

**A CORRELATIONAL STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF
MEDIA INFLUENCE ON THE BODY IMAGE
OF ADOLESCENT FEMALES**

by

Laurel J. Wickman

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**The Graduate School
University of Wisconsin-Stout
Menomonie, WI 54751**

ABSTRACT

<u>Wickman</u>	<u>Laurel</u>	<u>J.</u>
(Last Name)	(First)	(Initial)

A Correlational Study of the Impact of Media Influence on the Body Image of
(Title)

Adolescent Females

<u>Guidance and Counseling, Mental Health</u>	<u>Leslie Koepke</u>	<u>December/2000</u>
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Magazines, movies, advertisements are all influential forces in our society. Adolescent females are susceptible to this influence. It is important for adolescent females to become aware of the impact of the media to override the messages that our society is sending to these females. In heightening adolescent females' awareness of this destructive force in our society, body image satisfaction may be increased, and the damaging consequences of negative body images, such as eating disorders and depression, may be lowered.

The purpose of this study was to determine the correlation of the media influence on the body image of adolescent females. A detailed description of the development of body

image, large targeting of the media upon adolescents, the dangers of negative body image, and the benefits of a positive body image were the focus of this study.

Data collected from adolescent females enrolled in a required psychology class during the fall of 2000 at a high school in the Midwest was utilized. The data included responses from the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale and the Appearance Schemas Inventory. The questionnaires were used to assess the level of influence the media had on these particular females, their attitudes about their body, and corresponding correlation between these two factors.

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Results showed that the media is a significant factor in the assessment of one's body image. Items focusing on the fact that attractiveness ideals stem from magazines, movies, actresses/actors, models were found to be highly significant. The participants also agreed with questionnaire items that made appearance a high priority in our society.

Recommendations for further research would include the sampling of a more diverse population, utilizing a sample of males, and gathering a larger sample of participants.

Acknowledgements

This paper is dedicated to women who are pressured by our society's standards of beauty. The standards presented to women of all ages are constricting and disheartening. The beauty of our society lies in the diversity of appearances; the individuality of all human beings. My hope is that some day our society will recognize the pressure it is placing upon women to conform to these standards and the damaging consequences that are occurring due to that pressure, and that women will refute these messages and embrace their individuality as beauty.

I want to thank my family and friends, as they have been my support system throughout my work on this paper. It has been through them that I have learned the real meaning of beauty. I also want to express my extreme appreciation to Dr. Leslie Koepke, my thesis adviser, for her numerous hours of help and guidance that allowed me to complete this paper.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Violence in schools, stereotyping, prejudice, exploitation, commercialism and consumerism, promotion of sex and sexuality; these are all products of the media in our society. We are all aware of the impact of the media; we are bombarded by images on television and in movies, in magazines, and through advertisements, encouraging us to buy into society's ideals and consequential products.

The most widely used way to learn about cultural standards of what is "good, beautiful, and important" is through the media. Advertisements, movies, magazines, books, newspapers, and television shows promote the ideals and values for our culture. The emphasis on appearance in our society is widely demonstrated throughout all visual forms of communication (Cash, 1997).

Although the media targets persons of all age levels, the adolescent population is more vulnerable to the messages that are being communicated within our society (Broughton & Cleveland, 1999). A majority of the information presented in various media forms are directed specifically toward adolescents (Strasburger, 1995). However, due to an increased level of disposable income, adolescents tend to be more impressionable, as they progress through various developmental processes, at this stage in their lives. Adolescents are also vulnerable to societal messages as they develop a self-identity and seek outside information in defining their identity (Botta, 1999). Due to the fact that the media seeks out adolescents as their target population for commercialism and

consumerism, we need to think about the messages that are communicated to the adolescent population.

A review of the literature (Botta, 1999; Cusumano & Thompson, 1997; Strasburger, 1995) has shown the media to be very influential for adolescent females, in particular. Numerous images of the "ideal" for beauty and happiness in our society are portrayed in the ultra-thin models and actresses in magazines and on television and movies. These "idealized" women are the role models of many adolescent females (Strasburger, 1995).

In comparing adolescent males and females, studies have also shown that adolescent females demonstrate lower satisfaction in their body images than do male adolescents (Henderson-King & Henderson-King, 1997; Broughton & Cleveland, 1999). Adolescence is defined by puberty and developmental changes. During this time period, adolescents experience a heightened awareness of their bodies because of the physical changes that are occurring (Broughton & Cleveland, 1999). Becoming more aware of oneself can lead to self-scrutiny of, and confusion about, one's developing body.

In a survey concerning body image given to 36,284 students in grades seven through 12 during 1986-87, data revealed that girls, overall, were much more concerned about their physical appearance: 32 percent of females and 13 percent of males expressed a primary concern about their appearance. Among the junior high respondents, 30 percent of females and 12 percent of males said they had a negative body image. Among high school respondents, 40 percent of females and 15 percent of males reported having a negative body image (Gilligan, et al., 1991).

Other studies have yielded similar results. In a body image survey in Psychology Today, 25 percent of males and 33 percent of females reported having negative feelings about their bodies. Adolescents, especially females, reported the strongest appearance orientation and most negative appearance evaluations (Cash, 1990).

In our society, females tend to have a greater difficulty experiencing their bodies positively than do men (Cash, 1990). Girls and women are generally preoccupied with their bodies and how their bodies look. In particular, adolescent females' ideals of their bodies, what their bodies should look like, and what they feel is attractive, are the main sources for dissatisfaction (Gilligan, et al., 1991).

Body image experiences are intertwined with feelings about oneself. Body images are not entirely fixed or static, and tend to be socially determined. One's body image is experienced in all aspects of his/ her life (Cash, 1990).

It is important that our society pays attention to the messages it sends to adolescents. It is also important to recognize potentially damaging messages that may lead to things such as body image disturbance, a very important factor leading to the initiation of eating disorders (Broughton & Cleveland, 1999). We need to become aware of the damage that is being done through harmful media messages, to curb the likelihood of adolescent females developing lowered body image and ultimately, eating disorders.

This research is supported by the Learning Theory, since the major premises of this theory suggest that new patterns of behavior are learned and integrated based on watching a model or models. Social learning is the "process by which the behavior of an individual or a group (the model) acts as a stimulus for similar thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors on the part of observers" (Corey, 1991, p. 303). Models can teach clients

behaviors, influence attitudes and values, and teach social skills. These premises fit well with the hypothesis of this study.

The research hypothesis for this study is that the media contributes to lower body image satisfaction in adolescent females.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to determine the correlation between the influence of the media as measured by the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale - Adolescent Version and body image satisfaction as measured by the Appearance Schemas Inventory for adolescent females at Eau Claire Memorial High School, in Wisconsin, in the fall of 2000.

Null Hypothesis

There is no statistically significant correlation between the influence of the media and body image satisfaction for adolescent females.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined for a more complete understanding of the material:

Body image - is defined as "one's personal relationship with their body; especially one's beliefs, thoughts, perceptions, feelings and actions that pertain to one's physical appearance" (Cash, 1997, p. 2).

Media - the media refers to an information-producing form of communication within a society (Strasburger, 1995). In this paper, the term "media" refers to the concept of mass media, encompassing mediums of communication such as television, magazines, advertisements, and commercials.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

This chapter will review the literature relating to the development of body image among adolescent females. It will also review information on the influences upon the development of body image, such as the family and society. The final portion of the chapter addresses the implications of a negative body image and the implications of a positive body image upon adolescent development.

The development of body image

Body image is formed as a part of a gradual process, beginning early in childhood.

By the age of two, most children have self-awareness and can recognize their physical self as a reflection in the mirror... their bodily being comes to represent who they are in their eyes...then they begin to reflect upon how others view their appearance (Cash, 1997, p. 43).

Body image and feelings of self-worth are formed as children evaluate what their surroundings value as attractive. They think about how they should look and compare themselves to that standard (Cash, 1997).

Influences on body image

Many factors influence and determine how a person evaluates their body. Cash (1997) describes two basic categories of influential factors in determining body image: historical influences and current influences. Historical influences are "forces from the

past that have shaped how one comes to view their appearance in the ways they do" (p. 43). Current influences are "experiences of everyday life that determine how one thinks, feels, and reacts to their looks" (Cash, 1997, p. 43). It is necessary to explore each of these two categories to understand personal body image development.

Cash (1997) discusses two major factors pertinent in the development of body image. First, parents, peers, and other loved ones are major influences on the way one feels about one's body. Second, the Western culture/ society has a large influence over the feelings and perceptions about the body.

The influence of family and peers on body image development will be discussed first. Cash (1990) states "Relations with other people are the main measures for judging oneself and are a fundamental aspect of everyday living" (p. 131). Through relationships with others, socialization about the meaning of the body occurs (Cash, 1997). The family functions as the initial contact with relationships, and, more than likely, teaches about the body. Cash (1997) states that "modeling" communicates expectations for how one's body or appearance should be (p. 45).

Peers comprise the next level of communication about the body and expectations concerning the body. Being repeatedly criticized or teased about a certain feature of the body in early years can have a long-term effect on body image development (Cash, 1997). Puberty and adolescent years are especially tough on body image due to the changes of the human body. "Feelings of social adequacy depend in part on how one thinks their appearance is perceived by their peers" (Cash, 1997, p. 46). Body image formation is very much the consequence of interpersonal relationships.

Cultural conditioning also largely influences body image. In the book, Hunger Pains (Pipher, 1995), the author discusses the concept of culture:

Margaret Mead described an ideal culture as one in which there was a place for every human gift. It would allow its members to grow to their fullest potentials and would allow the culture the maximum use of its members' gifts. Nothing would be wasted (p. 114).

Pipher refutes this thought by saying that cultures, in reality, are not this way. A culture values certain things and devalues others. What is good, beautiful and important is also defined within the culture (Pipher, 1995).

Pipher describes a discussion with one of her female clients in Hunger Pains (1995). The client makes this statement about the values of our society: "In society, you have to be pretty first, then you can think about having character, being smart, and achieving things. If you aren't pretty, nothing else matters" (p. 2). This female touches on the concept of "lookism," the primary importance of one's appearance, and she also reinforced the strong message about "lookism", which is targeted to people, especially women and girls, in society (Pipher, 1995).

Every day, images of the "ideal look" for males and females are portrayed in our society. The phrase "thin is in and feminine" demonstrates the Western culture's worship of thinness, especially for women (Cash, 1997, p. 44). Well-toned thinness is promoted for women. Tallness and muscularity is ideal for men. These messages are portrayed to people in our society every day. Messages about the "ideal look" are attached to the assumption that if you acquire the "ideal look", you will also experience happiness,

attraction, success, and being loved and desired. If you are beautiful, you will achieve happiness and success, and find love (20/20 report, 1999).

Retail stores across the country extensively promote these messages and values. Diet books, diet camps, exercise spas, and diet fads are everywhere, promoting the need for a thinner and more shapely society (Pipher, 1995). Leading Hollywood actors and actresses are thin women and muscular men, who represent, and possibly even initiate, these "ideal" messages. These prominent figures are the physical role models for society, especially for children and adolescents. These "role models" send three pervasive messages to people of all ages: 1) You ***should*** look like this; 2) When you ***do*** fit the ideal, you automatically are happy; and 3) ***You*** can become the ideal (20/20 report, 1999).

After identifying the numerous ways society promotes an ideal of beauty and an emphasis on the importance of appearance, it is understandable how people consume these values, and are influenced by culture in their formation of body image (Pipher, 1995). These bold messages from society, which emphasize the "ideal look" as the norm, reach people of all ages.

Influence of the media on body image

The media (i.e. television, movies, and magazines) are external forces in the formation of body image. The messages are absorbed from society into the inner self (Cash, 1997). At a seminar on eating disorders by Christine Nicklaus, the process of internalizing and forming one's body image around these outside cultural forces was explained. Nicklaus termed this process the "comparison complex". The comparison complex is based on the underlying motivation in identifying with a "role model" or "hero" that symbolizes our dreams, personal aspirations, and beliefs. People admire role

models and aspire to be like them. The comparison begins in the recognition of, and increased attention given to, personal shortcomings and simultaneously becoming oblivious to the imperfections of idols. When shortcomings are realized in comparison, feelings of inadequacy and of failure are overwhelming. As people look at their role models, appearance plays a role in the comparison. A person may believe that if they *look* more like their idol, they may be able to *behave* like them (Nicklaus seminar, 1999).

Nicklaus continued to say that as messages of "ideal heroes" are reinforced through the media, there is pressure for people to compare themselves to these athletes, actors, and models. "Combined with low self-image and lack of confidence, it can surely weigh a person down," and may cause a person to take drastic measures to change in order to conform to the appearance and behaviors of the role model, and to the norm of society, in general (Nicklaus seminar, 1999).

From the moment of birth, messages are sent about the body. The early influences of parents and peers are significant in initial body image formation. As a child grows, Western culture also plays an important role in the development of body image. Societal messages lead to the formation of perceptions, feelings, and thoughts of the body and the establishment of a personal body image.

Results of a negative body image

Eating Disorders

Western culture places a strong emphasis on the importance of external beauty to acquire happiness. This message promotes thinness as equal to beauty, and appearance as the most important factor in relationships and in life. The cultural focus on outward

appearance is detrimental to society; it results in negative consequences as an influence on one's body image (Pipher, 1995).

There are numerous ramifications of society's emphasis on appearance related to having a negative body image. Eating disorders, which may include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, or compulsive overeating, can be directly linked to a negative body image. Body Dysmorphic Disorder and clinical depression also correspond with the symptomology of a negative body image (Williamson, 1990).

ANOREXIA NERVOSA

Anorexia nervosa is defined as "extreme weight loss which can be life-threatening, due to extremely restrictive eating and/ or purgative behavior" (Williamson, 1990, p. 8-9). Anorectics have a severe distortion of their body size; they perceive themselves as being overweight, even though they are thin. Their distorted eating behavior is driven by paranoia of gaining weight and body image disturbances. Some of the physical consequences of anorexia nervosa include: "cessation of the menstrual cycle, loss of hair, lowered body temperature, and dry skin due to dehydration" (Williamson, 1990, p. 8-9).

BULIMIA NERVOSA

Bulimia nervosa is defined as the "frequent use of purgatory behaviors, self-induced vomiting, laxative use, excessive dieting, or fasting to prevent weight gain" (Williamson, 1990, p. 11). Bulimia nervosa is characterized by "body image distortion and extreme preference for thinness" (Williamson, 1990, p. 11). This fear of weight gain and persistent overconcern with body shape motivates purgatory behavior (Williamson, 1990).

The common components of anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa are the "fear of fatness", along with body image disturbances. Body image distortions appear to be the primary underlying condition for the onset of anorexia or bulimia. Again, the sociocultural influence of the emphasis on thinness is also a major determinant in the occurrence of these disorders (Williamson, 1990).

COMPULSIVE OVEREATING

Compulsive overeating is also a common disorder in our society. Twenty to forty percent of obese people participate in compulsive overeating behaviors, which are defined as "when an individual consumes more energy than is expended" (Williamson, 1990, p. 5-6). This person partakes in compulsive, uncontrollable binge-eating, which is soon followed by repeated attempts at dieting in an effort to lose weight, due to body size dissatisfaction. A compulsive overeater "recognizes that binge-eating is abnormal and experiences negative affect after binge-eating, which in turn precipitates further binge-eating" (Williamson, 1990, p. 5-6).

Adolescence is a crucial time for the development of eating disorders. Young adolescents have deep concerns about their physical appearance in correlation to their level of attractiveness. Adolescents may experience great dissatisfaction in and with their bodies, and they may try to transform their bodies through disordered eating behaviors to align their bodies with our cultural standards (Gilligan et al., 1991). Gilligan and her colleagues (1991) summarized the adolescent development of eating disorders: "The preoccupation of adolescents on how their bodies look when coupled with a distorted body image leads to chronic dieting and disordered eating" (p. 121). Fifty-two percent of

junior high age girls, 65 percent of high school girls, and 29 percent of boys in all grades are at a moderate - to - high risk for developing an eating disorder (Gilligan et al., 1991).

Distorted body image

Eating disorders are characterized by having an underlying distorted body image. Williamson (1990) stated that there are three main components of a distorted body image: body-size distortion, preference for thinness, and body-size dissatisfaction. These three aspects work together in the formation of a distorted body image. Body-size distortion involves the perception of one's current body size. The preference for thinness is based on a body size, which is used as an ideal standard for judging satisfaction with current body size. "Persons who strongly fear weight gain prefer a much thinner body size than people who don't have those fears" (Williamson, 1990, pp. 65-66). Body-size dissatisfaction represents a discrepancy between **actual** body size estimates and **ideal** body size estimates. Extreme body dissatisfaction occurs when the discrepancy between actual and ideal body size is large, and a small discrepancy yields a small amount of body-size dissatisfaction (Williamson, 1990).

Body Dysmorphic Disorder

Many individuals without eating disorders have a certain level of appearance-related, body image disturbance, such as general dissatisfaction, specific size/weight dissatisfaction, or size-perception inaccuracy (Cash, 1990). Body Dysmorphic Disorder is an example of this. Body Dysmorphic Disorder is characterized separately from eating disorders, but it also results from an underlying negative body image. This disorder is defined as "a disorder of imagined ugliness; a grossly distorted view of what one looks like" (Cash, 1997, p. 5). Persons with this disorder have an obsessive preoccupation with

their appearance. This disorder is life-controlling, and can even result in an avoidance of any events that entail socialization. They have a strong desire to fix their perceived flaws. Others view a person with Body Dysmorphic Disorder and consider their appearance normal. In reality, the victim has an extremely negative body image and is overly self-aware and self-conscious (Cash, 1997).

Depression

Various emotions are associated with having a negative body image. Anxiety, disgust, despondency, anger, envy, shame or embarrassment arise in different situations for different people (Cash, 1997). Depression can even result from an extremely negative body image. Depression is defined as "an intense and recurring mood disturbance" (Cash, 1997, p. 5). A depressed person's mind is composed of negative thoughts about themselves and their life events. They feel worthless, guilty, and unable to get any pleasure from life. There are often other events and situations leading up to depression, but a frequent characteristic of this disorder is having a negative body image. To combat depression, more help is needed beyond body image improvement; other issues around the depression need to be examined also (Cash, 1997).

Results of a positive body image

As the literature reveals, there are numerous consequences of a negative body image. However, it is also important to consider the many benefits of obtaining and maintaining a positive body image.

As stated previously, the initial formation of a positive body image occurs early in life. Body image affects all areas of life. To have a positive body image is to more than likely have a heightened self-esteem, a more actualized gender identity, lowered

interpersonal anxiety, heightened sexual fulfillment, and lowered incidence of eating disorders and depression (Cash, 1997).

Summary

As the literature review reveals, body image consists of thoughts, feelings, and perceptions of the self. Body images are determinants of personalities and behaviors, and are influenced early in life (Cash, 1997).

Body images are influenced by historical and cultural factors. Messages delivered by the media emphasize the importance of appearance and the "ideal look" for members of our society. These contribute greatly to the development of a personal body image. The values and modeling of family and peers, along with messages from the media about "ideal beauty", are integrated into the formation of body images (Cash, 1997). This has a special impact on adolescents.

A possible result of the messages to achieve an "ideal look" is a negative body image, which is an underlying cause in disorders such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and compulsive overeating. Body Dysmorphic Disorder and clinical depression also contain a negative body image as their main characteristic.

Learning Theory is based on the premise that social influence and modeling results in learned behavior. "Through observational learning, persons can learn to perform desired acts themselves without trial-and-error learning" (Corey, 1991, p. 303). Albert Bandura has theorized that modeling plays a major role in the "development and modification of much of Human behavior" (Corey, 1991, p. 303). Modeling has three basic effects: the learning and performance of new responses or skills; the inhibition of fear responses - one does not suffer negative consequences or meets positive

consequences; and the facilitation of responses, where the model provides cues for others to follow (Corey, 1991).

Our society provides adolescents with numerous role models and images that promote various behaviors. Observational learning is a product of the media; through "tuning in" to movies, television shows, magazines, adolescents are "taught" by models about their body and our society's "ideal body".

It is important to address the issue of body image and media messages about body image in our society. Education about body image and early intervention on body image development among adolescents could help to minimize the medical, emotional, and societal costs associated with body image disturbances. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the influence of the media upon body satisfaction among adolescent females, with the ultimate goal of helping to educate adolescent females about developing a healthy body image.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

This chapter will discuss the process of selecting subjects for the study, a description of the subjects involved in the study, and the instrumentation used in the study. The chapter will end with data collection and analysis procedures.

Subject Selection and Description

After consultation with the principal of Eau Claire Memorial High School, the researcher was given permission to have access to the students in a required senior level Psychology class. The researcher contacted the instructors of the classes and explained the purpose of her study and gave the instructor instructions on the distribution of the consent forms and questionnaires. The subjects for this study were 39 adolescent females age 17 to 18 attending Eau Claire Memorial High School. The subjects were enrolled in a required Psychology class during the fall semester of 2000.

Procedures

The researcher contacted the principal of Eau Claire Memorial High School to gain his permission to contact the teachers of the senior Psychology classes. Each teacher was given consent forms to be distributed to the students to be signed by their parent or legal guardian (Appendix A). After the teachers received the parental consent form, each student was given a cover letter stating the purpose of the study, who the researcher was, and a request for their participation (Appendix B). If students signed their voluntary consent form, they were then given the instruments (Appendix C) to complete. These were then returned to their teachers, who separated the consent forms from the

instruments. The researcher picked up the consent forms and instruments, which were in separate envelopes. The researcher mailed thank you letters (Appendix D) to the principal and teachers of Eau Claire Memorial High School to thank them for their time and help with the research.

Instrumentation

The Multidimensional Media Influence Scale - Adolescent Version is a paper and pencil instrument, used to assess females' recognition of societal/ cultural standards of appearance. It does not require any training to administer the test and it is hand-scored to obtain the results. Reliability was computed two ways and ranged from poor to good:

	Alpha	Test-Retest
Internalization	.86	.86
Importance	.85	.68
Comparison	.74	.72
Awareness	.60	.50
Total Scale	.90	.79 (Keery, et al., 2000)

Pearson Product Moment Correlations were computed to test the convergent validity of the subscales and other measures of disturbance. Good convergent validity was found (Keery, et al., 2000).

The Appearance Schemas Inventory is a paper and pencil instrument, used to assess females' beliefs or assumptions about their physical appearance and the influence of appearance on life. It does not require any training to administer the test, and is hand-scored to obtain the results. Cash and LaBarge (1996) initially described the psychometric properties of the ASI. Since then, this author has conducted numerous other studies, both published and unpublished, that included the ASI. To date, all investigations

have been done with college samples reflecting reasonable diversity in age (including older "nontraditional" students) and race/ethnicity. As the information below summarizes, the Appearance Schemas Inventory has good internal consistency for both sexes and is also acceptably stable over a 1 month interval (Cash, 2000).

ASI Psychometrics (men, women)

Norms

$$M = 2.59$$

$$SD = 0.61$$

($n = 332$ across 3 samples)

$$M = 2.65$$

$$SD = 0.62$$

($n = 1349$ across 7 samples)

Internal Consistency (Cronbach's alpha)

$$Mdn = .82$$

$$Mdn = .86$$

Stability (1 month)

$$r(.30) = .76$$

$$r(114) = .72$$

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by Christine Ness, University of Wisconsin-Stout statistician. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, standard deviations, and Pearson Product Moment Correlational statistics.

Frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations on Items 1-14 on the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale were conducted in addition to performing the same tests on the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale subscales of "Internalization", "Importance", "Comparison", and "Awareness".

Frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations on Items 1-14 on the Appearance Schemas Inventory were conducted in addition to performing the same tests on the Appearance Schemas Inventory subscales of "Body Image Vulnerability", "Self-Investment", and "Appearance Stereotyping".

Pearson Correlation Coefficient Matrixes on all combinations of Items 1 through 14, "Internalization", "Importance", "Comparison", and "Awareness" subscales from the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale and Items 1 through 14, "Body Image Vulnerability", "Self-Investment", and "Appearance Stereotyping" subscales from the Appearance Schemas Inventory for the total group of respondents were constructed.

Each item was correlated to the four overall subscales of the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale instrument. Pearson Product Moment Correlations were constructed on each item of the Appearance Schemas Inventory with the subscales.

Limitations

The limitations of the study are as follows:

- 1) The participants of the study were primarily Caucasian females, therefore limiting cross-cultural attitudes and assumptions.
- 2) The location of this school is in a small Midwestern city whose cultural, economic, and social conditions may not be generalizable to other communities.
- 3) The female respondents had just completed a unit on body image awareness in their Psychology class, so a heightened sensitivity to body image issues may have influenced their responses to items on the questionnaires.
- 4) The research sample was composed of high school students; other studies based on these instruments were normed on college-age students.

5) Six questionnaires were incomplete due to the format of the questionnaires;
some items were on the backside of the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of media influence upon the body image of adolescent females. This chapter will discuss the statistical results of the research and data analysis. The validity and reliability of the two instruments will also be discussed. The chapter will end with a discussion of the results.

Demographics

Thirty-nine adolescent females participated in this study. The participants were enrolled in a senior level Psychology class in a high school in the Midwest. The females were age 17 and 18. Each student completed the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale and the Appearance Schemas Inventory.

Results

Frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations on items 1 through 14 from the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale for the total group of respondents were conducted.

In reviewing the results on the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale, the means were highest on the following items: Item 4 - "I would like my body to look like the bodies of people in the movies" ($x = 3.28$), and Item 9 - "I get hints about how to look attractive by reading magazines" ($x = 3.00$). The lowest mean was on Item 2 - "When I watch sports on TV, I compare my body to the bodies of the athletes" ($x = 2.38$).

Frequency counts, percentages, means, medians, and standard deviations on "Internalization", "Importance", "Comparison", and "Awareness" subscales from the

Multidimensional Media Influence Scale for the total group of respondents were conducted. Findings are included in Table 1. The highest means were found to be in the "Internalization" subscale, while the lowest means were noted for the "Comparison" subscale.

Table 1. Statistical Findings of the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale

	INTERN AVERAGE SCORE: MMIS - INTERNAL- IZATION	IMPORT AVERAGE SCORE: MMIS - IMPORTANCE	COMP AVERAGE SCORE: MMIS - COMPARISON	AWARE AVERAGE SCORE: MMIS - AWARENESS
N VALID	33	33	39	33
N MISSING	6	6	0	6
MEAN	2.9091	2.8061	2.4487	2.7121
MEDIAN	3.0000	2.6000	2.5000	2.5000
STANDARD DEVIATION	1.2011	.9893	1.2763	1.1459

Frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations on Items 1 through 14 from the Appearance Schemas Inventory for the total group of respondents were conducted. Highest means were on Item 1 - "What I look like is an important part of who I am" ($x = 3.59$), and Item 4 - "If I could look like I wish, I would be much happier" ($x = 3.11$). Lowest means were on Item 13 - "Attractive people have it all" ($x = 1.97$), and Item 5 - "If people knew how I really look, they would like me less" ($x = 2.18$).

Frequency counts, percentages, means, medians, and standard deviations on "Body Image Vulnerability", "Self-Investment", and "Appearance Stereotyping" subscales from the Appearance Schemas Inventory for the total group of respondents were conducted.

Results are shown in Table 2. High means were noted for the "Self-Investment" subscale, while the lowest mean was noted on the "Appearance Stereotyping" subscale.

Table 2. Statistical Findings of the Appearance Schemas Inventory

	BODY IMG AVERAGE SCORE: ASI - BODY IMAGE VULNERABILITY	SELF INV AVERAGE SCORE: ASI - SELF- INVESTMENT	STEREOTY AVERAGE SCORE: ASI - APPEARANCE STEREOTYPING
N VALID	38	39	39
N MISSING	1	0	0
MEAN	2.7061	2.7231	2.1624
MEDIAN	2.9167	2.8000	2.0000
STANDARD DEVIATION	.8941	.8481	.8511

Pearson Correlation Coefficient Matrixes on all combinations of Items 1 through 14, "Internalization", "Importance", "Comparison", and "Awareness" subscales from the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale and Items 1 through 14, "Body Image Vulnerability", "Self-Investment", and "Appearance Stereotyping" subscales from the Appearance Schemas Inventory for the total group of respondents were constructed.

Each item was correlated to the four overall subscales of the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale instrument. The scores ranged from a low of .476 to a high of .971. All items were significant, therefore supporting the validity of the instrument for this population.

Pearson Product Moment Correlations were constructed on each item of the Appearance Schemas Inventory with the subscales. The scores ranged from a low of .176 to a high of .786. Overall, there was less significance per item, and therefore, less validity of the instrument overall for this population.

Table 3. Comparison of subscales of the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale and subscales of the Appearance Schemas Inventory

	BODY IMG AVERAGE SCORE: ASI - BODY IMAGE VULNER- ABILITY	SELF INV AVERAGE SCORE: ASI - SELF- INVESTMENT	STEREOTY AVERAGE SCORE: ASI - APPEARANCE STEREO- TYPING	
INTERN AVERAGE SCORE: MMIS - INTERNALIZAT ION	.514 .002 33	.536 .001 33	.403 .020 33	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N
IMPORT AVERAGE SCORE: MMIS - IMPORTANCE	.379 .030 33	.575 .000 33	.361 .039 33	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N
COMP AVERAGE SCORE: MMIS - COMPARISON	.325 .046 38	.361 .024 39	.456 .004 39	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N
AWARE AVERAGE SCORE: MMIS - AWARENESS	.364 .037 33	.480 .005 33	.477 .005 33	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N

As Table 3 shows, the correlation of the "Internalization" subscale from the MMIS and the ASI "Body Image Vulnerability" and "Self-Investment" subscales indicated a significance of .002 and .001, respectively. The correlation of the MMIS "Importance" subscale and the "Self-Investment" subscale was highly significant (.000). The correlation of the "Comparison" subscale of the MMIS with the "Appearance Stereotyping" subscale of the ASI yields a significance of .004. The correlation of the MMIS "Awareness" subscale and the ASI subscales of "Self-Investment" and "Appearance Stereotyping" both yield a significance of .005. These numbers demonstrate

the high correlation between the subscales of the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale and the Appearance Schemas Inventory. In particular, these results indicate that although the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale "Comparison" subscale mean and the Appearance Schemas Inventory "Appearance Stereotyping" subscale mean were low, when correlated with one another, they produced a significant result.

The reliability for the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale was conducted by using Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient. Results are indicated in Table 4.

Table 4. Reliability for the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale

	ALPHA	STANDARD ALPHA
ITEMS 4, 6, 8, 11, and 13	.9378	.9378
ITEMS 1, 5, 9, 12, and 14	.8892	.8918
ITEMS 2 and 7	.9420	.9443
ITEMS 3 and 10	.8244	.8286

Reliability appeared to be the greatest among Items 2 and 7, and least among Items 3 and 10.

The reliability for the Appearance Schemas Inventory was conducted by using Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient. Results are indicated in Table 5.

Table 5. Reliability for the Appearance Schemas Inventory

	ALPHA	STANDARD ALPHA
ITEMS 2, 4, 5, 9, 11, and 12	.8212	.8187
ITEMS 1, 3, 6, 7, and 8	.7601	.7625
ITEMS 10, 13, and 14	.6909	.6892

The strongest reliability appears to be among Items 2, 4, 5, 9, 11, and 12, and least among Items 10, 13, and 14. Overall, it appears that the Appearance Schemas Inventory is a less strong, less reliable, and less valid scale with this particular sample.

Discussion

The majority of the items on the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale and the Appearance Schemas Inventory were highly significant. Therefore, the results of this study support the hypothesis that the media has a strong influence on the body images of adolescent females. Numerous factors will be discussed regarding the results.

Multidimensional Media Influence Scale

The Multidimensional Media Influence Scale had many items with high average responses of agreement to the various statements. The highest scores were on Item 4 - "I would like my body to look like the bodies of people in the movies" ($x=3.28$), Item 9 - "I get hints about how to look attractive by reading magazines" ($x=3.0$), Item 5 "Watching movies gives me ideas about how to look attractive" ($x=2.90$), and Item 6 - "Looking at magazines makes me want to change the way I look" ($x=2.90$). The high scores on these items indicate the prevalence of the media in decisions regarding attractiveness and in conforming to an "ideal look" amongst the respondents.

Low average scores, which indicated more disagreement than agreement, on the MMIS were on Item 2 - "When I watch sports on TV, I compare my body to the bodies of athletes" ($x=2.38$), and Item 7 - "I compare my body to the athletes that I see in magazines" ($x=2.51$). Athleticism appears to not be as a significant factor in attractiveness for these particular females; athletes do not appear to be a significant comparison population amongst the respondents of this survey.

The four areas of media influence, or subscales, of the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale are the Internalization of the ideal of thinness as a personal ideal (Items 3, 10), the Importance of the media as a source of information regarding appearance (Items 1, 5, 9, 12, 14), Comparison (the tendency to compare one's appearance to that of others) (Items 4, 6, 8, 11, 13), and Awareness of the ideal of thinness portrayed in the media (Items 3, 10) (Keery, et al., 2000). Through an analysis of the responses to the MMIS, the items were broken down into the four subscales, where the average score of responses was deciphered. The "Internalization" subscale yielded a mean response of 2.9091, the "Importance" subscale mean response was 2.8061, the "Awareness" subscale mean was 2.7121, and the mean of the "Comparison" subscale was 2.4487.

All mean scores on the MMIS subscales were high, with the "Internalization" and "Importance" subscales demonstrating higher scores than those of the "Awareness" and "Comparison" subscales. Adolescence is a time of searching for oneself; much of the knowledge gained about oneself comes from outside sources, therefore leaving adolescents more likely to rely on the media for knowledge about a variety of issues, including "ideal images". These messages are learned, then internalized as personal ideals and goals one may set for themselves to reach society's standards of attractiveness.

Since adolescence is a time where an "Imaginary Audience" is always present; where adolescents constantly assume others are scrutinizing their looks and behavior, it was surprising that the scores on the "Comparison" subscale were not higher. However, the research population utilized in this study had just had a unit in their Psychology class on body image, which may have heightened their awareness of society's ideals of the

body. This unit may also have encouraged individuality and discouraged comparison, allowing for lower average scores on the "Awareness" and "Comparison" subscales.

Appearance Schemas Inventory

The Appearance Schemas Inventory had many items with high average responses of the subjects, meaning that the agreement with the items' statements was quite high.

The highest average scores on the ASI were on Item 1 - "What I look like is an important part of who I am" ($x = 3.59$), Item 4 - "If I could look just as I wish, my life would be much happier" ($x = 3.11$), Item 2 - "What's wrong with my appearance is one of the first things that people will notice about me" ($x = 3.00$), and Item 11 - "The media's messages in our society make it impossible for me to be satisfied with my appearance" ($x = 2.95$).

These high scores indicate the great value that is placed on appearance; looks equal happiness, appearance is noticed first, and the agreement on Item 11 support that messages in our society surrounding appearance are influential.

Low average scores, indicating more disagreement than agreement on a particular item, on the ASI were on Item 13 - "Attractive people have it all" ($x = 1.97$), and Item 5 - "If people knew how I really look, they'd like me less" ($x = 2.18$). These scores were inconsistent with the rest of many responses. This inconsistency may be due to the fact that adolescents tend to challenge expectations, or to challenge the "norm"; therefore, they would not buy into Items 5 and 13. Another possible reason for such high disagreement may be a strong desire for the adolescents to convince themselves that appearance is not overly important; denial of reality is typical for adolescents.

The three subscales of the Appearance Schemas Inventory are "Body Image Vulnerability", "Self-Investment", and "Appearance Stereotyping". "Body Image

Vulnerability" is a subscale that "reflects assumptions that one's appearance is inherently defective and socially unacceptable" (Items 2, 4, 5, 9, 11, 12). The "Self-Investment" subscale "reflects the belief that one's appearance is central to one's sense of self and influential on one's life and beliefs in the necessity of the pursuit and management of physical attractiveness" (Items 1, 3, 6, 7, 8). The "Appearance Stereotyping" subscale "reflects assumptions about the social goodness/badness of an attractive/unattractive appearance" (Items 10, 13, 14) (Cash, 2000). Through an analysis of the responses to the ASI, the items were broken down into the three subscales, where the average score of responses was deciphered. The "Self-Investment" subscale yielded a mean response of 2.7231, the "Body Image Vulnerability" subscale mean response was 2.7061, and the "Appearance Stereotyping" subscale mean was 2.1624.

All mean scores on the ASI subscales were significant, with the "Body Image Vulnerability" and "Self-Investment" subscales demonstrating higher scores than those of the "Appearance Stereotyping" subscale. Adolescence is a time of change; the onset of puberty yields physical changes; emotional and mental changes occur as well. Due to the physical changes that are occurring in their bodies, much of an adolescent's thoughts are focused on their body and the changes that are taking place. Adolescents are bombarded with advertisements concerning products that can "help out" their appearance, therefore creating more discontent in the minds of adolescents. The combination of these two factors creates unsettling feelings in adolescents; they may become unsatisfied with their bodies and are sent numerous messages on how to change their appearance to make them more "acceptable", "likeable", "beautiful". Adolescence is a time of confusion; adolescents receive much of their information about themselves and of how they "should"

be from outside sources. All of these factors may have contributed to the prevalence of higher average scores amongst the subjects.

Denial of the placement of power on appearance is normative for adolescents. They do not want to admit that we live in a society that stresses the importance of one's looks over almost every other quality that a human being may possess. Denial among these adolescents may account for the lower average scores on the "Appearance Stereotyping" subscale.

Correlation of the MMIS and ASI Subscales

When the subscales of the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale and the Appearance Schemas Inventory were correlated, the results were highly significant. The correlation of the MMIS "Importance" subscale with the ASI "Self-Investment" subscale yielded a significance of .000. The MMIS "Internalization" subscale correlated with the ASI subscales of "Self-Investment" and "Body Image Vulnerability" showed a significance of .001 and .002, respectively. The correlation of the MMIS "Comparison" subscale with the ASI "Appearance Stereotyping" subscale demonstrated a .004 significance. And the MMIS subscale of "Awareness", when correlated with the ASI subscales of "Self-Investment" and "Appearance Stereotyping", yielded a significance of .005 on both subscales.

The lowest significance was found between the MMIS subscale of "Comparison" and the ASI subscale of "Body Image Vulnerability" (.046), and between the MMIS "Importance" subscale and the ASI "Appearance Stereotyping" subscale (.039). All other subscale correlations were highly significant.

The highly significant results between the subscales of the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale and the subscales of the Appearance Schemas Inventory support a strong relationship between media influence and appearance schemas.

The ASI "Self-Investment" subscale, when correlated with the MMIS "Importance", "Internalization", and "Awareness" subscales, indicated high significance. These results support the belief that appearance is central to one's sense of self, that appearance is very influential in one's life, and that the pursuit and management of attractiveness is necessary. The results support that appearance is highly valued, that the media is a source of information about and portrayal of appearance, and media influences internalization of those societal ideals. The results indicate that, amongst the subjects, media is an important source of information for appearance, and that appearance is highly valued, both internally and in our society.

Other subscale scores which were highly significant were the MMIS "Comparison" subscale with the ASI subscales of "Body Image Vulnerability" and "Appearance Stereotyping", and the MMIS subscale of "Awareness" with the ASI subscale of "Appearance Stereotyping". These correlations demonstrate in more depth the societal standard of beauty that is imposed on adolescents. Media messages are sent out promoting attractiveness and the goodness that goes with beauty. Adolescents receiving this message are told that their current appearance is unacceptable, they need to compare themselves to media images and take the appropriate steps to look like society's ideal.

Although all of the findings of the correlated subscales were significant, less significance was found between the MMIS "Comparison" subscale and the ASI "Body Image Vulnerability" subscale, as well as the MMIS "Importance" subscale and the ASI

"Appearance Stereotyping" subscale. A possible reason for the lowered significance of the results for this research population could be heightened awareness from their recent Psychology unit, which examined body image.

As the results indicate, this research contains highly significant findings. The influence of the media upon the body images of adolescent females is clearly demonstrated throughout the results.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Recommendations, and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of media influence upon the body image of adolescent females.

This chapter will summarize the study and provide recommendations for future research on the topic of the media and its influence on body image. The chapter will end with an overall conclusion of the study.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine the correlation of the media influence on the body image of adolescent females. A detailed description of the development of body image, large targeting of the media upon adolescents, the dangers of negative body image, and the benefits of a positive body image were the focus of this study.

Thirty-nine adolescent females were asked to participate in this study. Participants were enrolled in a senior level Psychology class in a midwestern high school. The females completed two questionnaires: the Multidimensional Media Influence Scale, which assesses the emphasis placed on the media and its messages, and the Appearance Schemas Inventory, which evaluates attitudes towards one's body and their appearance. The use of these instruments together was to assess the correlation between the above two variables.

The data was collected and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations were conducted on each item of both instruments. Pearson Correlation Coefficient Matrixes were conducted on the subscales

of the two instruments. The results demonstrated a highly significant correlation between the media and body image, which supported the hypothesis that the media is a very influential factor upon development of in the creation body image for adolescents in this study.

Recommendations for further study

This section will identify recommendations for future research regarding body image and the media.

For future research, a larger sample would provide a greater number of participants, which may show greater variation in results. The greater the number of responses, the more valid the responses and the more accurate information is gathered.

One of the limitations listed was that of a lack of diversity in the sample. A comparison of responses to the questionnaires with a more diverse population is recommended. Media images are primarily Caucasian, so the responses from a diverse population might yield different results.

A final recommendation would be to include males as participants of the study. Body image issues are prevalent for males also, so it would be beneficial to society to examine the attitudes of males regarding their body image and the influence of the media.

Conclusion

Overall, this study determined that the influence of the media is strongly correlated with the body image of adolescent females. In particular, the most significant items were found to be that attractiveness ideals stem from numerous media images, such as magazines, movies, actors/actresses and models. Also highly significant were the items

that made appearance a high priority, not only in society, but also in the adolescent's internal definition of themselves.

This study was done to heighten awareness of the widespread influence the media, in all its forms, has on adolescents. Adolescence is a time of individual growth and self-realization. Body images are just forming, and the media messages play a very large role in the creation of one's attitudes surrounding one's body. Negative body images can be very destructive in adolescence; eating disorders and depression are only some of the difficulties that may come from a negative body image. Positive body images can have numerous benefits to the adolescent's life, including feeling better about oneself; increased confidence and a more positive attitude may result from a healthy body image. It is important to realize the overwhelming influence the media has on adolescents, especially concerning their bodies and appearance, to combat these unhealthy messages and resulting consequences, and to create messages that celebrate individuality and uniqueness.

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APPENDIX A
PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Fall 2000

As a Master's level student at the University of Wisconsin - Stout in Menomonie, Wisconsin, I have the opportunity to research a topic of importance to society and of interest to me. I have chosen to research the influence of the media in our society, particularly, the way the media influences how an adolescent female views and judges her own body.

In your child's psychology class, the teacher will distribute two brief questionnaires, which ask questions about the influence of the media on your child and your child's feelings about her body. The questionnaires will take no more than ten minutes to complete. Your child will be given the option of participating in the study and no consequences will occur if she chooses not to participate.

The psychology teacher will separate your child's consent form from her answers to the questionnaires so her responses will be kept completely confidential. All student responses will remain anonymous, and be given to the researcher in a sealed envelope.

If you have any questions about the study, please call my advisor, Dr. Leslie Koepke, at (715) 232-2237 or me at (920) 926-0783. Please sign the attached form indicating your consent for your child's participation and return it to Bob Peterson or Casey Eckardt by September 15.

A report of the findings will be distributed to the health teacher and you are more than welcome to read it.

Thank you for your time and support.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Dr. Leslie Koepke

Laurel Wickman

I ☐ **agree** ☐ **do NOT agree** to allow my child, _____,
to fill out the two **anonymous questionnaires** for this research.

Signature

Date

****This form is for teacher's use only**

APPENDIX B
STUDENT CONSENT FORM

Dear Student:

Fall 2000

As a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin - Stout in Menomonie, Wisconsin, I have the opportunity to research a topic of interest to me and importance to you. I am studying what teenage girls think about their bodies; for example: what they like, what they don't like. I would like your help with this study. Please complete #1: this consent form, and #2: and the attached questionnaires. **THIS STUDY IS ANONYMOUS! YOUR NAME WILL NOT BE REQUIRED OR USED IN ANY WAY!**

Thank you very much for your help.

Laurel Wickman

Please read the following statement and sign at the bottom if you agree to participate in this study.

I understand that by returning these questionnaires, I am giving my informed consent as a participating volunteer in this study. I understand the basic nature of the study and agree that any potential risks are exceedingly small. I also understand the potential benefits that might be realized from the successful completion of this study. I am aware that the information is being sought in a specific manner so that no identifiers are needed and so that confidentiality is guaranteed. I realize that I have the right to refuse to participate and that my right to withdraw from participation at any time during the study will be respected with no coercion or prejudice.

Signature

Date

****NOTE:** Questions or concerns about participation in the research or subsequent complaints should be addressed first to the researcher or research advisor and second to Dr. Ted Knous, Chair, UW-Stout Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, 11 HH, UW-Stout, Menomonie, WI, 54751, phone (715) 232-1126.

APPENDIX C

INSTRUMENTS USED FOR RESEARCH

Multidimensional Media Influence Scale - Adolescent Version

Directions: Please read these questions and circle the number and words that best match your agreement with the following statements.

1. I learn how to look attractive by watching TV.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

2. When I watch sports on TV, I compare my body to the bodies of the athletes.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

3. Watching movies makes me feel that attractive people are more successful than unattractive people.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

4. I would like my body to look like the bodies of people in the movies.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

5. Watching movies gives me ideas about how to look attractive.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

6. Looking at magazines makes me want to change the way I look.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

7. I compare my body to the bodies of athletes that I see in magazines.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

8. Reading magazines makes me want to lose or gain weight.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

9. I get hints about how to look attractive by reading magazines.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

10. Watching TV shows makes me believe that thin people are more successful than overweight people.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

11. Reading magazines makes me want to change my appearance.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

12. I learn how to look attractive by watching movies.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

13. I would like my appearance to be like the appearance of people in movies.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

14. Watching TV gives me ideas about how to improve my appearance.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

Appearance Schemas Inventory

The statements below are beliefs that people may or may not have about their physical appearance and the influence of appearance on life. Decide the extent to which you personally **disagree or agree** with each statement and enter a number from 1 to 5.

There are no right or wrong answers. Just be truthful about your personal beliefs.

1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Mostly Disagree; 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree

_____ 1. What I look like is an important part of who I am.

_____ 2. What's wrong with my appearance is one of the first things that people will notice about me.

_____ 3. One's outward physical appearance is a sign of the character of the inner person.

_____ 4. If I could look just as I wish, my life would be much happier.

_____ 5. If people knew how I really look, they would like me less.

_____ 6. By controlling my appearance, I can control many of the social and emotional events in my life.

_____ 7. My appearance is responsible for much of what's happened to me in my life.

_____ 8. I should do whatever I can to always look my best.

_____ 9. Aging will make me less attractive.

_____ 10. To be feminine, a woman must be as pretty as possible.

_____ 11. The media's messages in our society make it impossible for me to be satisfied with my appearance.

_____ 12. The only way I could ever like my looks would be to change what I look like.

_____ 13. Attractive people have it all.

_____ 14. Homely people have a hard time finding happiness.

(ASI © Thomas F. Cash, Ph.D.)

APPENDIX D

EAU CLAIRE MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL THANK YOU LETTERS

621 8th Street
Fond du Lac, WI 54935

Mr. Tim Leibham
Eau Claire Memorial High School
2225 Keith Street
Eau Claire, WI 54701

October 30, 2000

Dear Mr. Leibham,

Thank you for the help you provided for the research portion of my Graduate Thesis. I appreciated the chance to meet with you to present my project and research tools. Thank you also for your help in providing me the opportunity to work with Memorial faculty. Both Bob Peterson and Casey Eckardt were helpful in explaining the surveys to the students, distributing them, and returning them to me in a timely manner. I appreciated their help and willingness to work with me on this project.

If you would like, I will provide you with the results of my study. Thank you again for your time and energy that helped complete my research! If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Laurie Wickman
Phone: (920) 926-0783
email: wickmanl@post.uwstout.edu

621 8th Street
Fond du Lac, WI 54935

Mr. Casey Eckardt
Eau Claire Memorial High School
2225 Keith Street
Eau Claire, WI 54701

October 30, 2000

Dear Mr. Eckardt,

Thank you for the help you provided for the research portion of my Graduate Thesis. Thank you for taking the opportunity to work with me on this project. You were helpful in explaining and distributing the surveys to the students, and in returning them to me in a timely manner. I appreciated your help and willingness to work with me on this project.

If you would like, I will provide you with the results of my study. Thank you again for your time and energy that helped complete my research! If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Laurie Wickman
Phone: (920) 926-0783
email: wickmanl@post.uwstout.edu

