectified in advertising as we saw in the Lee Jeans advertisement. How does the frequency of sexuality between men and women compare today? Another area available for research is examining the race and culture of the models in the advertisements. Is one group for sexualized than another? There has been a lot of research done in the area of magazines and television advertisements but some of the changes discovered in this study should receive future attention and analysis to determine long term trends.

APPENDIX 1 – CODEBOOK

The following codebook is the intellectual property of Monk-Turner et al. (2008).

Magazine:

- 1- Instinct
- 2- Out
- 3- Sports Illustrated
- 4- Popular Mechanics

Gender:

- 1- Male
- 2- Female
- 3- Both male and female

Product being sold:

- 1- Body enhancing
- 2- Home
- 3- Food
- 4- Automobile
- 5- Technical
- 6- Entertainment
- 7- Clothing
- 8- Alcohol and tobacco products
- 9- Other

Sexuality:

1- No sexuality present

2- Sexuality present

If sexuality present, type of sexuality:

1- Object

2- Alluring Behavior

3- Undress

APPENDIX 2 –FIGURES

Figure 1.



An advertisement for Pistol Pete shows the typical ad with undress.

Figure 2.



An advertisement for Budweiser shows the typical ad with alluring behavior.

Figure 3.



The advertisement features a photograph of two men in a bedroom. The man on the left is wearing a light blue t-shirt and dark pants, while the man on the right is wearing a grey tank top and patterned pajama pants. They are standing on a white textured rug, holding hands and smiling at each other. In the background, there is a bed with white linens, two bedside tables with lamps, and two framed pictures on the wall. In the foreground, there are dumbbells, a magazine, and a pair of shoes on the rug. The K-Y logo is in the top left corner, and a purple box of K-Y INTRIGUE lubricant is in the bottom right corner.

K-Y®

© MENTHOLIPIC, Inc. 2009.

The better the “during,” the more the after glows.

Give yourselves the very best with K-Y® Brand INTRIGUE®. Using the highest quality silicone, INTRIGUE® gives you an ultra smooth, non-sticky experience that brings premium performance to your intimate moments.

Available at major retailers.

K-Y®
INTRIGUE®
ULTRA SMOOTH SILICONE LUBRICANT

This K-Y advertisement is typical for an ad containing objectification.


Figure 4.

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

**HIV treatment
can help me now.
My T-cells are at 461.**

Talk with your doctor about ways to help protect your immune system.

HIV treatment is now recommended for everyone with a T-cell count of 500 or less and should be considered when T-cells are higher than 500, according to the DHHS* and the IAS-USA†, along with other factors. Starting treatment early may help protect your immune system and vital organs. Today's medicines may have fewer, more manageable side effects. They may help you live a longer, healthier life. Receive helpful information about living with HIV that you should know. Call toll free 1-888-451-5707, or visit TREATHIVNOW.COM.

 **GILEAD**

*DHHS = Department of Health and Human Services †IAS-USA = International AIDS Society USA. ©2011 Gilead Sciences, Inc. All rights reserved. UN7538 03/11

This Gilead advertisement deviates from the norm by depicting tattoos.

Figure 5.



**DEAL WITH IT.
IT'S WHAT MEN DO.**

YOU FACE THINGS HEAD ON. WHY WOULD THIS BE ANY DIFFERENT?
More than half of all men over 40 have some degree of erectile dysfunction (ED).^{*}
If you're one of them, ask your doctor about VIAGRA. It's America's most prescribed ED treatment.

For more information go to viagra.com or call 1-888-484-2472 (1-888-4VIAGRA).

THIS IS THE AGE OF TAKING ACTION.
VIAGRA[®]
(sildenafil citrate) tablets

WITH EVERY AGE COMES RESPONSIBILITY. IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION BELOW.

We know that no medicine is for everyone. Don't take VIAGRA if you take nitrates, often prescribed for chest pain, as this may cause a sudden unsafe drop in blood pressure.

Talk with your doctor first. Make sure your heart is healthy enough to have sex. If you have chest pain, nausea, or other discomforts during sex, seek medical help right away.

In the rare event of an erection lasting more than four hours, seek immediate medical help to avoid long-term injury.

In rare instances, men who take PDE5 inhibitors (oral erectile dysfunction medicines, including VIAGRA) reported a sudden decrease or loss of vision, or sudden decrease or loss of hearing. It is not possible to determine whether these events are related directly to these medicines or to other factors. If you experience any of these symptoms, stop taking PDE5 inhibitors, including VIAGRA, and call a doctor right away.


The most common side effects of VIAGRA are headache, facial flushing, and upset stomach. Less common are bluish or blurred vision, or being sensitive to light. These may occur for a brief time.

VIAGRA does not protect against sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.

Please see Important Facts for VIAGRA on the following page or visit viagra.com for full prescribing information.

^{*}Data taken from the *Massachusetts Male Aging Study*. Of 1,290 respondents, 52% stated that they had some degree of ED.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.FDA.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

VGU00761 ©2010 Pfizer Inc. All rights reserved. 

This Viagra ad is typical for prescription drugs in that it doesn't contain sexuality.

Figure 6.



This Lee Jeans advertisement was the only ad that showed objectification of a man by a woman.

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