

**Getting out of the kitchen and into the bedroom: The objectification of women in  
advertising through the use of design elements**

**Exploring the perception of sexual imagery and objectification in advertising  
amongst graphic design undergraduates**

by

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## ABSTRACT

“Sex sells” is a common phrase popular in the world of advertising and marketing. More specifically, it is the sexual material plastering the pages of magazines in various forms of advertisements such as cologne or alcohol, selling not only the product itself, but also the women who inhabit it.

This thesis gives a brief introduction to the sexual history behind “the gaze”—the lustful stare man places on a woman, its impact on advertising, and how America’s universities are not properly informing their undergraduates of the overtly sexual content. In many regards, painting during the Renaissance paved the way for the explicit use of the female figure and “the gaze,” which has become an element of how we view her. Painters represented women as objects of desire to the viewer—presumably a man—and this concept is often used in advertisements and designs today. This could lead to a false interpretation of whom a woman should be and how she should act in our society, or it could also lead to body issues within our youth, especially in young girls.

Many commercials and print ads today have a misogynist theme, making the woman’s role lesser than her male counterpart. Some men have a fear of losing power and status, and support the idea of keeping a woman in her traditional role, thus contributing to the perception that the most important aspect of a woman has become her sexuality (Jhally, 2007). What do these images demonstrate to America’s youth? With each overly sexual picture plastered on billboards 45 feet in the air or hidden within magazines, the idealized image of women—according to Jean Kilbourne (1999), an author and speaker on the image of women in advertising—is becoming the norm, influencing how we, especially men, judge real women.

This thesis will investigate if undergraduate students in graphic design truly understand why they use stimulating content, or if they are mimicking what they see through promotional ad elements such as imagery, typography and color.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Overview

*“Unto the woman God said, ‘I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee.’”*

*-Genesis 3:16*

Just as God proclaimed, Eve would bear children and take care of her husband.

Likewise, women in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries have been used in advertisements to cater to others’ desires. Take a moment to think of the great commanders, dictators, presidents or leaders of any country. Are any of these individuals that came to your mind a woman?

Assuming most of you thought of male leaders, history has shown us of men’s power, and the limits of women’s position and status in careers, families and relationships. There have been exceptions such as Queen Victoria, Queen Elizabeth, Cleopatra and Margaret Thatcher, but they are rare exceptions to the general trend in the world’s leaders, who have been predominantly male.

In recent years, many documentaries and studies have been conducted, examining the role media plays in gender representation. In the documentary *(Miss) Representation*, Caroline Heldman, Ph.D. argues, “leadership is seen as a masculine pursuit and women are discouraged from pursuing ambitious positions” (Newsom Siebel, 2011). Heldman goes on to say, that in the last few centuries, women have become more recognized in both the political and the work sphere of life; however according to many interviewees in *(Miss) Representation*, many women of power are seen as “bitchy,” moody, or whiny, while male

leaders are seen as powerful and in control. This stereotype of leadership and power were—and sometimes still are—translated into advertising’s vision of women.

Similarly to the arguments in the *(Miss) Representation* documentary, recent studies such as the World Economic Forum’s annual Global Gender Gap Report discovered that “women have gained little ground in political leadership around the world, with men still in about 80 percent of key elected and appointed positions” (Rupp, 2012). Following World War II, occupational segregation and an increased pay gap between the genders was established (Faludi, 2006). Like the documentary and the Global Gender Gap Report, many authors have discussed this void in the workplace, in politics and in society. According to Susan Faludi (2006), the advancement in women’s rights was halted during the late 1940s and 1950s after men returned to America from the war in Europe. Additionally, Faludi mentions that women have “learned to adjust” to the new way of thinking within our American culture and different social groups (2006, p. 72). Since that time, the gender gap has fluctuated, opening doors for women in leadership positions and closing the gap between gender inequalities. However, in more recent years, this divide has again attributed to the gender roles displayed in the media.

A lack of respect for women in art, advertising and other forms of media may have contributed to an objectified image of females. Think of all the negative images—such as sexually objectified or gender stereotypical pictures—of women we see daily in commercials, printed advertisements, films, etcetera and how they impact our perceptions of real women. Is the imagery from these ads or commercials an accurate representation of our mothers, daughters, sisters and wives? There has been increasing interest in the role both men and women play in the media, especially in advertisements. According to Phyllis B. Frank

(2008), advocate for gender and civil rights, objectification stems from “portrayal of women in ways and contexts which suggest that women are objects to be looked at, ogled, even touched, or used, anonymous things or commodities perhaps to be purchased, perhaps taken—and once tired of, even discarded, often to be replaced by a newer, younger edition; certainly not treated as full human beings with equal rights and needs” (para. 6). The literature on sexual objectification is quite extensive. However, the gap between how men and women (even boys and girls) are represented in ads and how to change this portrayal is still considerable. These advocates such as Jean Kilbourne or Sut Jhally discuss the need for change. However, many of the students coming out of the graphic design programs in the United States may not be finding this sexual imagery and gender representations as serious enough to alter. If these are the individuals who will be formulating our media, what are educators doing to establish a sense of importance in image representation and image interpretation? Very few studies have investigated how undergraduate graphic design students interpret the sexual imagery they are interacting with each day via their television sets, magazines, Internet videos and news media.

It is still not clear how these students see the sexual content of an advertisement, and if they are mimicking images found in popular media resources in their own work. Given this lack of knowledge on the subject, there could be a continuing perpetuation of this content in representations of men and women in the future. There is a need for a better understanding of how undergraduate graphic design students in the United States interpret images and whether they see it as a serious matter. This research concentrates on the effects that sexual imagery in ads have on American society by focusing on body image, gender roles and beauty. This study was designed to evaluate the relationship between image perception of advertisements

and how society views women, specifically, how graphic design undergraduates at Iowa State University see these ads and if they find them to be a serious issue to our social views on femininity and masculinity. Based on the survey conducted on image interpretation with graphic design undergraduates, the following hypothesis was formulated for this study: many of the students recognize the sexual content within advertisements, but do not see it as a serious matter to change. According to Jean Kilbourne (1999), women's bodies today are seen as "property to be looked at, commented on, touched, perhaps eventually hit and raped," and this mindset has impacted how we view the women in our communities (p. 280). With this information, this thesis focuses on one specific advertisement category: alcohol.

Although a plethora of advertisements ranging from Burger King Whoppers to Calvin Klein apparel rely on sexual content to sell goods, the use of a woman's body within alcohol marketing campaigns is distinctly sexual, and often accompanied by cleverly phrased 'fun' commentary and other design factors. For example, in Figure 1, the tagline "pursue your daydreams" is presumably used to describe the scene for the two subjects in the ad as well as the daydreams for the viewers of this promotion. This advertisement is 'fun,' and all those who view it will also experience a similar fantasy—a theme explored in the survey discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.





**Figure 1.** Jose Cuervo advertisement, unknown ad agency, 2002

### 1.1.1 Background of the study

Popular culture continues to portray women as sexual objects for a man's inner yearning. This phenomenon is not a recent discovery. Instead, it began many centuries ago in a world that was drastically changing in all forms, the Renaissance. John Berger discusses the importance of how we view women in different forms of media in his book, *Ways of Seeing*. Berger describes Renaissance artists—as well as other artists involved in other styles such as early Impressionists—and their methods of producing work containing images of the female form. Because of this, the audience was presumably male, and the female within the painting was presented for the spectator-owner, or the person who owns and is viewing the art (Berger, 1977). As Berger explains, a woman's presence "expresses her own attitude to herself, and defines what can and cannot be done to her" (1977, p. 46). Although the

technique differs still in style, the image and the meaning portrayed in the Renaissance paintings does not journey far from what we see today in the media.

Overtime, Renaissance artists progressively introduced more sexual content in their work. For example, in Hans von Aachen's painting, *Bacchus, Cerse and Cupid*, the woman "is aware of being seen by the spectator," and is appealing to *his* sexuality (Berger, 1977, p. 56). Interestingly, the man in the painting looks longingly at the nude woman, while she does not acknowledge his gaze. Instead, she looks outward at the spectator—the man who owns the painting—and passionately returns his gaze, knowing he watches her. As a result, the woman has now become an object for both the man viewing the piece and the men in the painting (Berger, 1977). The method of "the gaze" has been a major theme for scholars who discuss gender equality and gender stereotypes displayed in advertisements. Scholars such as Berger (1977) have argued its ability to make a painting appear lustful with assistance of the female form for her male viewer. Additionally, the psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan argues of the impact of "the gaze," which he claims begins at a young age, and continues throughout an individual's life.



**Figure 2.** Hans von Aachen, *Bacchus, Ceres and Cupid*, 1599-1602

In order to better clarify the specific ways of seeing as discussed by Berger, one must discuss “the gaze,” a term used by Jacques Lacan (1949) in his article, *The Mirror Stage*, to describe a baby’s ability to recognize itself in the mirror. Additionally, the term has evolved to describe other situations. The gaze, as defined by John Berger (1977), is when “men look at women. However, women also watch themselves being looked at...the surveyor of woman in herself is male: the surveyed female. Thus she turns herself into an object” (p. 47). Berger points out that this objectification of women is evident in the Renaissance paintings and in advertisements today. This form of “the gaze” plays a negative role in our society, by

describing women as nothing more than sexual beings in both the viewings of men to women, women to women and women to themselves.

Likewise, today's advertisements mimic this same state of mind, making the woman a 'sight' for the presumably male audience. The use of "the gaze" or "sight" within advertising and other forms of media has become an important issue among those involved with gender equality. For example, Sut Jhally (2007), producer of *Dreamworlds 3* also comments on the sight in which women are viewed, stating, "women are dependent on men for their emotional control," which he describes as a technique used in many advertisements as well as music videos to dehumanize a female. In this regard, these women have become not only dependent on men, but a man's property. She no longer can be used for anything other than pleasure and desire, which many designers emulate through the use of framing the shot used to record the scene (e.g. camera or drawing utensil).

The way in which a figure within an image is positioned can subconsciously render certain emotional feelings within the viewer. With this, designers are well aware of the use of the figure itself for both marketing aspects and developing a certain desire within the audience. This same technique used by Renaissance artists, positioned the figure in an alluring manner for the audience of men (Figure 2).

The point of view in which the audience sees the figure in paintings usually comes at a front-angled position (Berger 1979), while many of the advertisements from today tend to use what Jhally (2007) refers to as a "pornography fantasy" style. The pornography fantasy can be described as a dream world in which women enjoy any sexual advance or sexual situation they are put into (Jhally 2007). For example, Jhally (2007) mentions this pornography fantasy displayed at the Puerto Rican Pride Parade in New York City in 2000.

During the parade, a plethora of men stripped clothing from the women participating in the event and doused them with beverages. According to the documentary *Dreamworlds 3* (2007), this real-world event was brought on by the pornographic mindset displayed in music videos. To establish the pornographic view, positioning of camera or subjects, is needed to appeal to the audience of the video, ad or commercial.

Instead of shooting frontal shots, many advertisement designers rely on imagination by positioning the camera or other technical device between the legs of a female or pointing downward (or upward) to give the illusion of an adolescent sexual gaze. Jhally (2007) later refers to this view of looking upward—being able to view the woman’s private parts as well as undergarments—as the “forbidden view,” which he argues is triggering a pubescent state-of-mind for men and boys.

In addition, designers also exaggerate the female form by over extending the position of the woman. For example, in Figure 3, the woman is arching her back and pushing her body upward to accentuate her breasts. An increasing issue as discussed by Jhally (2007) and Kilbourne is the reduction of woman to body parts (Lazarus and Wunderlich, 2010). Jhally (2007) explains that this reduction of women into body parts as only a single story of the body and of how femininity is represented or viewed. Likewise, Kilbourne describes this as a way to dehumanize the woman in the ad (Lazarus and Wunderlich, 2010). For documentarians such as Jhally and Kilbourne, the camera plays a particular role in how the public sees a woman.



**Figure 3.** Cabana Vodka, Avrett Free Ginsberg, 2007

Jhally (2007) goes on to talk about the use of the camera to break down a woman's body into parts, relating these views to a pornographic gaze, which communicates who women are to those watching. He goes on to discuss the link between the pornographic gaze and adolescent thought, arguing the two are intertwined (Jhally, 2007). Although Jhally discusses the use of this concept in the creation of music videos, the same can be said of advertising. Jean Kilbourne has generated great deal of discussion of the subject matter in a variety of her documentaries (Still Killing Us Softly, 2010, and Slim Hopes, 1995) arguing

that many of the women's "bodies are dismembered in ads" and warns about the consequences it has on our interpretation of how women ought to look in every day life.

In her documentary, *Still Killing Us Softly*, Kilbourne puts several ads she has collected on display and discusses how the advertising world has created a mentality of "your worth depends on how you look" instead of how you do something (Lazarus and Wunderlich, 2010). The idea of the inner adolescent mindset within men has attracted much attention recently. In this manner of thinking, the inner adolescent male is that of a pre-pubescent individual who thinks only in a sexual manner, taking apart a woman's body (Newsom Siebel, 2011). This same technique can be seen in advertisements today, which shows that although times continue to change, the desire within a man to be in control, through the use of dismembering a woman's body and the pornography fantasy, does not.

### **1.1.2 Purpose of the study**

The present study reports data from an investigation of the effects of sexual imagery in alcohol advertisements. This investigation sought to determine how undergraduate students at Iowa State University majoring in graphic design interpret sexual imagery with in these ads. In the beginning, there was much doubt in the students' ability to understand and recognize promotional manner displaying subtle or obvious sexual content. After reviewing work produced by the graphic design undergraduates in Iowa State University's student magazines such as *Revival* and *Trend*, it was also uncertain if these students recognized the manner in which women were used in advertisements (Figure 4 and 5).



In both student magazines, the sexually fueled images appear to be similar to those found in magazines and in commercials. Figure 4 was taken from *Revival*, a student led publication, in which two young females—who are also students—are seemingly about to kiss. Could the photo be taken directly from a fashion magazine? Likewise, *Trend* uses techniques found in many advertisements today. According to Erving Goffman (1979), women are more often than men seen with their hands or fingers around their face. The woman in the *Trend* image is doing this same act. She is touching her face in a delicate way, indicating that her body is a “precious thing” (Goffman, 1979). Poses and sexually fueled images such as these may have been influenced by the print and digital promotions seen in multiple forms of media today.



With the objectification of women in advertisements and the similar use of women in Iowa State University's student magazines, the American society appears to be developing a negative mentality for both femininity and masculinity. The use of sexually objectified images of women is also seen in promotional materials outside the U.S., and could be seen as worse. For example, men are seen as violent, manly, or sexual beings like in a Dolce & Gabana fragrance advertisement from 2007. In this printed ad, a group of men watch as another man holds down a woman in a scene that appears to be a gang rape (Figure 6).



*Figure 6.* Dolce & Gabbana advertisement, unknown ad agency, 2007

According to Barbara B. Stern, men have specific stereotypes in advertisements. She claims these to be the superhero,—male-bonder who is seen as a macho man with no emotion—or the body builder who is stronger than the weak female, or the gay man who is everything anti-masculine (Reichert and Lambiase, 2003, p. 221). The representations of the men in the Dolce & Gabbana ad are displayed in a similar manner to Stern's analysis. The Dolce & Gabbana ad along with many others have created a level of sexual content in which many other ads are attempting to out do the last with more shocking imagery.

The aim of this paper is to develop an understanding of the relationship between how the figures are represented in ads and how the previously mentioned body of students may view sexualized imagery. A presentation of both commercials and printed advertisements was given through the use of an online survey, using the Qualtrics Survey System. From here, a clear understanding of the perceptions of women in advertisements and sexual content was determined. Additionally, a collection of data from Iowa State University's graphic design undergraduates was composed to determine if they use specific gender roles in their own work. This information helped to explain how America's future designers consciously or unconsciously use women sexually to promote a product or if the students plan to use imagery displaying sexual content in their own work.

### **1.1.3 Boundaries of the study**

In examining the response from undergraduate graphic designers, a survey was given to several American men and women with a median age between 18 and 40 who are currently attending Iowa State University. The survey consisted of 5 graduate students with an emphasis in graphic design to see if a consistent use of sexual content has continued beyond the undergraduate program. According to documentaries such as *Dreamworlds 3*

(2007) and *Still Killing Us Softly* (2010), individuals between the ages of 13 and 17 are similar to what are referred to as “adolescent” males. This is the age range in which adult males (18-35) revert back to when viewing a woman’s body. Along with the “teenage boy” mentality, girls also have a vague idea of what femininity and womanhood means (Newsome Siebel, 2011). The specific age range in contributors (18-35) was considered when creating the survey as a means to better comprehend the adolescent view many of these advertisements are comprised of in terms of content and observation.

Much of the “teenage boy” mentality consists of a more sexual view of women. According to Jean Kilbourne in her documentary, *Slim Hopes* (1995), “One in ten young women in America today, have a serious eating disorder, the most common of which are anorexia and bulimia.” She goes on to argue that research has found that the self-esteem of girls plummets when they reach adolescence resulting in eating disorders and depression, which is an issue not seen in boys their age (Kilbourne, 1995). The survey was created to determine if the graphic design undergraduates experience this view of sexual content with ads and if they are aware of it, whether they see it as a major consequence to change the use of sexual imagery of women.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This research set to find whether these factors have an effect on society’s view of femininity and whether students recognize the threat of sexualized advertisements brings to American society. Below are questions this thesis will explore:

1. What perspective do the undergraduate students majoring in graphic design have on body image, femininity and unwitting objectification?

2. Do the graphic design undergraduates recognize sexual imagery that portrays stereotypical gender roles?

### **1.3 Thesis Outline**

Chapter 2 explores the significant literature related to the research questions. Chapter 3 discusses the methods used in the conduction of the online survey. Chapter 4 presents the results of the survey and will discuss the findings of those results. The appendix contains supporting data for the summary and findings of the analysis.

### **1.4 Definition of Key Terms**

The terms listed below are meant to provide a general definition rather than an exact definition provided by the authors or scholars who use the terms within their work.

- *Beauty Myth*: The notion females have created that they do not measure up in beauty when it comes to their looks (Olin, 2003)
- *Ego*: The self especially as contrasted with another self or the world; The one of the three divisions of the psyche in psychoanalytic theory that serves as the organized conscious mediator between the person and reality especially by functioning both in the perception of and adaptation to reality (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2013)
- *Gaze*: A psychoanalytic term that describes the anxious state that comes with the act of being viewed by another. The observed becomes an object for the person who is viewing them (Berger, 1977)

- “*I*”: Jacques Lacan describes this term as being what someone thinks about themselves or their image; how someone imagines himself or herself (Lacan, 1949)
- *Inner adolescence*: The child-like being within each individual; mostly discussed when talking of men’s pleasure and fantasies (Jhally, 2007)
- “*Mirror stage*”: The belief that infants can recognize themselves in the mirror from the age about 6 months (Lacan, 1949)
- *Objectification*: To treat as an object or cause to have objective reality (Merriam-Webster, 2013)
- *Returned gaze*: Margaret Olin (2003) describes this as “one who is looked at looks back at the viewer; an equal relationship between the viewer and the viewee”
- *Scopophilia*: eroticized looking. Can be either active, which allows the woman to look back at the viewer, returning his gaze, and he is then reminded of castration from this act, or fetishistic (Margaret Olin, 2003).
- *Spectator-owner*: John Berger describes this as “one who owns an image and all that is in it,” or a person, presumably a man, who views a painting, ad, movie, or other media and sexualizes the person, presumably a woman, in the scene.
- *Visual perception*: The way an image or object is seen to a particular viewer (Olin, 2003)

## CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1 “The Gaze” and Representations of Women in Art

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary (2014), the word “renaissance” means a rebirth or revival. During the Renaissance, European countries evolved out of the Dark Ages. This evolution was a transition from a time that was “superstitious and artistically primitive” to a time of “rediscovery of rational civilization,” within all forms of life ranging from political to artistic (*History of the Renaissance*, para. 2). Just as the Renaissance in the arts, the women’s movement—late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries—was formed to change gender-bias laws in American culture.

After the laws were passed in favor of the women’s movement, women obtained their goals of getting closer to gender equality, but never fully took advantage of their opportunities and postponed their efforts (Faludi, 2006). As Susan Faludi (2006) reflects on the different view of the women’s movements throughout history, she argues that “an accurate charting of American women’s progress through history might look more like a corkscrew tilted slightly to one side, its loops inching closer to the line of freedom with the passage of time—but never touching its goal,” (p. 61).

Similarly to the Renaissance, the women’s movements in American history were and still are times for rebirth. These movements helped to transform life from an old way of thinking, in which women were not given the same opportunities as men such as working wages or the right to vote, to a new and more equal way to live. In fact, it was during the Renaissance in which images of women were painted in a more sexualized manner. These paintings were used as a way to entertain a man’s inner desire and to show the owner—the man viewing and often owning the painting—“the sights of what he may possess” through the

use of the female form (Berger, 1977). John Berger (1977), art critic, novelist and painter, investigated the importance of understanding the use of the female form and how a painting's audience views it. The existing literature on ways in which we see a female figure within a piece of art or other form of media, suggests that we, the audience, have taken on a more masculine manner in viewing the woman. According to John Berger (1977), the gaze that brought on this objectification of women can be traced back to the artists of the Renaissance era.

“To be naked is to be oneself. To be nude is to be seen naked by others” (Berger 1977, p. 54). Here, Berger reiterates how Kenneth Clark drew a distinction between the words “naked” and “nude” in his book *The Nude*. Both authors discuss the differences between the two terms, explaining their significance in paintings, specifically when connected to the female form. Berger argues for a woman's need to continually watch herself; although the surveyor of her nude form is presumably male, who continually watches the woman in the painting, she internally judges herself like the men viewing her, creating a masculine mindset in herself, (Berger, 1977). As a result, not only do men treat women in a negative manner, but also women treat themselves negatively.

Many paintings prior to the Renaissance involved naked figures of biblical characters, which are often seen as innocent and the nakedness of the figures is not the focus, but as time went on, the naked figures became nudes and the imagery became erotic. One of the major techniques for expressing “the gaze” used by many Renaissance artists was that of the mirror. To Berger, the mirror has become “a symbol of the vanity of a woman” (1977, p. 57). Because of this, he uses many examples of women who are often interpreted as a figure utilizing the mirror, exploring the woman's arrogance and view of herself. *Susannah and the*

*Elders* by Renaissance artist Tintoretto uses this mirror technique, in which Susannah views her own image as the spectators within the painting look on, watching her in the nude state (Figure 7). Here, the viewer can see a woman intimately bathing herself as she gazes at her own image in the mirror. The male elders in the painting view her in her private time, as does the viewer who is also looking on. Because of this, the character representing Susannah has now become an object of man's desire. Susannah is openly allowing others to view her, which is a theme that has become popular in advertisements today and helps to connect us back to "the gaze."



**Figure 7.** Tintoretto, *Susannah and the Elders*, 1555, Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna



It is commonly known that the Renaissance was an ideal time for inventors, engineers, artists and many others who created many devices, machines, and artwork still in use today. Many of these items and ideas are positive to our culture (e.g. the helicopter), providing us with new and exciting experiences. The existing literature on “the gaze,” of what Berger (1977) phrases as “ways of seeing,” argue that some of these methods of thought have created an owner-owned mentality situation within paintings, the audience being the owner and the woman in the artwork being the owned.

For example, in Bronzino’s (originally Agnolo di Cosimo) painting, *An Allegory of Time and Love*, Cupid is kissing Venus as the other characters look on (Figure 8). The painting was originally created for the King of France, and it was, as Berger argues, “made to appeal to his sexuality” (1977, p, 55). Venus’ body is arranged in a way that displays her to the man looking at the painting. Berger (1977) points out that women in Renaissance paintings—especially *An Allegory of Time and Love*—“are there to feed an appetite, not to have any of their own” (p. 55). Later on in his studies, Berger discusses ways of seeing, which are evident in paintings as a technique used by many ad agencies when they use women in certain campaigns.



**Figure 8.** Bronzino, *An Allegory of Time and Love*, 1545, National Gallery, London

As time has gone on from paintings to advertisements, designers have perpetuated the techniques used by Renaissance artists, placing a gaze on the woman within a piece. Moreover, numerous studies have examined “the gaze” within eroticized ads, which are filled with sexual imagery of both men and women, giving society false interpretations of what masculinity and femininity mean.

### **2.1.1 Defining the origins of “the gaze”**

“The gaze” has become a significant term used by many scholarly writers, including Margaret Olin and Jacques Lacan, relating it to sexual objectification of women. In order to be looked at, there must be a viewer and a viewee (Newsom Siebel, 2011). Without both, “the gaze” does not represent what it has come to mean today. Many scholars have written on

the topic of sexual objectification and “the gaze,” decoding the science of image interpretation and appeal. In each of their prose, the authors, Olin (2003) and Lacan (1949) argue their interpretation of the gaze and its affect on the public or individual receiving it. Discussion on the gaze has been around for centuries, but it first became a phenomenon in 1949 when Jacques Lacan wrote *The Mirror Stage*.

As Lacan (1949) explains in his article, the “mirror stage” is the moment, somewhere around six months, when an infant recognizes his own reflection in a mirror. From here, an identification of the image is established and a mental representation of “I” and ego are developed within the child (Lacan, 1949). He goes on to argue that “I” becomes an ideal image for the child. The “I” is the realization of the self and who we are, and the “mirror image would seem to be the threshold of the visible world” or the baby believes the mirror image is how the world sees him (Lacan, 1949, p. 3). With this false interpretation of how he thinks the world sees him through the mirror image, the baby has now come to realize the person he sees in front of him is actually himself. Although he may not understand the complete concept of a mirror, he does comprehend who he is.

With the baby’s understanding of who he believes the world thinks he is, the infant strives to uphold his image throughout his life, forming a dependence on an external “other” to maintain the ego he has established from the mirror image. The “other,” or society, is a projection of a misrecognized ideal (Lacan, 1949). The baby has now become aware of how others perceive him, and he knows he must live up to their recognition in order to maintain his reflected image. Therefore, the baby’s gaze at himself through the mirror gives him feedback on his internal self, or ego (Lacan, 1949). It is “the gaze” that has spurred a plethora of arguments and discussions of how it affects society, art and those individuals viewing the

artwork. After Lacan established this recognition of “the gaze” of the infant upon himself, and Berger argues of “the gaze” of the man onto the woman in ads and other media, many other scholars—such as Margaret Olin—began to argue how “the gaze” seen in Renaissance paintings has become a tool used in advertisements to sexually objectify women.

Margaret Olin (2003) investigated the affects of “the gaze” on society and argues that it is a negative relationship between the beholder and the object through a use of ownership of that object. Olin suggests that most discourse about “the gaze” “concerns pleasure and knowledge; however, it generally places both of these in the service of issues of power, manipulation and desire (2003, p. 319). With this, the image of women displayed in different forms of media has developed into what society may see as a desirable or pleasing figure.

“Your gaze hits the side of my face,” as stated by Barbara Kruger, a renowned designer, and quoted by Olin to reference the gaze of the man onto the woman in ads and other forms of media (2003, p. 322). Throughout her prose, Olin is concerned with the use of the female form within art, film and advertisements. She argues, “a work of art, like a person, can seem to gaze or be gazed at,” before mentioning the importance of scopophilia within all forms of art, especially that of film (2003, p. 320-321). As explained by Olin (2003), scopophilia is eroticized looking and can be passive, allowing the viewer to gaze, or active, in which the woman looks back at the viewer, returning his gaze.

According to Olin (2003), the returned gaze upon the viewer, the man, is telling him that she would like to castrate him. Man cannot handle the returned gaze so his gaze upon the woman has become fetishistic in order to silence her so the men can worship her (Olin, 2003). Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that man’s fear of castration comes from the woman’s gaze back at him, making him realize his wrongdoing and placing guilt within his

gaze. Because this, “power is on his side,” for he will not allow the woman to be in control (Olin, 2003, p. 322). Olin, along with other scholars (e.g. Mulvey, 1999) agree that once the fetish is pronounced, the woman remains powerless because she has been silenced by the male and no longer has a voice.

Both Olin and Berger declare the importance of “the gaze” in painting, mentioning Manet’s *Olympia* (1863). Inspired from Titian’s *Venus of Urbino* (1538), Manet recreated a sensually positioned woman, who is commonly known to be a prostitute, gazing out at the viewer (Figure 9). In both paintings, the artist has deliberately painted the woman in a provocative pose in which the returned gaze is an invitation for the spectator-owner to look upon her body. Berger (1977) reiterates this effect as he discusses “the gaze” in the painting, *Nell Gwynne* (1618), by Lely.



**Figure 9.** Edouard Manet, *Olympia*, 1863, Musée d’Orsay, Paris

Berger (1977) explains Nell's similar gaze outward at the spectator, and recognizes her nakedness, just like Olympia's as "a sign of her submission to the owner's feelings and demands (p. 52). In a different view, Olin (2003) describes this painting and this particular gaze used throughout art history as an equal relationship between the viewer and viewee. Because Olympia is seen as a prostitute, she is no longer an innocent being. Instead she is a sexual being, whose duty is to relieve men of their sexual tension, which she does through her stare. According to Marilyn Stokstad (2004) in the book, *Art: A brief history*, Olympia is the modern counterpart to Titian's Venus. Stokstad (2004) describes Manet's Olympia as angular and flattened in look as well as coldly looking at the male spectator while Titian's Venus is curvaceous and who looks at the viewer in a loving manner. Olin (2003) believes in the importance of the spectator-owner looking at the women in the painting, who is looking back out to the spectator-owner. Only here will their relationship in power be equal (Olin, 2003).

## **2.2 Brief History of American Advertisements (1800s - WWII)**

Winston Fletcher, author of *Advertising: A very short introduction* differentiates the definitions of advertising and advertisement. To him, these are two entirely different items. Fletcher (2010) describes advertising as a process and advertisements as the end result of that process. He goes on to clarify that an advertisement is "a paid-for communication intended to inform and/or persuade one or more people" (2010, p. 2). Fletcher (2010) notes that in order to have a successful advertisement, the promotion itself must first have an objective—usually more than one for a single ad. Likewise, Arthur Asa Berger (2011) argues that advertisements are methods used to call attention to a product. He explains the term as "a

kind of text that attracts attention to, simulates desire for and in some cases leads to the purchase of a product or service” (Berger, 2011, p. 197).

From these definitions a clearer understanding of the intent of the use of an advertisement is established. It is widely believed that advertisements help to tell us what to buy or what is “hot” in popular culture. Although advertisements have changed throughout history, the techniques used today are quite similar to those used in advertising’s beginning in the United States.

One of the biggest contributors to advertising’s establishment in the United States was Benjamin Franklin, who marketed items in his paper, *The Philadelphia Gazette*. Franklin was the first individual in America to use both texts as well as woodcuts to advertise products, while others before him only used text ads (O’barr, 2005). However, the advertisements and illustrations were varied during this time in history. Instead of focusing on consumer goods like that of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, an alarming number of early American advertisements were notices for slave trade or the capture of escaped slaves (Reed, 2012). As time went on, advertisements switched from primarily text-bodied promotions to both text and illustration integrations. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, new uses of advertisements were invented such as the use of the brand of a product, and the need for a surplus in production was great (Neuhaus, 2011). It is widely accepted that because of this, creative advertising became a useful technique for many merchants to expand their products appeal during the Industrial Revolution and is still in use today.

With the establishment of large advertisement agencies, “commerce and newspapers once again took their place in the fabric of society,” leading to the change in how we purchase goods after the Civil War (O’Barr, 2010, para. 72). As a result, the branding

image—or the view customers have about a brand—became a key factor in how consumers purchase products. Because of this, different forms of branding techniques and the image of women began showing up on many manufactured goods such as crackers or soap (Figure 10). For example, Pears' Soap—a company owned by Andrew Pears at the time and located in London England—is a company that relied on the use of an upper-middle to upper class female, and the use of both text and image to market their product. The image shows a link between the upper class—represented by the women below—and cleanliness, leaving the ad text to identify the product's producer.



**Figure 10.** Pears' Soap advertisement, unknown ad agency, 1899

Instead of depicting scenes of the lower class—which could be interpreted as unclean—Pears' Soap decided to show a well dressed, attractive woman, seemingly a



member of high-end society, to sell their product. This ad as well as many others began the use of an idealized woman for womanly products, promoting beauty and health. According to Juliann Sivulka, author of an excerpt from the book *Sex in Advertising: Perspectives on the Erotic Appeal*, around the 1890s, the use of advertisements in magazines skyrocketed and many of these magazines created where targeting the married woman with children such as *Better Homes and Gardens* or *Good Housekeeping* (Reichert and Lambiase, 2003). Sivulka further argues that the presentation of a woman's body was "not only for visual delectation of the onlooker, but functioned in his or her own world to sell a product, service or idea" (Reichert and Lambiase, 2003, p. 43).

As time went on, women's role in advertising evolved, parallel to their roles in society. According to Jessamyn Neuhaus, the early 1900s housewife was a female who was "neatly dressed, slim, pleasant-looking, married and a mother of a middle-class home and family" similar to the woman used in Figure 10 (2011, p. 110). For the first time in advertising history, the housewife had been established. After WWI, canned goods and processed foods became popular and made domestic chores easier on the newly established housewife (Neuhaus, 2011). After WWII began in 1941 at Pearl Harbor, America's view of women's role in advertising changed dramatically. The existing literature on women's role in ads, strongly suggests that women were more commonly used as propaganda for the war, selling war bonds and recruiting women to factory work (Figure 11). Nevertheless, once the war was over and the soldiers returned to America, the image of women in advertising reverted again, in the 1950s, to the role of the housewife and caregiver.

THE AIR YOU BREATHE SHOULD BE AS PURE AS THE WATER YOU DRINK

**Dolly...**  
*"doubles"* on the  
 short shift



**Rapid Air Change Promotes Energy-Plus!**

A crackerjack secretary by day, Dolly dons overalls at night . . . puts in *four more hours* in the same plant—working on the "half shift."

But Dolly wouldn't have that vital "energy-plus" without adequate ventilation to help her do a full day's work—and then some! "Bad air" accentuates fatigue, spreads disease, and sabotages war production. So wise executives provide "Vitalized Ventilation"—controlled air change (not just air movement).

Modern ventilation—including rapid removal of dangerous fumes, dust, steam, excessive heat—is brought about with ILG equipment, headlined by the famous Self-Cooled Motor Propeller Fan shown below. . . . Consult your classified directory for nearby branch office . . . or mail coupon or write today.

**BUY WAR BONDS AND STAMPS EVERY PAY-DAY!**



**ILG**

**VITALIZED VENTILATION**  
 AND AIR CONDITIONING  
**AIR CHANGE...NOT JUST AIR MOVEMENT!**

**FREE!** 48-page Condensed Catalog on Ventilation for America at War. Send coupon!

**ILG ELECTRIC VENTILATING CO., CHICAGO**  
 1647 NORTH CRAWFORD AVENUE, OFFICES IN 37 PRINCIPAL CITIES

☐ Send FREE copy of "Ventilation for the Nation"

*Ventilation for the Nation*

Figure 11. 1940s propaganda ad, unknown ad agency, 1943

From their beginning, advertisements have been an effective way of promoting a company's product. It is commonly known that advertising has helped promote the mass production of goods through the use of media throughout the world. Arthur Asa Berger reiterates his definition and stresses the importance of advertisements when he states, "advertising tries to attract attention to, create a desire for and stimulate action that leads to the purchase of products and services advertised on part of those reading print advertisements or listening to radio or television commercials" (2011, p. 7). Additionally, Berger (2011) points out that advertisers are attempting to motivate their viewers to action such as buying a specific product.

From its simple beginnings in the United States in newspapers and as flyers, advertising and advertisements have drastically changed the way we see products and models encompassing those ads. After the war, our view of a woman's role changed to the housewife and the caregiver of the home once again. Women were taken out of the factories and placed back in the home, whether they wanted to or not.

### **2.3 Post WWII Advertisements**

The 1950s were a time of optimism and prosperity in the United States unlike some prior times. During WWII, many companies developed weapons and artifacts for the war effort, helping to guide the nation out of the Depression. As a result, the image of women was not only a mother, but also a promoter for the war effort. This image quickly changed when the men came back from war, reclaiming their positions in the factories. Once the war was over, some women remained in the workforce, but still many went back to the home, taking care of their families and households.

Advertising quickly switched its view of women, promoting a happy woman in her home who looks after her children as well as her husband (Figure 12 & 13). These figures show a comparison between a 1940s image of Rosie the Riveter and a 1950s version of the housewife. Rosie the Riveter images were used in WWII to “encourage women to become wartime workers” for the factories constructing items to be shipped overseas to those fighting (Doyle, 2009, para. 3). Many companies and propaganda posters stressed patriotism, showing their viewers the products they were promoting were American made and strong (Newman and Souter, 1988).



**Figure 12 & 13.** 1940s propaganda advertisement (Rosie the Riveter), Westinghouse, 1942 and a 1950s Van Heusen advertisement, unknown ad agency, unknown year

Conversely, in the 1950s feminism became defined as the housewife. Neuhaus reflects on a quote by the historian Katherine Parkin who summarized 20<sup>th</sup> century print advertisements by saying, “women should shop and cook for others to express their love” (2011, p. 107). In Figure 13, the woman is providing a meal for the man as the caption reads,

“show her it’s a man’s world,” and also promotes the tie in which the man is wearing. The female has entered into the realm of working for her man and her family. As Margaret Olin (2003), says women have been silenced. Although she is discussing the use of a man’s gaze upon a woman, this same concept can be used here. The ad promotes the idea that men dominate the world and women should be silent.

According to Erving Goffman (1979), women were and still are positioned on the ground and are also featured below a man, suggesting a sense of male-dominance. The woman in Figure 13 is shown in both stances discussed by Goffman (1979). She is both lower than the man and sitting on the floor, which Goffman suggests that the positioning of men above women “employs high social status” (1979, p. 43). The 1950s Van Heusen ad may help determine the displayed dominance between the sexes and gives a glimpse into the use of gender stereotypes during the post WWII era.

Many scholars such as Naomi Wolf (1991) argue that the 1950s focused on homemaking and suburban family life, romanticizing the role of the housewife. According to Neuhaus (2011), many middle to upper class families had maids to take care of their home, but advertisements still idealized the housewife, showing her happily cleaning up after her children and husband as well as taking care of the home. Furthermore, this idolized 1950s version of femininity (Figure 13) muffled who women truly were at that point in America’s history. Advertisement designers focused on the housewife’s dependence on her husband, her lack of choices and career opportunities, and the fulfilling life of taking care of others (Newsome Siebel, 2011).

After WWII advertising companies needed to get women back in the home and men back in the factories through the use of the television set (Newsome Siebel, 2011). With this

device, TV shows such as *Leave it to Beaver* or *I Love Lucy* depicted the 1950s housewife, staying home and experiencing the “good life.” The television was also used to promote products through commercials, reiterating the importance of women in the home.

### **2.3.1 Women’s role in society during the 1950s**

*“I am able to baste the chicken with one hand and outline the paper with the other...it is our duty—nay obligation to reclaim our place in the home, bearing the children that will carry out traditions into the future.”*

- Mona Lisa Smile (2003)

The role of women has drastically changed throughout history, and her status in our society has always been lower than her male counterpart, though she is theoretically equal today. According to the PBS article, “Women and Work After World War II,” with the international expansion of the American economy after the war, men’s wages became higher than ever before, making it possible for the first time in U.S. history for a substantial number of middle class families to live comfortably on the income of one breadwinner. (2013, para. 4). With this, the factory girl became the housewife who supported her husband, and took care of their children and their home. PBS linked an interview with this article, explaining the change in society after the war’s end and the change in married life. In this interview with the University of Minnesota historian, Elaine Tyler May, the interviewer, Tom Foley, asks the historian of this sudden switch of women’s duties in the workforce back to the domesticity. She states that after the war, “prosperity was available” and “people were no longer afraid to commit to having children, because they could use the savings that had been pent up during the war,” (T. Foley, 2013, personal communication).

Because of women's scarcity of paid labor outside the home, women began to infuse professional work with that of being a homemaker. According to Tyler May, "the ideal was not only to be someone who cleaned the house and took care of the kids, but to be someone who became a professional, nurturing and educating her children, managing her household." (T. Foley, 2013, personal communication). Many women felt being a professional homemaker was their choice, and schools began to promote this, introducing courses like domestic science to show that this could be a satisfying role for any woman (T. Foley, 2013, personal communication). For example, Figure 14 shows a cartoon-like woman holding onto a man—who is presumably her husband's pants—as he tries to get away from helping to clean up after a party. Here is a clear illustration of gender roles in the home during the 1950s as represented in ads. Men were the workers and women were homemakers, but women "felt enthusiasm for building these great homes, living these prescribed gender roles" Tyler May argues (T. Foley, 2013, personal communication). Society had specific ideals for the home-life as well as the work force. It is in advertisements like this that show how women in society were perceived and how women were used in ads as the homemaker.





**If only parties didn't have an ending !**

**T**HE FUN is ended but the dirty dishes linger on. And, for a reason no man has ever fathomed, the hostess always seems to insist that the dishes be washed before anyone heads for the hay.

**But what a breeze** the job is with a Hotpoint Automatic Dishwasher! A few moments to set the dishes into the racks, twist a dial, and off to bed. Only in *this* dishwasher are china, glassware, silver, and kitchen utensils double-washed, double-rinsed, and dried electrically. They sparkle. And all without work.

**Your Hotpoint dealer®** has three models: under-counter, free-standing, combination sink. Special pump-drain feature makes installation easy and inexpensive in new homes or old. Hotpoint Co. (A Division of General Electric Company), Chicago 44, Illinois.

\*Dealers are listed in most classified phone directories.

**Hotpoint**  
Quality Appliances

**The Only Dishwasher That Washes Everything Twice !**

**Figure 14.** Hotpoint dishwasher advertisement, *Time Magazine*, November 1953

Although some imagery of the 1950s began creating a stir in erotic descriptions (a topic more familiar in 1960s), the housewife is the most recognizable portrayal of women during the decade. However, according to Kathleen Kendall-Tackett, Ph.D., (2001) the housewife was not viewed as a positive job title. She claims society did not meet this new profession with open arms although television and advertisements were pushing the ideal version of life at home in America during the 1950s (Kendall-Tackett, 2001).

In the 1960s many individuals in America began protesting inequality in race and gender as well as the demonstrating against the Vietnam War. These new societal ideals spread throughout the nation, even promoting a change within the images and themes seen in advertisements.

### **2.3.2 Changing times: How the image of women changed from the 1950s to today**

According to an article written in *Advertising Age* on the history of advertising during the 1960s, this decade was “advertising’s ‘coming of age’” once the industry began mastering the language of television (“History: 1960s,” 2003, para. 1). The existing literature on this decade strongly suggests that many of the advertisements were influenced by social and cultural changes. During this time, many young people began protesting against issues seen during their parent’s generation such as materialism, consumerism and capitalism (“History: 1960s,” 2003).

During this era, concerns such as race, gender and authority became things worth protesting. This time in advertising history was known as a “creative revolution,” or a time when traditional styles were discarded and a “new advertising” came to the forefront (“History: 1960s,” 2003). This new advertising was seen as humorous, disrespectful and self-deprecating, but it was mostly seen as ironic. Instead of relying on research, ad agencies turned to their creative instinct, attempting to influence their audience to purchase a product by using humor and irony (“History: 1960s, 2003). According the *Advertising Age* article, “print ads took on a realistic look, relying more on photography than illustration,” and many of their images featured white, cleaned up youth, something that was far from the counterculture audience the ad agencies were attempting to connect with (2003, para. 10).

Figure 15, for example, features a well-dressed, young white woman, lustfully looking out at her audience as she gently cups the Ronrico beverage in her hands. According to Erving Goffman (1979), author of *Gender Advertisements*, “women, more than men, are pictured using their fingers and hands to trace the outlines of an object or to cradle it or to caress its surface” (p. 29). In Goffman’s book, he breaks down the techniques used in advertisements when displaying men and women. In the Ronrico ad for example, the woman softly holds the cup, but not in a grasping or manipulating way that a man may hold an item, according to Erving (1979). Many of these techniques of representing the genders can be seen throughout America’s advertising history, establishing a subconscious hierarchy of men over women?



*Figure 15.* Ronrico Rum ad, unknown ad agency, 1966

From the 1960s to the 1970s, the new decade began in a minor recession, eroding faith in both government and business (“History: 1970s,” 2003, para. 3). During this time, gasoline shortages and new foreign manufacturers—the resignation of President Richard Nixon and the continuation of the Vietnam War—had a particular impact on America’s economy (“History: 1970s, 2003). Even with the decline in the nation’s faith in our government, advertisements continued to grow especially with the help of the new advertising medium: the television set. Unlike the 1960s, 1970s ad agencies began researching again, bringing a new positioning strategy to the forefront.

According to *Advertising Age*, the positioning strategy was when agencies positioned “a product in the consumer’s mind, both with the context of its own merits and strengths and in relation to its competitors” (“History: 1970s,” 2003, para. 9). This was popular amongst the soft drink companies such as 7-Up with their “Un-Cola” campaign or Pepsi’s secret camera comparison test, asking random individuals to taste test a Coca-Cola beverage and a Pepsi beverage. This technique was used to show most American’s enjoyed the taste of Pepsi over Coke, which both advertisers and the public “seemed to respond to the comparative advertising” seen in these ads (“History: 1970s,” 2003, para. 10). Likewise, light beer marketers began comparing the calorie counts of alcohol products, a technique that is still used today in many light beer commercials.

As advertising progressed from the 1970s to the 1980s, the ad industry began focusing its sights on the new technologies that were occurring. According to Mark Tungate in his book *Adland: A global history of advertising* (2013), “the 1980s are often regarded as the golden age of TV advertising,” because TV ads never got into their stride until then (p. 89). As ad agencies began to consolidate into larger companies for financial reasons, cable TV’s impact on the TV industry was being reshaped. It was now that audiences could ignore a multitude of commercials and ads due to products such as the remote control, which “gave TV viewers the ability to ‘zip’ and ‘zap’ their way through commercials” (“History: 1980s,” 2003, para. 12). Because of this, ad agencies had to figure out a new way to get their products to Americans. Media such as the infomercial and the Home Shopping Network became vehicles for TV advertising.

Like the few decades before it, the 1980s were marked for their challenges in the advertising industry. Much of the American audience questioned its effectiveness and the

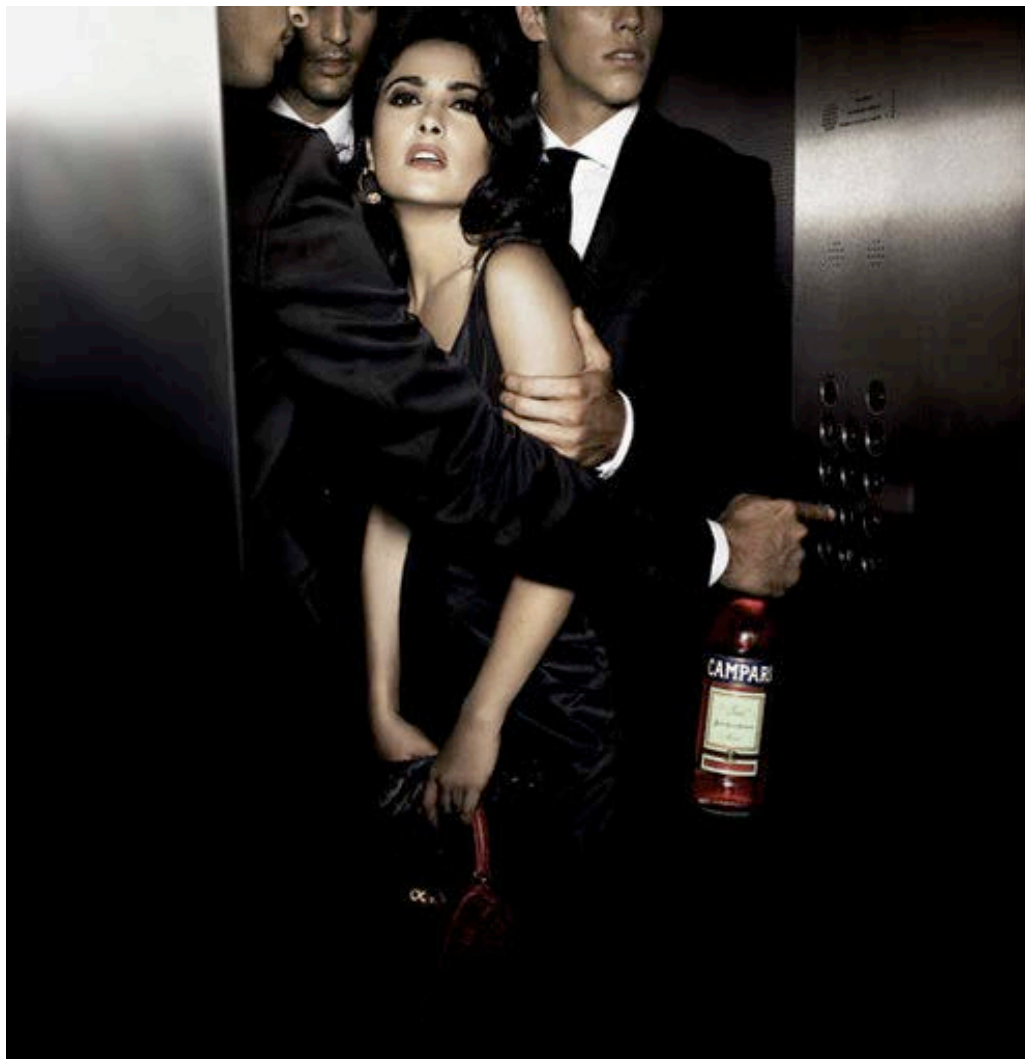
claims that were being made, however less so than in the 1960s and 1970s (“History: 1980s, 2003). With this method of reestablishing more honest promotional material, many new techniques were used in order to gain more trust from the American public.

With the start of technology such as the Internet, ad agencies and advertisers “sought to find the best media outlet to reach the largest audience at the lowest possible cost” (“History: 1990s,” 2003, para. 3). This was the first decade the public was truly able to have more choices and greater control with different technologies (“History: 1990,” 2003). In fact, to better target audiences of different race and values, specialized consultants began working with ad agencies and clients for more profitable advertisements. Because of this, small creative boutiques began opening in places such as Minneapolis or Portland, Oregon. These small shops were able to thrive because “technology innovations made the physical location of an agency less important” (“History: 1990,” 2003, para. 6). As technology became more important throughout the 90s, ad agencies searched for different techniques to communicate a product to the American public. These ads continued to portray sexual experiences, but began a never-ending feud between agencies, trying to top or out shock the last overly sexual advertisement.

## **2.4 Current Methods in Advertising: The Portrayal of Men and Women**

Although times have changed as well as the “ideal” standards for the way a woman should look or act in our society, the manner in which we use women for the marketing of a product has remained somewhat similar. Sut Jhally (2007) discusses the role women play in music videos as well as in advertisements, stating that each have “relied heavily on stories of female sexuality” to fulfill their function of selling products. The most important aspect of a woman in advertising over time became her sexuality (Jhally, 2007).

In many of today's advertisements, women are displayed as a voracious creature that is ready to have sexual escapades at any moment, even in an elevator (Figure 16). Like Berger's (1977) explanation of "the gaze" in paintings, especially those from the Renaissance, many of the promotional ads today seem to rely on male customers to purchase their products. Figure 16 demonstrates the men's gaze upon the woman within the advertisement and the presumably male audience watching the scene of the ad.



*Figure 16.* Campari ad, MRM, 2008

Erving Goffman (1979) extended the research on “the gaze” by discussing body language and positioning of the forms within an ad, which can subconsciously demonstrate a sort of ranking or power of the figures. He suggests that within an advertisement where men and women are pictured together, “the man is likely to perform the executive role” while the woman plays a more passive role (Goffman, 1979, p. 32). Goffman (1979) also claims that women are often shown lowering their bodies, often seen as a sign of weakness, while men are shown as more erect, which is a demonstration of power or superiority.

For example, in Figure 16 the woman slumps her body back and the men stand erect, enclosing in on the woman. Also, the woman seems almost removed from the action that is going on around her, another factor that Goffman (1979) describes as a technique only used with women in ads. Many studies have examined the subject of women psychologically removing themselves from social situations in ads, which appears to be what this woman in the Campari ad is doing. Perhaps to remove her from the possible gang rape that is about to take place.

Similarly to the hierarchy used in body positioning, the clothing displayed in the advertisement seems to demonstrate a sense of sophistication. Interestingly, each subject of the promotional ad is wearing clothing that would be seen as elite. Additionally, there is no distinct indication of hierarchy through the use of clothing, but there is a indication of the superiority of the men and woman because of the clothing chosen for the ad.

In the Campari ad (Figure 16), the scene is depicting what Jhally (2007) describes as the pornography fantasy, which is disrespect for women and gives the ad a sense of misogyny. In this particular ad, the pornography fantasy shows the spectators looking on, viewing the woman who is presumably a part of a gang rape through the use of multiple men



and their control over the woman. She, along with the women in other sexually driven ads (Figure 6), is now there for the desire of the male audience (Jhally, 2007).

The Campari ad is what Jean Kilbourne describes in her documentary, *Still Killing Us Softly 4* as eroticized violence, meaning the pornographic scene has become “cool” to the viewer because it indulges their inner most desires (Lazarus and Wunderlich, 2010).

Kilbourne continues discussing other methods in advertisements that sexually objectify women.

A common technique used in many advertisements is the dismemberment of a woman by showing only parts of their bodies and making those parts objects for men to gaze upon. Not only are women dismembered in ads, but women are also taken apart to demonstrate worth through beauty (Lazarus and Wunderlich, 2010). This dismemberment within ads, slices women into sections, focusing on specific parts or sections to eroticize the ad. According to Kilbourne, bodies are dismembered in ads, primarily focusing on the breasts, which she argues is the portion of a woman’s form with which America has become obsessed (Lazarus and Wunderlich, 2010). Additionally, it is through the use of dismemberment that many women within our media discuss their rise to success through the use of their body. In the documentary *(Miss) Representation*, Katie Couric explains how she “started with her legs” when she began in the news industry (Newsom Siebel, 2011). Another woman in the documentary exclaims that the American society is “a nation of teenage boys,” condoning women as sexual objects for not only the male’s desire, but to establish a woman’s success in a plethora of careers through the use of her body (Newsom Siebel, 2011). This demonstrates that it is not only men who are acting like teenage boys in America today.

According to Ariel Levy (2005), author of *Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of the Raunch Culture*, women have succumbed to a new way of displaying their sexuality and understanding of what femininity means. Throughout her book, Levy describes her interactions with young women all over the nation who have interesting views on what it means to be a woman. She first starts by telling a story of the *Girls Gone Wild* team who go out on spring breaks to capture women lustfully removing their clothing in front of their camera crew. Levy (2005) quotes Joe Francis, founder of *Girls Gone Wild*, comparing girls flashing the camera to women in the 70s burning their bras. He states “it is sexy for men, liberating for women, good for the goose and good for the gender” (Levy, 2005, p. 12).

Levy goes on to explore the reason why women put themselves on display for men and for the entire world to see. Moreover, reality TV has jumped on the beauty bandwagon, making beauty the most important part of being a woman (Levy, 2005). Levy (2005) argues that this image of women we see as America’s stars like Pamela Anderson or in our media such as *Girls Gone Wild* or *The Bachelor* “is our establishment, these are our role models, this is high fashion and low culture, this is athletics and politics, this is television and publishing and pop music and medicine being a part of it makes you a strong, powerful woman” (Levy, 2005, p. 26). It is these role models and programs that are pushing our society to rework the understanding of what it means to be a woman in America.

#### **2.4.1 What is beauty?**

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary (2014), beauty is “the quality or collective of qualities in a person or thing that gives pleasure to the senses or pleasurably exalts the mind or spirit; a beautiful person or thing, *especially* a beautiful woman.” How one looks has become the pinnacle of importance in our nation. Aside from merely looking

appealing, being good-looking establishes your power, success and worth to others around you (Lazarus and Wunderlich, 2010). Because of this, the general ideal image of women, which we see in our ads seem to affect the self-esteem of a surplus number of individuals, causing them to view themselves just as men do: as objects.

Throughout America's history, we have used women for different promotional needs some of which are advertising a product, endorsing the war and sexual pleasures. According to Naomi Wolf (1991), female beauty is a political weapon, used in the 1940s to encourage our nation to support the war in Europe. It is her belief that these propaganda images diminished our nation's advancement toward gender equality established by first wave feminists in the late 1910s and early 1920s when they fought for women's right to vote (Wolf, 1991). In addition, this war—driven political imagery of the 1940s kept male dominance alive, silencing the woman and defining power relationships (Wolf, 1991). This mindset of the dominant male and the insufficient female, whose role has been lessened, appear to still be in our advertisement designs today.

In today's advertisements, designers have created what Naomi Wolf (1991) describes as the "beauty myth." In this myth, women must embody beauty and men must want the woman who embodies that beauty, emphasizing the caveman mentality of natural selection (Wolf, 1991). With this, beauty is something women desire to obtain in order to receive "the gaze" from their male counterparts. According to Ariel Levy (2005), American women do not want to be excluded anymore, so they actively seek male attention by being sexy. In Figure 17, the woman who is lying on the sandy beach is looking up at the man who is holding two martini glasses, returning his gaze, implying that she is ready for sexual interaction with him.



**Figure 17.** Skyy Vodka advertisement, Lambesis, 2000

According to Erving Goffman (1979), women along with children are often pictured lying on floors and beds more than men. Goffman (1979) sees floors as less clean, less pure and a place to keep dogs or baskets of soiled clothes. Although the woman is not lying on a floor of a home, the same concept can be used in this advertisement. The woman is also being dominated by position of both figures. As stated previously, the man is pictured in a dominant or superior pose, legs spread as he stands confidently over the woman who appears inferior to her male counterpart and who is conveniently exposing her breasts a technique expressed by Goffman (1979). Many advertisements such as the Skyy Vodka ad in Figure 17 express a new form of beauty or sexiness that a woman must uphold in order to get a man's

complete attention. This new form of beauty has become an impossible feat for women to uphold, and consists of a flawless complexion, perfect body and glorious hair, which is discussed in the documentary (*Miss Representation*).

It appears that many advertising designers promote sex instead of the product itself. They use the technique of the “new” form of beauty in women as well as the male dominance over that particular woman. The Skyy Vodka ad has nothing to do with vodka; it instead demonstrates the woman as a sexual being, trapping her within this man’s dirty dream (Wolf, 1991). Is this the “natural role” women are supposed to live up to? According to Jennifer Pozner, founder of Women in Media & News, women, “are expected to look like Miss USA, have sex like Samantha from *Sex and the City* and think like June Cleaver” (Newsom Siebel, 2011). Interestingly, men do not have a similar requirement to live up to because the male image in advertisements further establishes his power over women.

The topic of power and dominance, or lack thereof, as displayed in ads has shed light on particular gender role representations within the media. Erving Goffman (1979) discusses other techniques used in advertisement to assert a sense of power or superiority in the genders on display. For example, as stated previously, men are often seen in an executive role instructing women (Goffman, 1979). However, when men are shown in a woman’s domain such as in the kitchen or living room, “the man is not engaged in any contributing role” avoiding either subordination or contamination with what is seen as a “female task” (Goffman, 1979, p. 36).

Goffman (1979) explains that a man may do the “female task,” but never under the watchful eye of the woman. Additionally, many men are seen higher than women, “employing a higher social status” (Goffman, 1979, p. 43). This is a technique used in Figure

17, as the man stand over the woman; displaying his clearly more dominate posture. Many of these same techniques that were used in the 1970s, when Goffman wrote his book *Gender Advertisements*, are still used today. Many women are seen as inferior to the men within today's advertisements.

Similarly to Olin's (2003) argument, Laura Mulvey (1999)—author of *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*—a man cannot be gazed at in the same manner as a woman for fear of castration. A man's gaze upon women furthers his power over her, establishing his control, something women will never be able to obtain through “the gaze.” Although Mulvey discusses the use of the male gaze within film, many of her arguments have been shown to moderately correlate with the use of the female form and “the gaze” in advertising. For example, Figure 18 examines the power of “the gaze” in the sexual objectification of women. This TV commercial displays a series of attractive women, passing by groups of men. As she passes, the men halt whatever they are doing to catch a glimpse of the woman they find striking. Many advertisements are created by men and are for men, developing an internal male gaze within the woman, as she looks upon herself just like that in film (Mulvey, 1999). Additionally, men see themselves as a specific ego identifier, meaning they view themselves as intelligent, powerful and strong because they are shown this way in advertisements. On the contrary, women are depicted as objects for eroticized viewing from the predominately male audience (Olin, 2003). This theme is reiterated in the Jim Beam commercial shown in Figure 18.



**Figure 18.** Jim Beam commercial, unknown ad agency, unknown year

American society should not have to put an emphasis on success through beauty. How we see each other should have no connection with our careers and how far we go in those careers. According to Jennifer Newsome Siebel—producer of *(Miss) Representation*, (2011)—we should “measure ourselves by our accomplishments, not how we look.” This point of view is quite provocative and an interesting thought to the topic of gender equality. In order to become equally represented in advertisements, women must measure their successes by what we have accomplished, not who they are or how they look.

Ariel Levy quotes Erica Jong—author of *Fear of Flying*—as she argues her thoughts on women’s dependence on sexuality to give them power, stating that she would like to see “the Senate 50% female; let’s see women in decision-making positions—that’s power. Sexual freedom can be a smoke-screen for how far we have not come” (2005, p. 195). The threat of “the gaze” as well as stereotypical gender roles seen in ads further diminish femininity in the media and in real life by making the public believe that power and worth remain in beauty.

## 2.5 Conclusion

Today's ideal woman is described as thin, young and white as claimed by Jean Kilbourne (Lazarus and Wunderlich, 2010). Our nation today is more concerned with looks than with who we are as individuals. It is commonly known that today's obsession with beauty and weight has become an issue with many Americans. Women are taught from a young age to hate food unlike men who seem to swell instead of shrink (Lazarus and Wunderlich, 2010). However, in earlier times, weight was not as much of an issue as it is today. Jean Kilbourne explains our situation today perfectly when she argues, "if you are not young and perfect-looking, you have no sexuality" (Lazarus and Wunderlich, 2010).

According to Ariel Levy (2005), women today rely on their sexuality to receive attention from men. She discusses the sexuality of women in magazines for men such as *Penthouse* or *Playboy*. In fact, she quotes the CEO of *Playboy*, Christie Hefner, stating that "post sexual revolution, post women's movement generation that's now out there in their late 20s and early 30s has a more grown-up, comfortable, natural attitude about sex and sexiness that is more in line with where guys were a couple of generations before" (2005, p. 39). Hefner believes a woman who poses for *Playboy* or strips for a profession, is taking control of her sexuality. On the contrary, Levy (2005) argues that women, who express themselves in a sexual manner, do not completely take control of their own sexuality. Instead, the media treats power as defined by men, silencing women in order for the male to objectify her and use her for his own pleasure (Newsome Siebel, 2011). Moreover, today's advertisement designers must create a new method of representing women in order to reach equality between the two sexes.



Designers have a duty to America's society to create designs and advertisements that will influence our generation. According to Newsome Siebel (2011), "media is shaping our children's brains," so the question now becomes how can designers change the image we understand as femininity? The image of women has changed immensely from advertisements beginning to today, transforming from a housewife to a sexual being. The image of women in advertisements show our youth, especially young girls, that in order to be successful and obtain happiness, you must be beautiful, sexual and allow men to control you. For this reason, O'barr (2005) discusses a new manner of advertising stating, "as the world of corporations and advertising charts its future, the search for new advertising venues goes on. Advertising has been very innovative in the past in finding ways to communicate promotional messages" (para. 103). Designers need to understand the consequences of the imagery they are promoting in their commercials and printed ads. With the vast audience reached by their work, ad designers have a unique ability to greatly impact social norms. They must do their part to reverse this unrealistic standard of femininity and promote equality in gender, depicting both men and women as strong, powerful and competent individuals.

Through the use of an online survey, which will be explained in Chapter 3 and 4, a better understanding will be made on how young individuals interpret the use of women within ads. In Chapter 3, an overview of each section of the online survey will be addressed. Through the use of an entry survey, a more concrete knowledge of how frequently undergraduates majoring in graphic design view advertisements and with what source of media will be established. This section also allows the author to see if the students are affected by the ads with their product purchases. Next, the questionnaire section determines

how the graphic design undergraduates view the women on display within the media. Both print advertisements and commercials are used to better answer the research questions.

Finally, the exit survey allows the students to reflect on the material shown in the questionnaire. This section helped to determine if the advertisements seen in the online survey, or in the real world affected the students tested or if the students believed they affected others more. Each section of the online survey helped to answer the research questions established in Chapter 1 through the use both qualitative and quantitative results.

## **CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The methodology section describes the approach used in this study to determine the image interpretation of advertisements. Initially, an online survey was conducted to test the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of the influence advertisements—both print and digital materials—might have on graphic design students studying within the United States. The importance of the online survey was to ascertain how these students interpreted sexual imagery, and if their interpretation had an influence on their work produced in or outside the classroom, specifically the collegiate design magazines. After viewing some of the collegiate design magazines, it appeared as though the undergraduate graphic design students at Iowa State University demonstrated their interest in sexualized imagery and the shock factor of that imagery through their work.

The method of personal analysis was chosen for this study to better understand individual graphic design students' view. This technique was applied based on a previous study (Mick and Politi, 1989) in which individuals were surveyed on their interpretations of advertising imagery. Past studies have revealed that female stereotypes (Wearden and Creedon, 2002) and sexism (Cortese, 2008) remained prevalent within commercials and printed ads.

Each advertisement—print and digital—within the survey was chosen to see how students identified it, and to determine if they comprehended the message behind the ad. The survey was conducted with the past studies in mind, reflecting the findings of researchers such as Cortese (2008) and Wearden and Creedon (2002).

The following sections cover the procedures of the survey. A brief overview of the participants is provided, followed by the technology used to conduct the survey and the procedures used to conduct the study. The strategies applied to gather data via an online survey are also discussed.

### **3.2 Overview of the Online Survey**

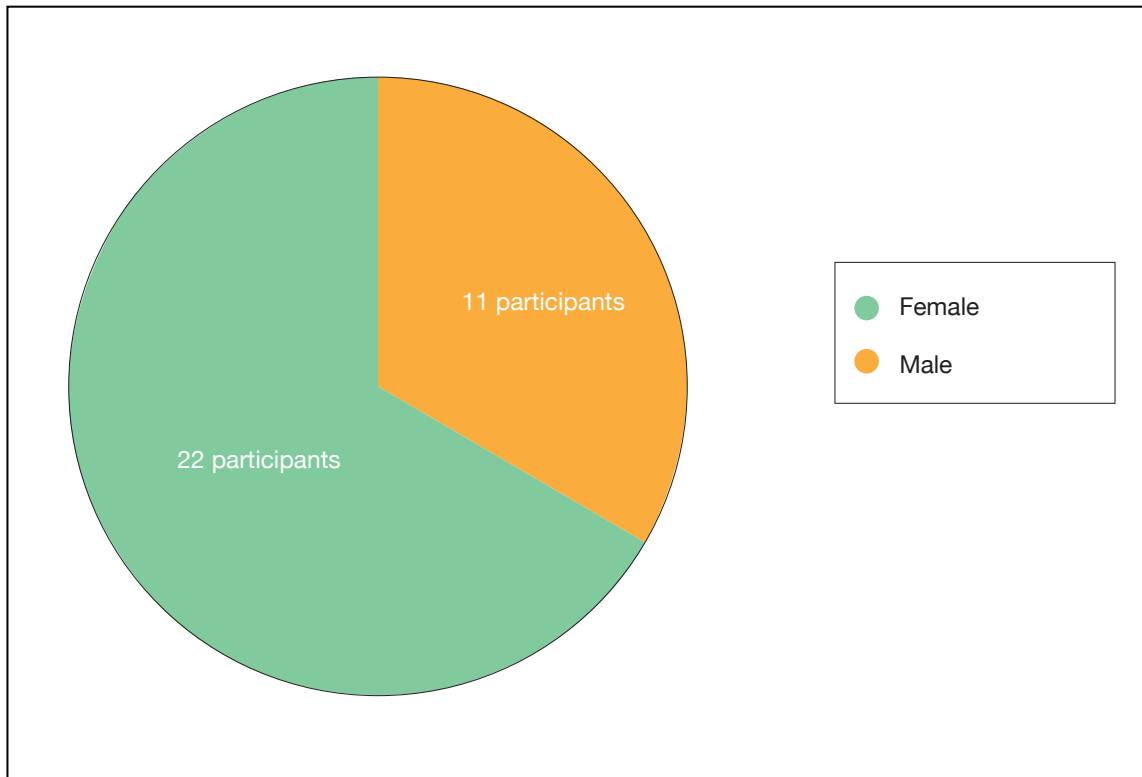
After receiving Institutional Review Board approval, an online survey was conducted to better comprehend image interpretation among graphic design undergraduates at Iowa State University. The participants were recruited through the use of both posters and word of mouth. First, all participants were asked to sign an electronic informed consent form (see Appendix D, Figure 52 and 53). This ensured that all contributors were aware their involvement was entirely voluntary and to inform them that they could remove themselves from the study. The informed consent section of the online survey also highlighted the purpose for the study, stating a need for this researcher to gain an understanding of the undergraduate graphic design students' perception of sexual imagery and content in advertisements. Some of the content shown during the survey may be considered controversial. However, these images can be seen in everyday situations, such as in magazines or ads seen on street posters or billboards. The images were not meant to offend, and were clearly outlined in the informed consent form signed by each participant at the beginning of the online survey. Confidentiality of all information and results collected from the survey were maintained by providing a user number for each participant. All of the contributors were informed the survey would take about 15-20 minutes; however, there were no time restraints if they needed more time.

The first section of the online questionnaire was a demographic entrance survey. Each participant was required to answer personal background questions (3.2.4). The next section of the online survey questionnaire section was comprised of 12 questions addressing both print advertisements and TV commercials (Appendix E, Figures 54–63). Finally, the participants were required to answer the exit survey (3.2.6) after the online survey was completed. The purpose of this approach was to understand the contributors' prior involvement with advertisements, their interpretation of a plethora of alcohol ads and how they perceived the sexual imagery within ads after completing the survey.

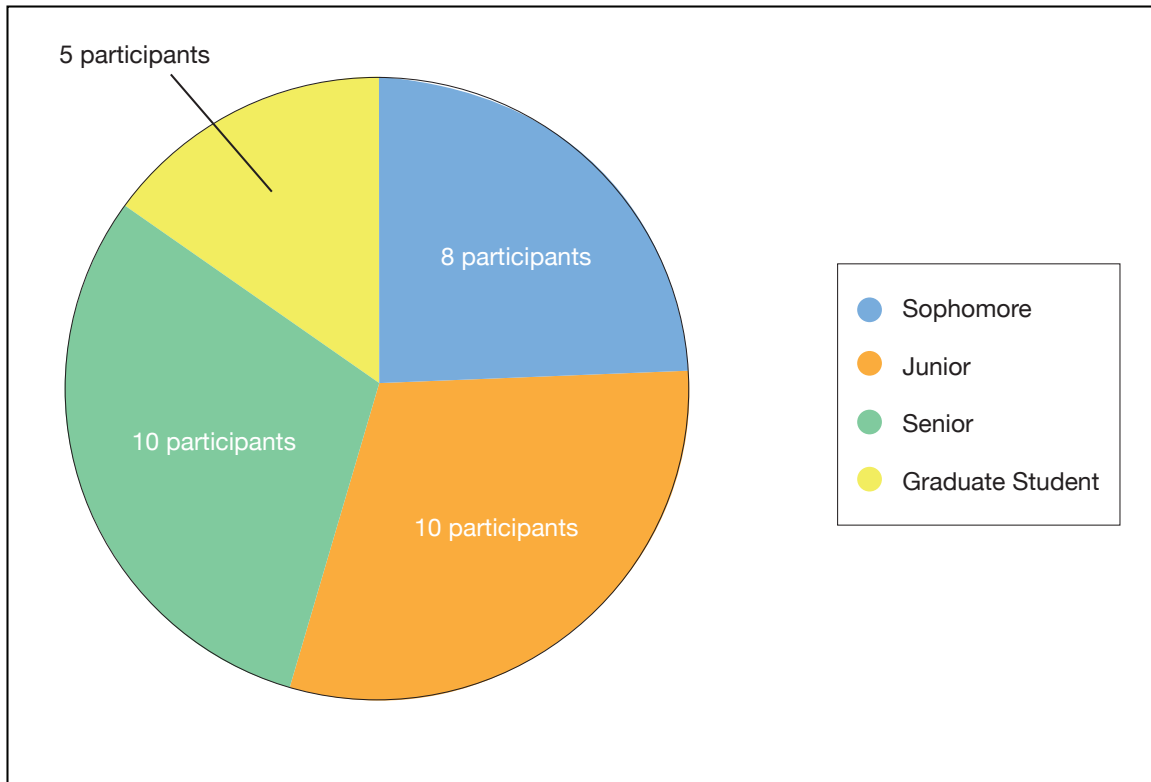
### **3.2.1 Subjects**

The individuals who participated in the online survey were undergraduate and five graduate students from Iowa State University who were studying to complete an undergraduate degree program in graphic design. According to Vanderbilt University's Assessment Website for tips on conduction surveys, online surveys can elicit candid responses and are easier to administer remotely (Vanderbilt University, 2010). Currently, there are 221 graphic design undergraduate students attending Iowa State University, all of which received an e-mail asking for their participation in the study. Thirty-three individuals—comprised of both undergrads and graduate students—took the survey, but only 27 completed the entire study. It was noted that five participants decided to quit the study somewhere between questions 5 and 10. In addition, one contributor only answered the entry survey and then decided to retire from the analysis. It is believed that this may be due to time constraints or other school-related issues. Of the 33 contributors who began the online survey, 22 were female and 11 were male (Figure 19). This was similar to the male to female ratio in the graphic design program. As of the Spring 2014 semester, there were 164

females and 68 males majoring in graphic design at Iowa State University. These students ranged in age between 19 and 38, and were comprised of almost equal percentages in education level (Figure 20).



**Figure 19.** Gender demographics for the online survey participants



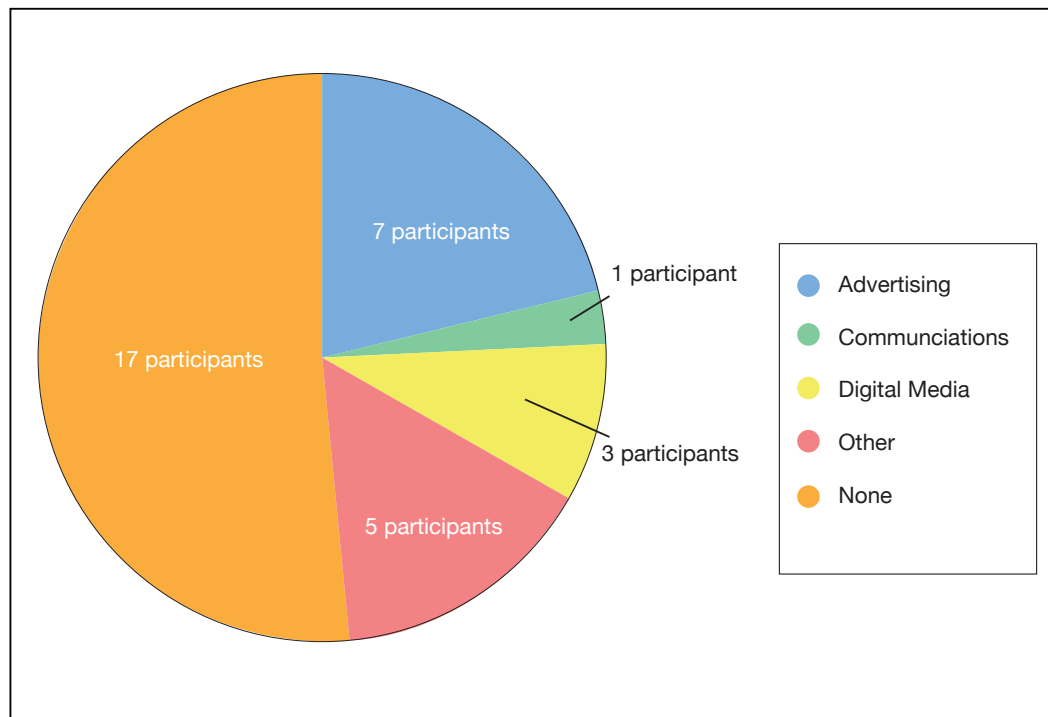
**Figure 20.** Education level demographics of the online survey participants

Furthermore, in order to determine if image interpretation within ads was consistent throughout different levels of education, 5 graduate students with a focus in graphic design were also tested, leaving 22 undergraduate students. In addition, a majority of these undergraduates were not seeking a minor, while others had additional backgrounds of interest, such as advertising, communication and digital media. The following is a breakdown of the minors of the students who participated in the study:

1. Advertising (7)
2. Communications (1)
3. Digital Media (3)
4. Other (5)

## 5. No Minor (17)

Moreover, since the purpose of this study was to investigate students' analysis of current and past advertisements, it was decided the minor degrees of those tested should also be evaluated. This would further distinguish prior knowledge in decoding advertisements. Figure 21 illustrates a mix of backgrounds among the contributors. Although several were obtaining additional degrees, many students did not have a minor, focusing entirely on graphic design. With this, the ease and comfort of using the online survey hosting website, Qualtrics, helped to create a relaxed and secure atmosphere for participants to answer the questions in the study.



**Figure 21.** Students' minor demographics of the online survey participants



### **3.2.2 Technology used**

The online survey was conducted through the use of Qualtrics, an online survey hosting website designed to help individuals create studies for testing. The online survey system allowed for flexibility for the participants in terms of time and availability since these variables were not taken into account when recording the results. This particular testing system was selected because Qualtrics allows for further analysis. In addition to gathering data, Microsoft Excel and Adobe Illustrator were used to code the results, and formulate the graphs and charts. Microsoft Excel was used to compile all of the data received from the survey and Adobe Illustrator was used to refine the design of the graphs produced in the Excel operating system.

### **3.2.3 Entrance survey**

At the beginning of the study, the participants were given an pre-survey to provide background information, which included questions about gender, age, ethnicity, education level, major and minors, and other information about the influence of advertisements on the participants. The following questions were asked to gather data about prior interaction with ads in all forms:

1. How often do you pay attention to advertisements?
2. How often do you read magazines?
3. What is your main source for viewing advertisements?
4. Do advertisements persuade you to purchase the product it is sponsoring?

The advantage of these inquiries is to determine how often the participants of the study believe they may pay attention to ads and if those ads may have persuaded them to purchase the products. It was hopeful that the results were to be used to make comparisons

with questions asked in the exit survey. Furthermore, the information collected from the entrance survey was used to determine if there are relationships between imagery seen in advertisements and gender, education level or major and minor.

#### **3.2.4 Questionnaire**

When brainstorming questions for the survey, it was important to remain brief, and not make the results of each question appear as obvious. This was not a manner of deception, rather, a method in producing the possibility of a variety of answers that are more candid, particularly since participants had some indication of the survey content.

The survey contained 12 questions, including both commercials and printed advertisements from magazines in more recent years (2000-2013) and some from the 1990s and 1980s. Different time ranges were selected to encourage participants to observe and compare images of female objectification from different recent time periods. Following is the list of questions asked during the online survey:



**Figure 22.** Online Survey Image – Question 1, White Oak Rum, 2011

1. Without seeing the company logo or product, what is this ad selling? (Figure 22)

Question 1 was developed to indicate if the students could interpret what type of product that particular advertisement was selling. This particular ad is for White Oak Rum in which the branding materials have been blocked off. This technique was created not to fool or deceive the participants, but many seemed uncertain of what the promotion was marketing. The White Oak Rum ad was chosen to assist in answering the research question—

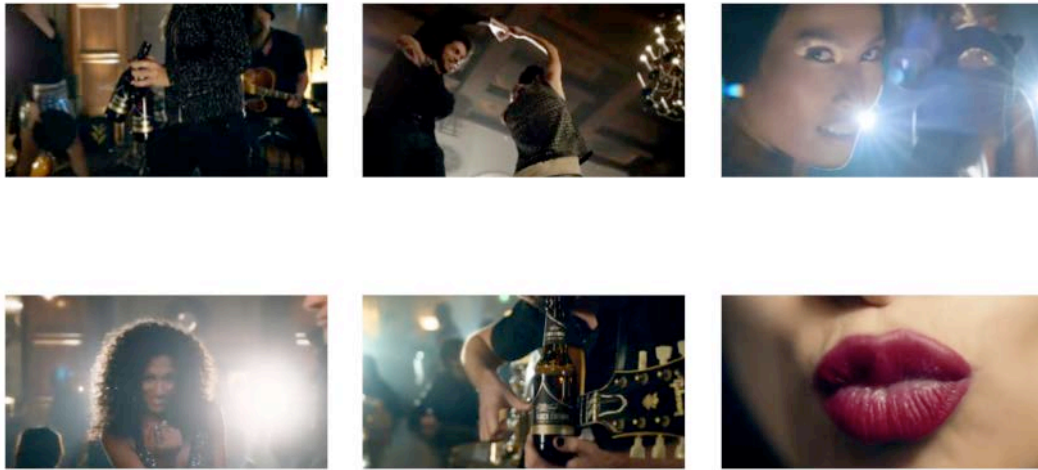
What perspective do the undergraduate students majoring in graphic design have on body image, femininity and unwitting objectification?

2. Did you realize the last advertisement was promoting an alcoholic beverage? (See Appendix E, Figure 55)

This particular question was chosen to determine if the graphic design students were easily distracted by the sexual imagery of the advertisement, or if they recognized what the ad was promoting. The branding material appears as a tattoo on the woman's hip, but the designers chose to use her body as a selling point, making her breasts a utensil by placing a lime in between them for the Cabo Wabo beverage. The advertisement and this question were chosen to clarify both research questions—What perspective do the undergraduate students majoring in graphic design have on body image, femininity and unwitting objectification? And the other research question—Do the graphic design undergraduates recognize sexual imagery that portrays stereotypical gender roles?

3. What, if anything, stands out to you the most about the Absolut Au Kurant advertisement? (See Appendix E, Figure 56)

Like question 1, this particular inquiry was developed to better understand how the students were viewing the use of sex within the marketing material. The Absolut Au Kurant ad hid the alcohol bottle in the laces of the corset, which allowed the author to test if the participants were paying attention to the ads, or simply looking at the imagery without decoding the promotion. Question 3 helped to answer the research question—What perspective do the undergraduate students majoring in graphic design have on body image, femininity and unwitting objectification?



**Figure 23.** Online Survey Image – Questions 4-6, Budweiser Black Crown, 2013

4. At what point in the Budweiser Black Crown commercial did you notice the woman with the golden earring? (Figure 23)

Similarly to question 2, the previous inquiry—question 4—was chosen to regulate if they graphic design undergraduates were paying attention to the commercial. This technique was also used in questions 5 and 6. Each separate question was developed to assist in answering the research question—Do the graphic design undergraduates recognize sexual imagery that portrays stereotypical gender roles?

5. What gender was the main character of the Budweiser Black Crown advertisement? (Figure 23)
6. Who was the main character of the Budweiser Black Crown advertisement? (Figure 23)
7. What is the main message of this advertisement? (See Appendix E, Figure 58)

Question 7 was created to allow the participants to reflect on the message of the ad. The image speaks for itself, showing that in order to receive attention, or to have women

surround you one must drink Jose Cuervo. It seems as though the ad is indicating that women will flock to the man as soon as he opens the Jose Cuervo bottle. This particular question was developed to assist in answering the research question—Do the graphic design undergraduates recognize sexual imagery that portrays stereotypical gender roles?

8. What factors do you like most about this ad? (See Appendix E, Figure 59)

Question 8 was chosen to determine if the students recognized similar design techniques used today. Many advertisement designers replace the woman's body or outfit with the alcohol label, which is discussed by Jean Kilbourne, author and speaker on the use of women in advertisements. According to Kilbourne, women's bodies are often replaced with bottles or brands to objectify her (Lazarus and Wunderlich, 2010). The question was also created to determine how much the graphic design undergraduates at Iowa State University knew about this technique, or if they could understand the message behind the image. This question was developed to assist in answering the research question—What perspective do the undergraduate students majoring in graphic design have on body image, femininity and unwitting objectification?

9. How would you describe this advertisement in 1-2 sentences? (See Appendix E, Figure 60)

Question 9 was used to understand how students could briefly describe the ad. It was meant to conclude what the participants were seeing in a quick amount of time and how they interpreted the action going on with the advertisement. This question was chosen to clarify both research questions—What perspective do the undergraduate students majoring in graphic design have on body image, femininity and unwitting objectification? And the other

research question—Do the graphic design undergraduates recognize sexual imagery that portrays stereotypical gender roles?



**Figure 24.** Online Survey Image – Question 10, Belvedere Vodka, unknown year

10. Describe this ad in 1-2 sentences. (Figure 24)

Question 10 was initially created to answer the research question—What perspective do the undergraduate students majoring in graphic design have on body image, femininity and unwitting objectification?—but once the Belvedere ad was chosen for this particular inquiry, it was found to also assist in answering the research question—Do the graphic design undergraduates recognize sexual imagery that portrays stereotypical gender roles? The Belvedere advertisement is a sexually charged marketing design, and allowed the participants to answer in their own terminology.

11. What are the main messages of these images? Explain in 1-2 sentences (See Appendix E Figure, 62)



In John Berger's book *Ways of Seeing*, he discusses the use of "the gaze" within paintings, pointing out how the viewer (presumably a man) sees the woman within the image. Paintings Berger mentions in his book were used in comparisons with advertisements printed today to better test his theory that "the gaze" and the use of a woman has remained the same throughout history. Additionally, the question was also developed to determine if students were more likely to discuss the art history facts or if they could compare the two messages between the two images. This particular inquiry assisted in answering both research questions—What perspectives do the undergraduate students majoring in graphic design have on body image, femininity and unwitting objectification? This question also helped to answer the research question—Do the graphic design undergraduates recognize sexual imagery that portrays stereotypical gender roles?



**Figure 25.** Online Survey Image – Question 12, Skyy Vodka ad, 2000 and Bronzino, *An Allegory of Venus and Cupid*, 1545

12. What, if anything, stands out to you the most in these images? Explain in 1-2 sentences. (Figure 25)



Similarly to question 11, was meant to test Berger's idea of "the gaze," and to determine if they could find similarities and differences between the two images. It was discovered that this question also helped to answer both research questions—What perspective do the undergraduate students majoring in graphic design have on body image, femininity and unwitting objectification? Question 12 also assisted in answering the research question—Do the graphic design undergraduates recognize sexual imagery that portrays stereotypical gender roles?

By selecting questions that had the possibility of both qualitative and quantitative responses the survey ensured a plethora of answers that would better identify not only how graphic design students viewed the figures that made up the images, but also how they interpreted the sexual content of the ads.

Additionally, although each question asked in the survey was beneficial to the study, there were some that not used in the results due to participants answering in the same manner. For example, question 2 of the questionnaire section resulted in each contributor answering, "yes" to whether they noticed that the ad was selling alcohol. This particular question was chosen to determine what the participants were viewing when looking at the ad, and if they were truly paying attention to the ad itself.

#### **3.2.4.1 Concept categories**

Each question from the questionnaire section allowed for a variety of answers. Although the terms used in the answers chosen to analyze were different, many of them had similar concepts. The students were able to pick up on each advertisement's message, but they used different terms or phrases to describe the scene. For example, in question 7 of the questionnaire (3.2.5) a man is surrounded by women as he lounges back in what appears to

be a beachside chair. The tagline reads: “Form your fantasy team.” Many individuals who participated in this question referred to the “team,” or discuss the women’s role in the ad. Still, a few contributors suggested that these women were “hot ladies,” or even “sluts.”

This specific terminology usage in these questions allowed for a variety of possibilities to separate the answers into categories. These categories were specific to the answers generated from the participants. With the terminology used in question 7 discussed above, the classifications “team” and “women” were formed due to the manner in which those surveyed were establishing relationships between the words used to describe the subjects or messages of the ad. Additionally, each grouping was tallied, which is located next to the specific category in each question (4.3.1.1).

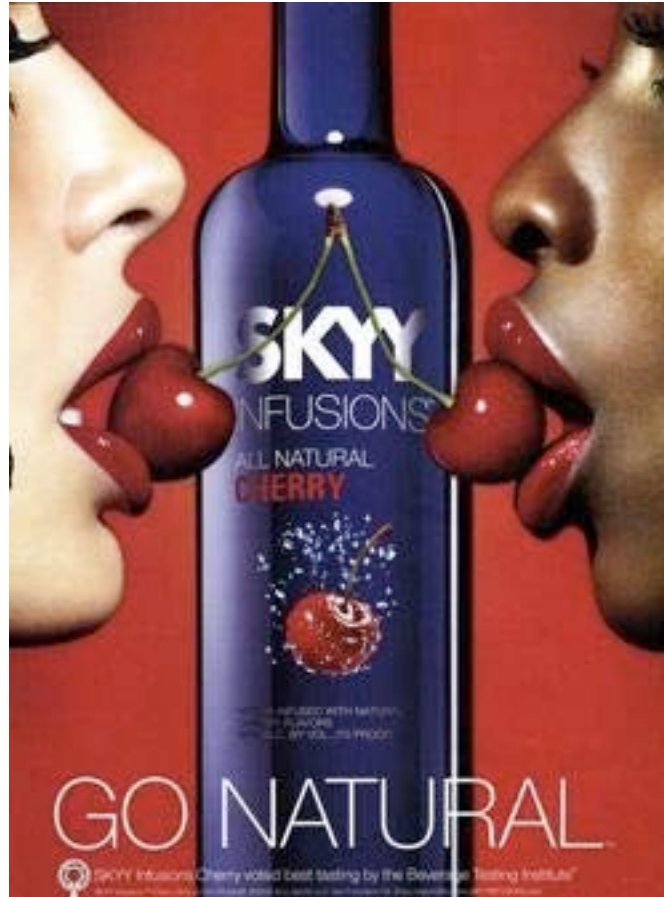
Further discussion of the categories created for each question will be discussed in the results and findings section (Chapter 4).

### **3.2.5 Exit survey**

Participants were given an exit survey on how their interpretations of the female form may have changed or remained the same, and understand if they plan on changing the imagery they use, or if they already use sexualized imagery. The information collected from the exit survey aimed to determine the tester’s understanding of how women are used in ads and whether they can see this in their own work. Below is the list of questions asked during the online survey:

1. Do you believe advertisements are becoming overly sexual?
2. How objectified have women become in advertisements?
3. Do you believe the roles women and men play in advertisements and commercials affect YOU in any way?

4. Do you believe the roles women and men play in advertisements and commercials affect OTHERS in any way?



**Figure 26.** Online Exit Survey – Question 5, Skyy Vodka ad, Lambesis, 2008

5. This ad shows a woman being objectified do you feel anything personally?
6. After looking at these images and commercials, do you feel you will consider using sexualize imagery for your own work?
7. Previous to this survey, have you ever considered using sexual imagery for your own work?
8. Do you feel as though you will notice this type of sexualize or objectified imagery more?

Participants who completed the survey were asked to answer eight exit survey questions to better clarify their opinions of the use of women in sexualized imagery and whom they believe it affects in society. With the data collected from the questionnaire, a connection between the entry questions was established.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

The information collected from the survey was analyzed through the use of both Qualtrics website, Microsoft Excel and Adobe Illustrator. Qualtrics was used as an aid to retrieve the information collected from the survey, enabling the researcher to quickly and easily transfer the information into spreadsheet form. Then the data were placed into Microsoft Excel spreadsheets, recording keywords to form categories for each of the responses. Excel was used to formulate graphs from the data entered into the spreadsheet, which were later placed into Adobe Illustrator to refine the look and readability of the charts. Moreover, the testing results will be used for the analysis in Chapter 4, Results and Findings.

## CHAPTER 4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

### 4.1 Summary of Findings

Although each question revealed important data in either qualitative or quantitative results, some of the questions were not used in the results of this study. These findings consisted of quantitative answers in which participants responded entirely the same.

Unfortunately, some questions had reactions in which the contributors did not understand how to answer the question. These issues will be discussed in future sections (4.2, 4.3 and 4.4).

Table 1 discusses the type of data gathered from each question of the online survey: qualitative or quantitative. This table helps to show how each question was

**Table 1.** Online Survey – Qualitative vs. Quantitative Answers

Entry Survey Questions (Ad Viewing Frequency)	Type
How often do you pay attention to advertisements?	Quantitative
Do advertisements persuade you to purchase the product it is sponsoring?	Quantitative
<b>Questionnaire</b>	
Without seeing the company logo or product, what is this ad selling?	Quantitative
What gender was the main character of the Budweiser Black Crown ad?	Quantitative
Who was the main character of the Budweiser Black Crown advertisement?	Quantitative
What is the main message of this advertisement?	Qualitative
How would you describe this advertisement in 1-2 sentences?	Qualitative
Describe this ad in 1-2 sentences?	Qualitative
What are the main messages of these images? Explain in 1-2 sentences.	Qualitative
What, if anything, stands out to you the most in these images? Explain in 1-2 sentences.	Qualitative
<b>Exit Survey</b>	
Do you believe the roles women and men play in advertisements and commercials affect YOU in any way?	Quantitative
Do you believe the roles women and men play in advertisements and commercials affect OTHERS in any way?	Quantitative
Previous to this survey, have you ever considered using sexual imagery for your own work?	Quantitative
Do you feel as though you will notice this type of sexualize or objectified imagery more?	Quantitative

After an informed consent form was signed by each of the 33 participants who took the survey (27 actually finishing), an entrance survey was given to each participant to obtain background information about the contributor's education on and prior interaction with advertisements (4.2). This was followed by a questionnaire of sexually diverse imagery found in print and digital promotions from recent decades (4.3). Finally, the 27 participants who completed the analysis were asked to fill out an exit survey to better determine how they interpreted sexual content within advertisements (4.4).

#### **4.2 Entrance Survey Analysis**

The online survey was conducted between January 30, 2014 and February 6, 2014 through the use of a survey system called Qualtrics. Participants were recruited through the use of flyers and word-of-mouth. The purpose of the entry section was to obtain background information about the individual, and to determine prior interaction with advertisements. It also was established to resolve if the students believed the ads affected our society by leading us to purchase a product.

The last four questions of the entrance survey were to establish advertisement interaction with each contributor. Question 1—How often do you pay attention to ads?—and question 4—Do advertisements persuade you to purchase the product it is sponsoring?—proved to be beneficial to the study because each could be used in comparisons with exit survey questions. However, questions 2 and 3 did not lead to any valuable outcomes. Question 2—How often do you read magazines?—did not conclude any connection to the amount of time looking at a magazine with the way the participants viewed the imagery in the survey. Likewise, question 3—What is your main source of viewing advertisements?—

failed to relate an advertisement source with any particular way the undergraduates analyzed the ads. Additionally, questions 1 and 4 helped to assist in determining the claims made in the introduction section of this thesis (Chapter 1).

The recruitment process was completely voluntary, allowing for a random number of male-female participants with different personal backgrounds and different minor study backgrounds. It should be noted that each participant was enrolled as a student of the College of Design, majoring in graphic design.

#### **4.2.1 Demographic background analysis**

Because the online survey was completely a randomization of volunteers, there was no control over how many women versus how many men would participate in the study. Table 2 presents the 33 participants' backgrounds, classifying them in to four separate categories.

**Table 2.** Demographic analysis of participant's background (33 participants)

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
Male	11
Female	22
<b>Age</b>	
18-22	21
23-27	7
28-32	1
33-37	3
38-42	1
<b>Education Level</b>	
Sophomore	8
Junior	10
Senior	10
Graduate Student	5
<b>Minor</b>	
Advertising	7
Communications	1
Digital Media	3
Other	5
None	17

The evidence displayed in Table 2 shows the largest age group was between 18-22 years old, representing 21 of those who participated in the online survey. The age of the participants had a direct correlation with their education level, making up the sophomores and juniors of the group. This represented 8 of the sophomores who participated and 10 of the juniors.

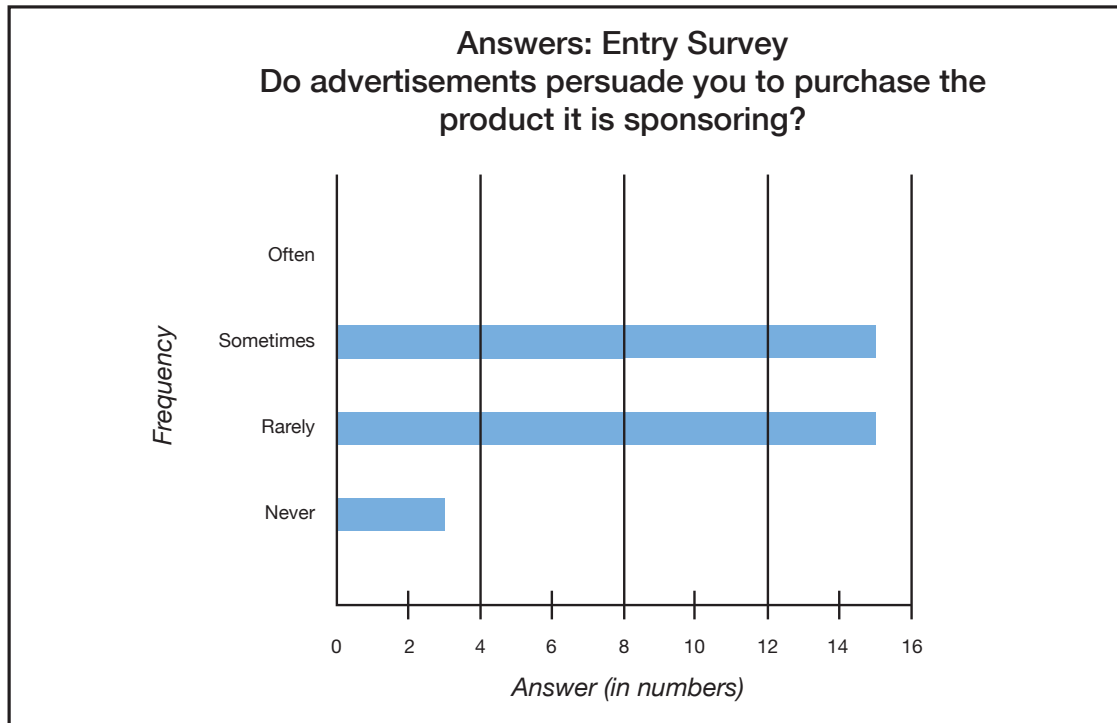
It should be noted that the graphic design department at Iowa State University consists of a higher percentage of women compared to men. With this, the female gender outnumbered the males 22 to 11. However, five female participants and one male participant did not complete the survey. Most of these individuals seemed to quit between questions five and ten of the questionnaire section. One of the six participants who did not complete the



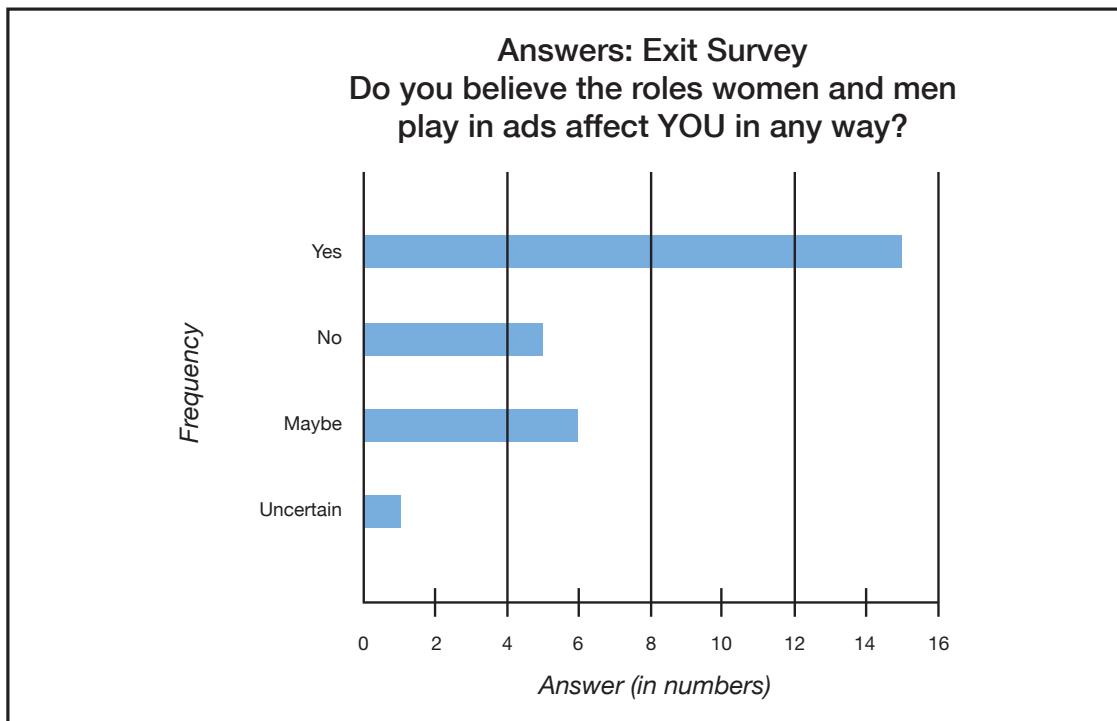
survey, one did not answer any of the questions after the entry survey. Several factors may be responsible for these individuals opting out of the survey, but the author hypothesizes that everyday time restraints and a lack of desire to complete may have been reason for unfinished results. Many of these individuals were graphic design students with no minors.

#### **4.2.2 Advertisement interaction frequency**

It has been previously stated that the online survey was conducted to understand the graphic design undergraduates at Iowa State University's interpretation of sexual imagery involving a woman within an advertisement. To evaluate this, it was important to gather information through the use of an entrance survey, asking general background information and prior interaction with advertisements. By inspecting the participant's preceding relation with promotions in both print and digital, a solid foundation was developed for the future questions asked in the online survey. For example, in Figure 27 many of the participants claimed advertisements did not persuade them to purchase a product. Many of the students later answered that they believe that advertisements affected *others* and did not have as much of an effect on them. This information formed a connection with some of the exit survey questions as shown in Figure 28, indicating although many of these individuals, who *sometimes* or *rarely* were persuaded by the ads in their everyday lives, found that they felt they were affected in some sort of manner by the gender roles displayed in advertisements.



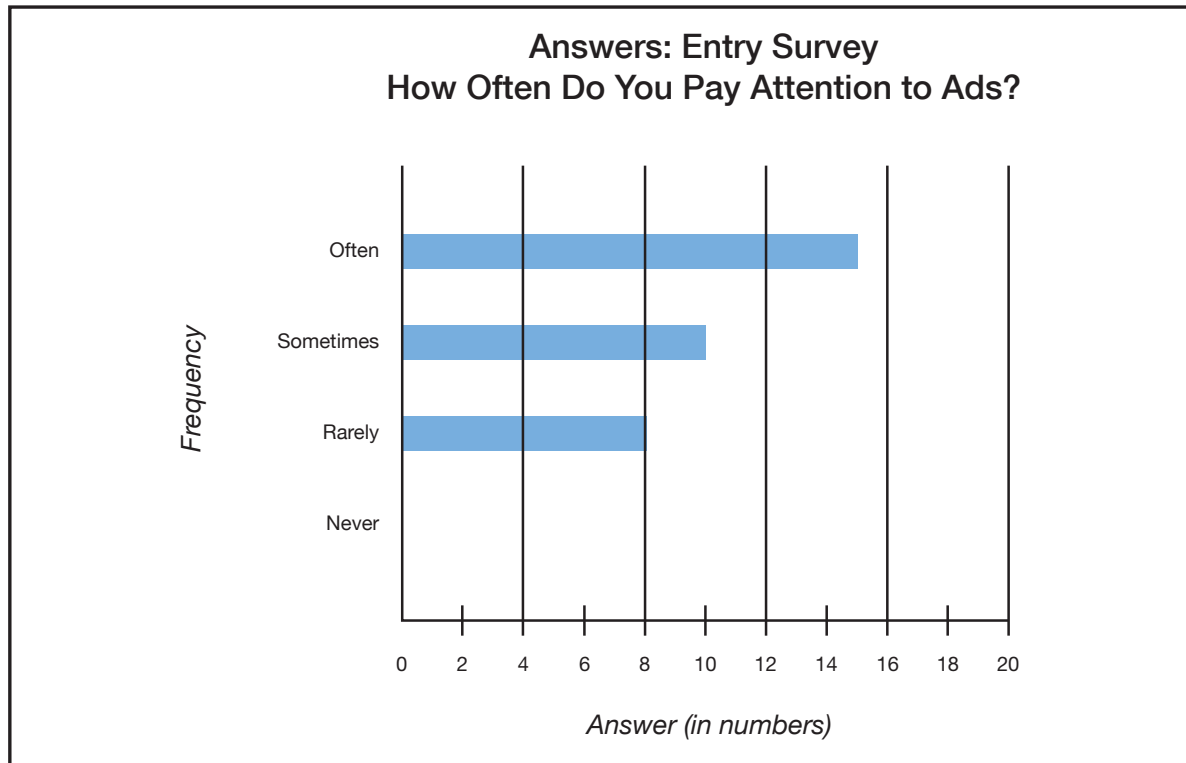
**Figure 27.** Online Entry Survey – Question 10 Results



**Figure 28.** Online Exit Survey – Question 3 Results

By analyzing the entrance survey, it became clear how graphic design undergraduates viewed an advertisement's effectiveness by asking questions triggered toward ad viewing frequency. This section asked students how they viewed advertisements and whether they believed they affected them in their purchases. Additionally, the use of comparisons provided an excellent probe for connections between different answers, and to see which group of participants was answering in the same manner or within the same categories established for the questionnaire section of the survey.

Figure 29 shows another significant response to the entry survey, in which a substantial amount of the 33 participants (15 people in total) stated they *often* pay attention to advertisements. This specific question also correlated with other questions within the exit section of the online survey. Figure 29 helped to connect how the participants viewed the effectiveness of ads like that shown in Figure 27. Because of this, a more consistent association was observed between the entry and exit surveys.



**Figure 29.** Online Entry Survey – Question 7 Results

#### **4.2.3 Entrance survey summary**

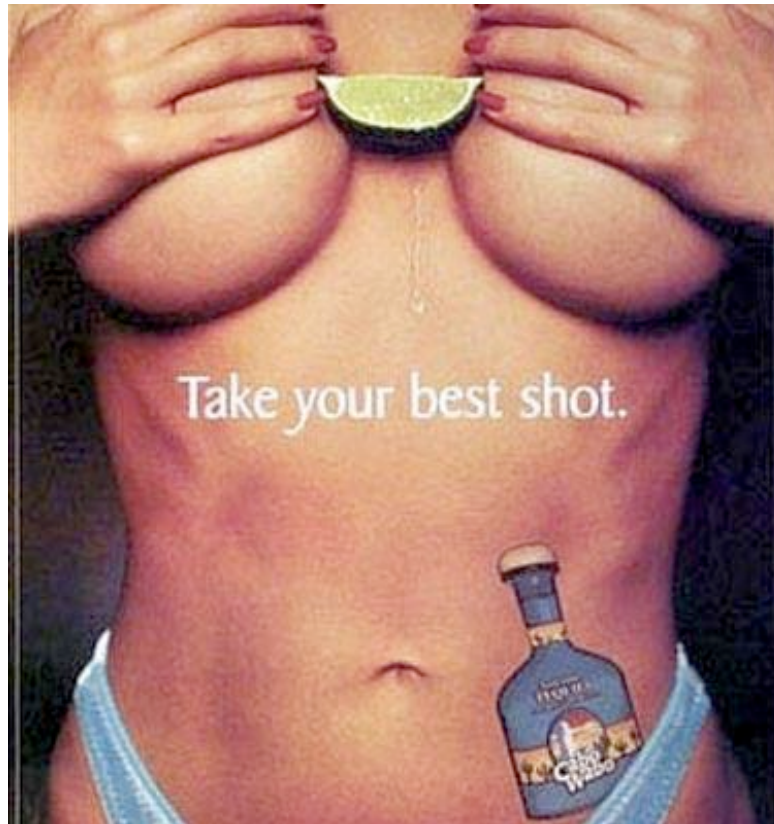
The entrance survey helped to distinguish how frequently the participants were interacting with advertisements, and what source of media they preferred. With a majority of the contributors claiming advertisements did not persuade them to purchase a product and they did not pay attention to ads, a disconnection between whom they believe was truly affected by promotional material was established. According to Rance Crain, former Senior Editor of *Advertising Age*, “only 8% of an ad’s message is perceived by the conscious mind. The rest is worked and reworked deep within the recesses of the brain” (Lazarus and Wunderlich, 2010). Crain made this statement after reviewing that many individuals do not believe they pay attention to ads nor do they have a direct affect on them.

### **4.3 Questionnaire Analysis**

The questionnaire gathered both qualitative and quantitative results, allowing individuals to interpret the advertisements in an open manner, meaning they could refer to the images in their own terminology. With this, much of the results varied in vocabulary used, but after creating categories, each response was placed in the according group and tallied to create a terminology chart. The results gathered helped to answer both of the research questions: 1. What perspective do the undergraduate students majoring in graphic design have on body image, femininity and unwitting objectification? 2. Do the graphic design undergraduates recognize sexual imagery that portrays stereotypical gender roles? Although each question within the questionnaire was helpful to determine how these undergraduates were viewing promotional images, there were many that claimed to be unusable in this study, and will be further discussed in 4.3.1.

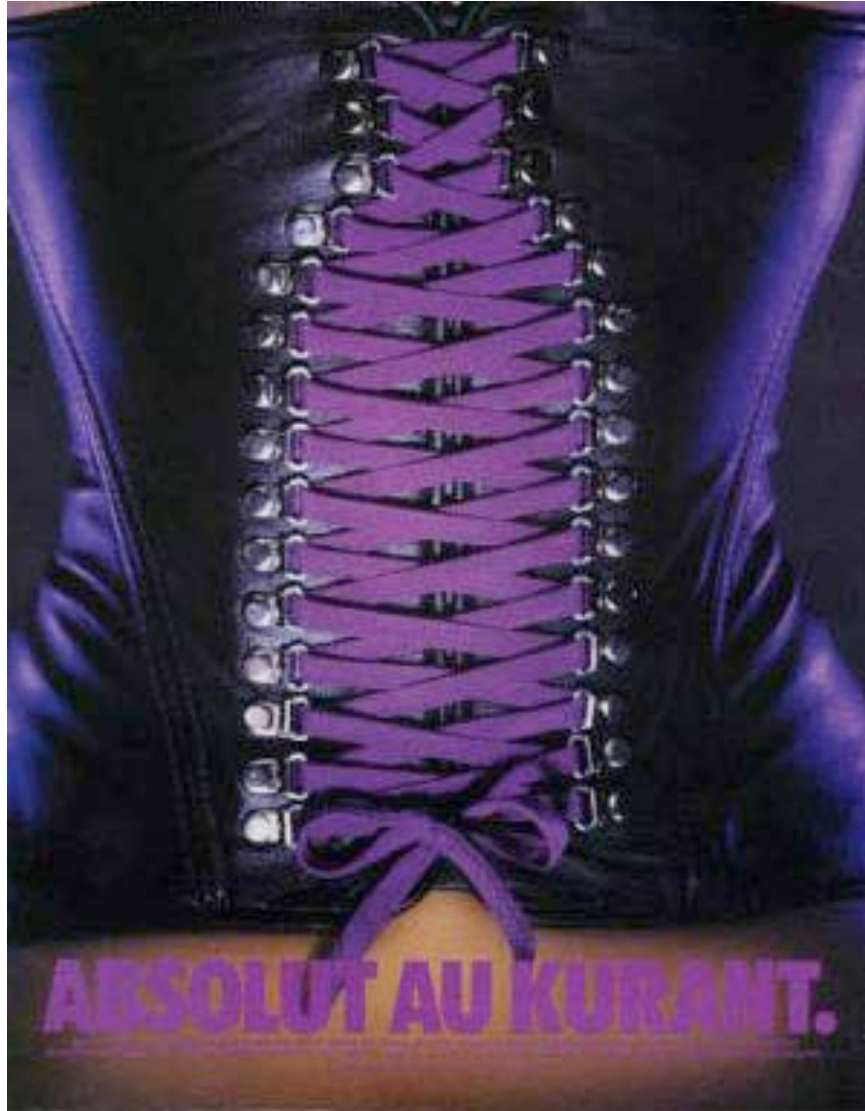
#### **4.3.1 Ineffective results**

In question 2—Did you realize the last advertisement was promoting an alcoholic beverage?—many participants were able to determine what the ad was for even though the image was seen as possibly distracting (Figure 30). Unlike question 1—What product is this ad selling?—in which the product material was blocked out, every participant determined the promotion in question 2 was for an alcoholic beverage. Perhaps the question would have been more effective if it were reworded and was reworked to be a multiple-choice problem. This may have allowed for a variety of interpretations and answers.



**Figure 30.** Cabo Wabo advertisement, 1996, Question 2 of Questionnaire

Question 3—What, if anything, stands out to you the most about the Absolut Au Kurant ad?—deemed to be insignificant due to the participants discussing similar concepts (Figure 31). Many of these individuals mentioned the look of the corset, the shape of the bottle in the laces and the color purple. This may have resulted from the manner in which the question was asked. In order to receive different outcomes, the question could be altered to obtain more valuable results in relation to the research questions. Perhaps the question could be linked to the research question on gender stereotypes to determine how students viewed each sex within advertisements. A comparison using a male-dominated ad and the Absolut Au Kurant promotion could help to establish the interpretation of both genders.

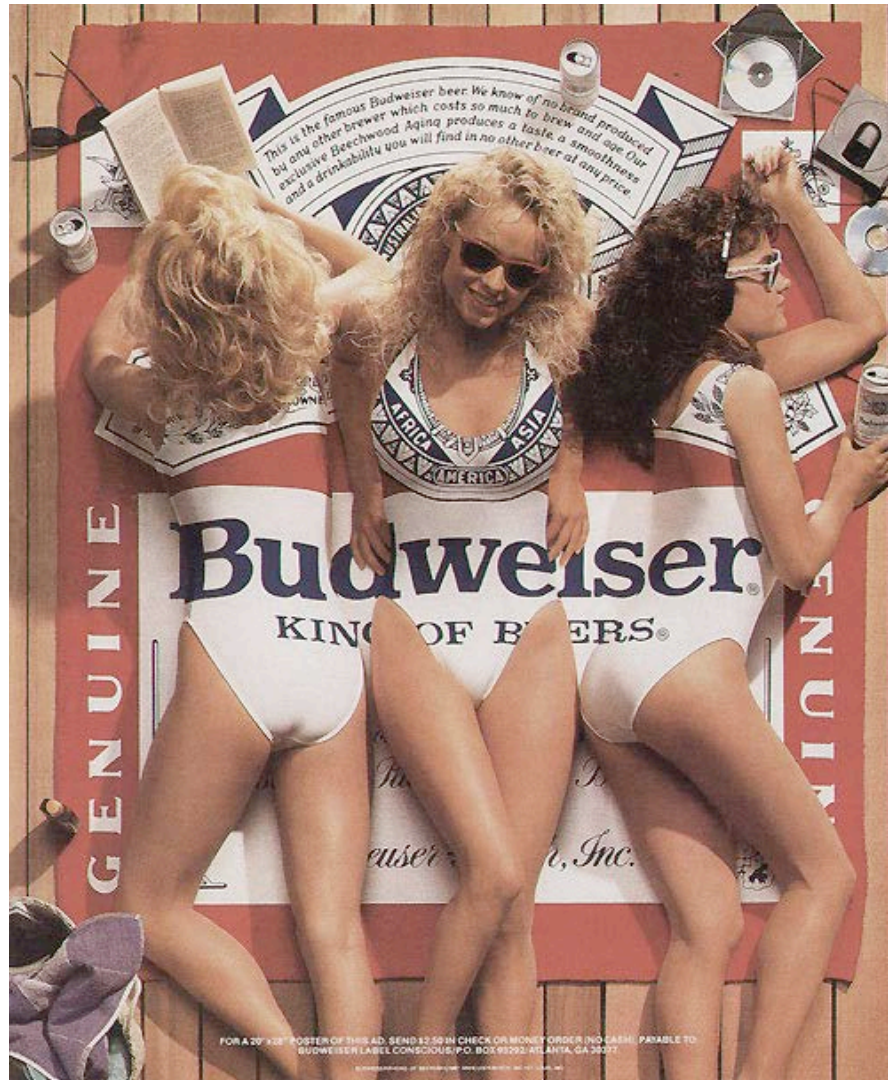


**Figure 31.** Absolut Au Kurent advertisement, 1997, Question 3 of Questionnaire

Similar to question 2, the results found in question 4—At what point did you notice the woman with the golden earring?—proved not to be usable. None of the participants noticed the woman in question. In fact, those who did answer the question did so in an inconclusive manner. They were uncertain of where she was in the commercial, but guessed presumably in order to fulfill the requirements of the survey by completing the study as far as the participant chose.



Question 8—What factors do you like most about this ad?—was not used in the findings of this study (Figure 32). Each participant mentioned the use of text on the towel, which may imply certain design elements stood out more than the content or subjects in the image. In order to produce more practical answers connecting to the theme of the survey, it may be beneficial to reword the question, asking instead about the content or perhaps other design elements that helped the promotion stand out. Also, a comparison between this particular ad and a similar advertisement could create different outcomes.



**Figure 32.** Budweiser advertisement, 1984, Question 8 of Questionnaire

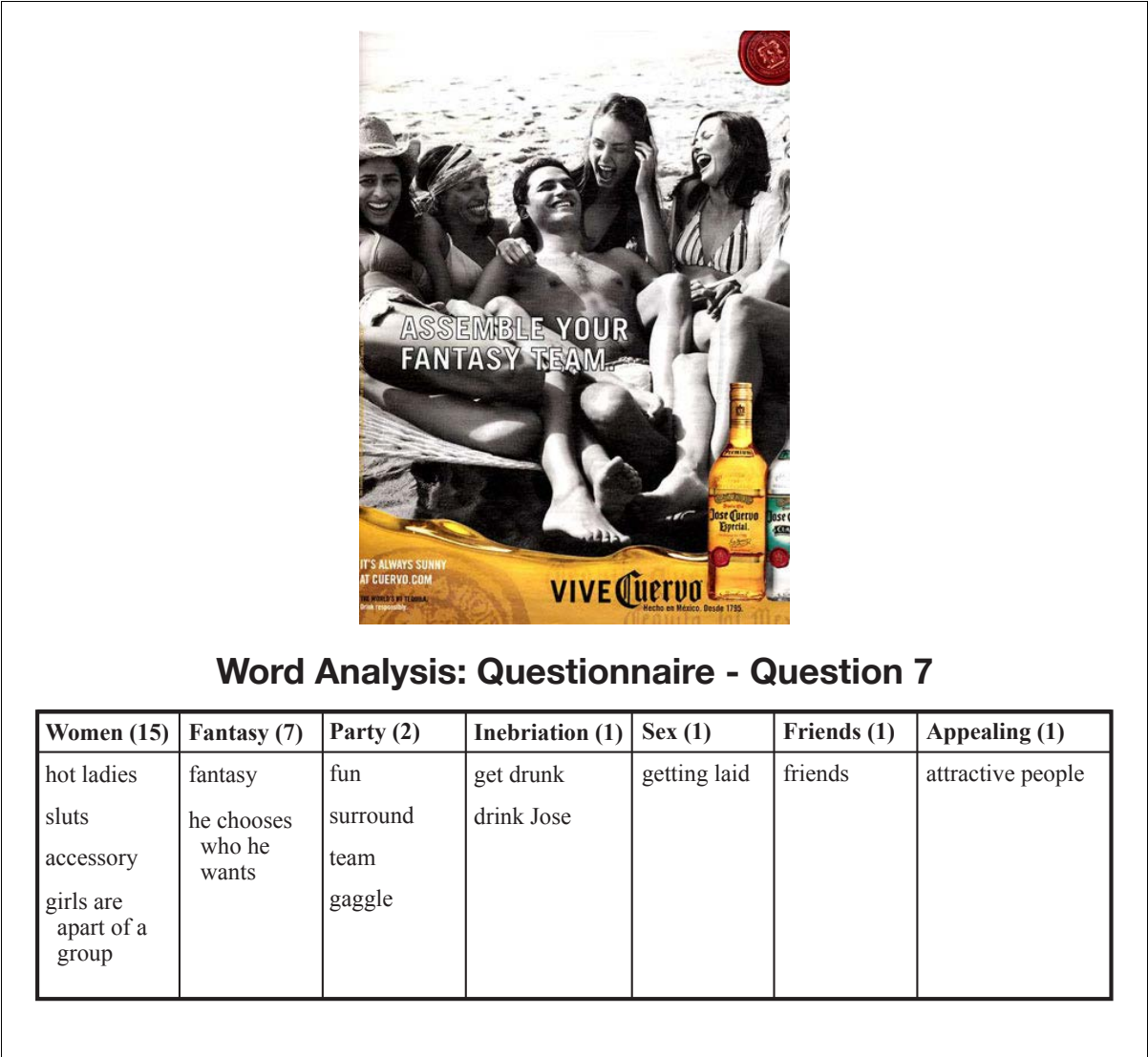


### 4.3.2 Qualitative findings

According to Theo van Leeuwen and Carey Jewitt—editors of *The Handbook of Visual Analysis*—(2001), qualitative results rely on observation and interpretation opposed to numbers like that found in quantitative findings. Phillip Bell contributed to van Leeuwen and Jewitt’s book, explaining a study he conducted very similar to the survey organized for this thesis. In Bell’s study, he analyzed the quarterly magazine, *Cleo*, investigating how it had changed over 23 years. He determined that a need of “identification of observable dimensions of the images in question...the answer requires a (visual) content analysis” (van Leeuwen and Jewitt, 2001, p. 10). Bell continues, arguing, “content analysis alone is seldom able to support statements about the significance, effects or interpreted meaning of a domain of representation” (van Leeuwen and Jewitt, 2001, p.11). With this information, it became clear that both content and image were important in order to understand if the viewers are affected in any way.

With the assistance of studies conducted in van Leeuwen and Jewitt’s (2001) book, a better understanding of how to conduct a qualitative study—and quantitative study—was completed for this thesis. Each question was designed to obtain results that would help answer the research questions. This section breaks down the qualitative findings from five questions found in the questionnaire section of the online survey. The five questions were chosen because they allowed the students to answer the question in their own terminology, which helped to discover the participants’ interpretations of the ads.

4.3.2.1 Question 7 analysis



*Figure 33.* Online Questionnaire Survey – Question 7 Responses

With six participants quitting the online survey, the qualitative results were varied in total numbers of those who answered. The answers were split into several categories depending on the content of the question. For example, in question 7—What is the main message of this advertisement? (Figure 33)—some of participant’s answers described the scene, which they depicted as being ‘fun,’ or a ‘fantasy,’ which placed the answers in the

party and fantasy classifications. Additionally, some of the participants hinted at the advertisement's message claiming that if you want to get as many girls as the man featured, you must drink Jose Cuervo, or "drinking Jose will get you all the girls; the girls will be a part of a group." Still, there were some alarming responses to the women of the ad. Some individuals referred to them as "sluts," "hot ladies," "accessories" and as a part of a team, not companions of the man. Many of the contributors were able to read the messages each ad was secretly, or not so secretly, presenting to the public.

Some of the answers may have been a result of terminology we see and hear today in ads, on television, on the radio, or even in song lyrics. By placing the answers into specific categories, a clear perception of how the undergraduates interpreted this particular ad was constructed. The categories were arranged to show the most frequently mentioned to the least. In this case, most of the contributors mentioned women or something about the women, supplying 15 answers for the classification. It is likely the 'women' and 'fantasy' categories are more prevalent because of the tagline, "assemble your fantasy team" and the use of a group of women surrounding one man. These factors may have led the participants to respond in a similar manner.

#### 4.3.2.2 Question 9 analysis



#### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 9

Elite (9)	Sex (8)	Sophisticated (3)	Vintage (3)	Expensive (1)	Women (1)
mysterious secretive catchy classy sleek	sex sexy getting laid get invited back to the hotel room	sophisticated smart	vintage black & white	luxurious	beautiful women

**Figure 34.** Online Questionnaire Survey – Question 9 Responses

Another form of qualitative data was found in question nine—How would you describe this ad in 1-2 sentences (Figure 34). The Grey Goose commercial (Figure 34) shows what seems to be a sexual experience in a hotel room. The ad is completely shot in black and white with only a red spot color to represent the cherry of the liquor.

The responses for the Grey Goose commercial were varied, but each seemed to understand the sexual content and even described the scene with similar key words. Many of the participants found the commercial sexy or displaying a scene that leads to a group sex session. The contributors realized the sexual innuendo of the advertisement. However, the most interesting key words used to describe the scene were “elite,” “mysterious,” “classy” and “sleek.” As a general consensus, the commercial was seen to the participants as a luxurious nightclub where only the young, sexy and cool hang out. In fact, one participant even described the scene as a “backstage pass to a world you always wanted to be a part of.”

Although the Grey Goose commercial was viewed as a hip place with elite individuals, one participant agreed with the others, but also found the content “disgusting” and “offensive.” This result may have come from the final scene of the commercial. In the last section of the commercial, a group of women were in a private hotel room with a few men. The men bump fists before one closes the shades while looking out at the audience, expressing a feeling that something sexual is about to happen. Perhaps this factor made this participant disgusted with the commercial, or the individual has a low tolerance for sexist or objectifying ads.

### 4.3.2.3 Question 10 analysis



#### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 10

Sex (14)	Caught (6)	Crude (2)	Content (2)	Object (1)	Unknown (1)
sex	shocked	degrading	advertisement	lipstick	unknown
getting laid	caught	crude	is disconnected from	belt buckle	
go to bed	caught in the	disturbing	the product		
blow job	act				
acting inappropriately					

**Figure 35.** Online Questionnaire Survey – Question 10 Responses

Belvedere vodka has produced some questionable ads over the past few years, displaying scantily clad individuals and overly sexual scenes, and has proved to be indicative of this ad genre. The ad agencies who create them seem to have a common theme from promotion to promotion: sex. The contributors recognized the ad's message clearly, replying with a plethora of responses for question 10, including some that focused on the crudeness of

the imagery chosen to compliment the alcoholic beverage. This implies that those who responded to the vulgarity of the ad, understood the message of the promotion, but did not appreciate the manner in which the ad agency took to endorse the product. For these individuals, they seemed to look past the shock factor of the image, and focused on the tastelessness of the sexual content the woman is displaying.

Figure 35 displays the answers recorded, and shows most participants believed the advertisement to be representing sex, followed by six respondents reflecting on the action of being caught, which is clearly displayed on the woman's face. In fact, these two categories—sex and caught—were interchangeable. Many of the participants who mentioned the woman's surprised look also referenced a sexual act about to take place.

Much of the data received contained crude terminology such as “blow job” and “getting laid.” Furthermore, the vocabulary was consistent from question to question. Many of the participants referred to these sexual acts in the same manner.

#### 4.3.2.4 Question 11 analysis



Image A



Image B

#### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 11, Image A.

"The Gaze" (6)	Power (3)	Object (3)	Concept (2)	Nudity (1)	Inebriation (1)
"the gaze" desire attraction men look at woman like a piece of meat	gender roles women are sexually powerful	women are an object for men	innocence creepy	scantily clad women	drinking

#### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 11, Image B.

Nudity (5)	Prostitutes (3)	Pleasure (3)	Picnic (2)	Relaxing (2)	Concept (0)
lack of clothes scantily clad naked nude women	prostitutes prostitutes in the park	dirty party in the woods woman's form is so pleasing it should be seen	strippers at a picnic picnic in the park	relaxing group of friends relaxing	

#### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 11, Both.

"The Gaze" (1)	Sex (4)	Power (1)	Object (2)	Concept (1)
a woman is meant to be looked at	attraction of the opposite sex sex appeal sensual	women are powerfully sexy & should not be ashamed of that	women are objects & men are prowling over them women as desire able objects	evil

**Figure 36.** Online Questionnaire Survey – Question 11 Responses



Unlike the Jose Cuervo ad and Grey Goose commercial, the last two questions asked on the questionnaire were comparing an advertisement from a recent time and a painting from the Renaissance and early Impressionist periods. The paintings were picked because of their resemblance in position and “the gaze” reflected in the subjects, which were seen as comparative to the advertisements. Also, these two painting illustrated what Berger (1977) argued were ways of seeing a woman as an object in paintings.

Another difference between questions 11 and 12 from the rest of the inquiries asked in the questionnaire was that participants often wrote one response for each image instead of writing two separate responses for each representation. In Figures 36 and 37, a third table was created for those who chose to contribute one answer for the two images. This data suggests that these individuals may have seen the separate representations as interchangeable. The two depictions were similar enough to place them in comparable categories.

In Figure 36, a woman is being creepily watched as she voluntarily blows out a match, leaving the threesome in the dark where anything could happen. Many participants understood the meaning behind this advertisement. Interestingly, the contributors reflected key words expressed in articles on the gaze (Wolf, 1991 and Berger, 1977), or in documentaries about women being an object for men (Lazarus and Wunderlich, 2010). Many of the answers were short, describing the advertisement as “evil,” expressing scenes of “desire” and communicating the clear distinction between the gender roles.

Surprisingly, one participant saw the ad as being empowering to women, stating, “women are powerfully sexual and should not be ashamed to show it off.” The way the woman is seductively looking outward as she blows out the match may also be partially

responsible for the participant's empowerment of women response compared to the portrayal of prostitutes in Manet's painting, *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe* (Figure 36, Image B).

Most of the participants referred to the Edouard Manet painting, *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe*, in art history terms. According to April Eisman, Associate Professor of Art History at Iowa State University, the undergraduate students majoring in an art field take the required art history courses during sophomore year. These art history classes focus on cave paintings to artwork develop in the present time; and therefore, would have covered the Renaissance and Impressionist periods when this piece was created.

Figure 36 shows the Manet painting of two men, lying on the grass having a picnic with a naked woman while another naked woman seems to be washing her clothes in the background. The participants who had taken the required art history course were well versed in the content of the painting. They understood right away that these women are prostitutes, describing the scene in short words such as “nude,” or “picnic.” Still some participants compared the two images, stating that both the ad and the painting displayed the female form in a pleasing manner. This implies that the “relaxing” feel of the Manet painting is a situation that may be pleasing due to its less threatening manner, showing the female form in a more natural way. However, the woman in Image A has a more erotic look, suggesting a more sensual feeling linked to a gratifying sight some may experience.

#### 4.3.2.5 Question 12 analysis



##### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 12, Image A.

Position (3)	Power (3)	Sex (2)	Nudity (2)	Concept (1)	Object (0)
woman's position pushes limits	man is dominating woman man is demanding woman to drink man is in charge	sexual seductive	skin body parts	man is propositioning the woman	

##### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 12, Image B.

Nudity (4)	Concept (4)	Position (1)	Power (1)	Sex (1)	Object (0)
the nude is respected exposure playful	elegant classic prostitute Roman painting	contortion	man is dominating woman	forbidden love	

##### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 12, Both.

Nudity(10)	Position (1)	Power (1)	Concept (1)	Sex (0)	Object (0)
exposed focus on nudity revealing boobs glowing skin	triangular composition	man is dominating woman	everyone is holding something		

**Figure 37.** Online Questionnaire Survey – Question 12 Responses

Similarly to question 11 (Figure 36), question 12 displays two images from two different times in history, comparing the scenes (Figure 37). In the Skyy Vodka advertisement, a woman lies on the sand as the man—holding two glasses—stands over top of her. The responses to this ad were indicative of Goffman (1979) who discusses gender stereotypes and representation in advertisements. Many participants noticed the positioning, describing it as “pushing the limits.” The scene was also described as the woman being dominated by the man, the man being in charge and sexual. Similar to Goffman’s (1979) arguments, these individuals may have found the man power-hungry because of his stance. He is standing directly over the woman, almost seeming to proposition her through the use of alcohol. The distaste for the positioning may have resulted from the man’s stance and dominance over the woman.

As expected, a few of the participants described the body parts of the woman, sectioning her off into boobs and skin. This view of the woman likely resulted mainly from her positioning within the ad, which flaunts the woman’s chest from a straight down view.

Like the Skyy Vodka ad, some of the participants saw the painting as a type of exposure; however, they understood it to be “elegant,” or “classic” compared to the alcoholic beverage promotion. Instead of seeing the painting as a sexual situation the contributors saw it as playful and even respected unlike the scantily clad woman in the Skyy Vodka advertisement. Many contributors agreed the nude is respected, a common theme in Berger’s (1977) argument.

It is likely that participants found the painting to be respectable compared to the woman in the Skyy Vodka ad because of the medium in which the image was constructed. Bronzino’s painting, *An Allegory with Venus and Cupid*, was created during the Renaissance,

which is often thought as a classic and inventive time in history. The Skyy Vodka ad is most likely shot with a camera, a more modern tool, and consists of a more contemporary view of sex and lust. The responses for the Bronzino painting compared to the Skyy Vodka ad discussed a sort of respect that paintings uphold compared to the advertisements seen today.

Unlike question 11, the categories in this particular inquiry were the same. This was constructed to better link the two images. In fact, all of the responses fell into one of these groupings. Additionally, the similarity of classifications from the three response groups helped to show how the participants were viewing each image, putting more emphasis on particular categories compared to others. Image A contained more responses on position and power than the nudity class seen in Image B.

#### **4.3.3 Quantitative findings**

Due to many participants refraining from answering several questions and five contributors quitting the survey during the questionnaire, the results could not be measured correctly. Many responses were inconsistent in the number of participants who contributed, and it was difficult to formulate constant data within the questionnaire section of the online survey. However, it could be argued that each question consisted of valuable information, pointing out where the students were inconsistent with their answers or views, and aiding in answering the research questions established in the introduction section of this thesis (Chapter 1).

While there were excellent results acquired from the qualitative outcomes by allowing the students to answer in their own terminology, the quantitative findings proved to be quite informative. This technique was helpful because it showed how many individuals understood what ads were selling, or if they recognized certain figures within a promotion like that of the

Budweiser Black Crown commercial (Figure 39 and 40). The quantitative image interpretation was carried out in the Qualtrics survey system, and then the information was coded in Microsoft Excel and finally plotted using Adobe Illustrator. Each of the coded answers was separated into different categories supplied by the key words formulated by the participants.

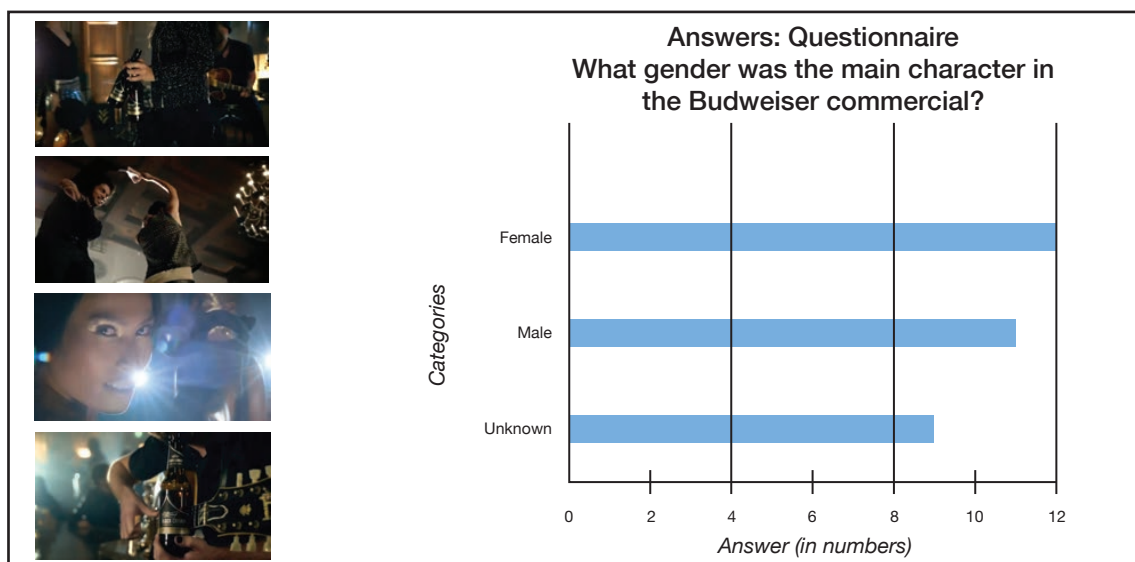
It has been previously noticed that both men and women are used in advertisements to grab our attention (Cortese, 2007). The images and videos were chosen because they depicted both subtle and explicit depictions of women, sexually objectifying them as well as promoting the product. For example, Figure 38 illustrates two women seductively dancing—or perhaps standing—in the rain. This ad is for White Oak Rum, but the branding material was blocked off to determine how the participants view an ad, and if they could conclude what the ad was for.



**Figure 38.** Online Questionnaire Survey – Question 1 Results

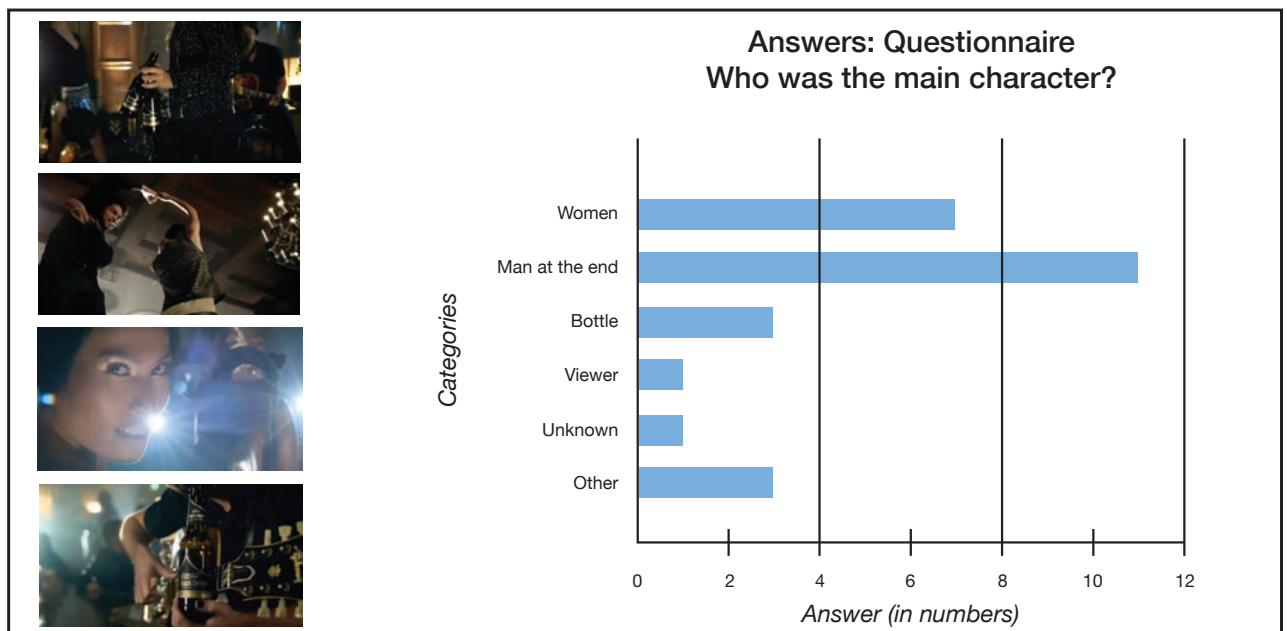
The graph shows that the majority of participants who answered question 1 of the questionnaire found the advertisement to be promoting perfume (10 participants), followed by alcohol (7 participants) and then fashion or hair products (5 participants). The results seemed to indicate in that the graphic design undergraduates at Iowa State University could decode the ad, and discover the true product the ad is endorsing.

By inspecting the key words the participants chose to use when describing each ad, a formation of quantitative data through the use of graphs was established. These graphs were a necessary and sufficient method in representing the information collected from the online survey. The quantitative results of the questionnaire section are presented in Figures 37-39, assisting in answering the second research question: Do the graphic design undergraduates at Iowa State University recognize sexual imagery that portrays stereotypical gender roles? The data also supports how much the students pay attention to advertisements and commercials, a question asked in the entrance survey (Figure 29).



**Figure 39.** Online Questionnaire Survey – Question 5 Results

Figures 39 and 40 displays a Budweiser Black Crown commercial, which were two results of a three-part question in order to determine how well the participants paid attention to the details within the ad. Unfortunately, the first question of the three asked—At what point did you notice the woman with the golden earring?—did not capture useable data due to most of the participants being unable to remember the woman. The others who did answer questioned themselves, uncertain of when she was present.



**Figure 40.** Online Questionnaire Survey – Question 6 Results

In the second question of the three (Figure 39), the results seemed to be split almost equally. Three possibilities account for these results:

1. Since the previous question was about a woman in a golden earring, the participants believed this woman to be the main character.
2. Over half of the participants were female, and they believed themselves to be the main character



3. Although the narrator was male—and also seen to be the main character—the woman carrying the beer was considered to be the main focus of the commercial, and therefore was the main character.

However, it may be argued that none of these possibilities are correct, and the majority of the participants were taking their best educated guess. Although there was no question pertaining to the reasoning behind each contributor's decisions, the data significantly influenced the last of the three-part question.

With this reasoning uncertain as to why the participants chose which gender to represent the main character, the results shown in Figure 40 were varied. Interestingly, although the majority of participants answered female as the gender of the main character in question 5 (Figure 39), the majority of the contributors declared the man at the end of the commercial to be the main character (Figure 40). This three-part question should be interpreted cautiously due to the inconsistencies between the questions asked.

#### **4.3.4 Questionnaire summary**

As expected, the participants interpreted the images in the questionnaire with a clear understanding of the sexual content displayed in the ads. Each contributor was keen on the erotic messages behind the sensual imagery of each promotion. Similar to the findings of Cortese (2008), it was determined that advertisements are not the primary reason on societal analysis of femininity and womanhood. However, there appeared to be a connection between the terminology used by the participants and who may be affected by the ads in the survey. However, it could be argued that these findings are only a vision of how “the younger generation” in our society views women in commercials and other promotions. It should be noted that many of the graphic design undergraduate students at Iowa State University may

view women within ads according to the stereotypical gender roles already established by society. This means women are displayed as sexual beings who are a spectacle for those who are viewing her. These results should be interpreted cautiously for future research and studies with similar themes.

#### 4.4 Exit Survey

The exit survey was established to determine if the student's opinions of how much an ad persuades its viewers had changed from the entry survey results (4.2). As stated prior in section 4.2 of this thesis, two of the four questions (Figure 27 and 29) asked in the entry survey provided comparisons to the questions found in Figures 42 and 43. These questions in the entry survey established how often participants viewed advertisements and whether or not they believed they had an affect on them in their purchases. These results were somewhat correlated with some of the results found in the exit survey (Figure 42 and 43).

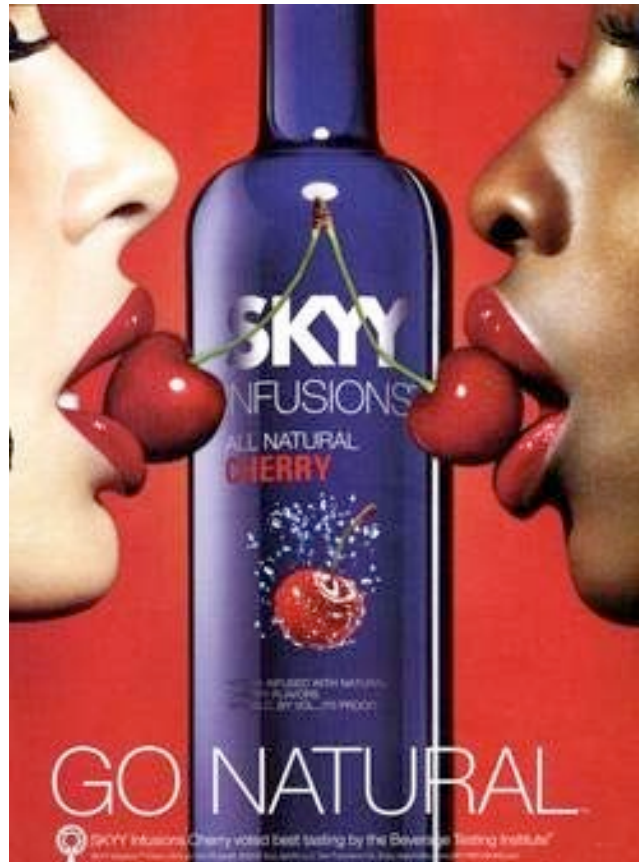
The results from the entrance survey showed that many of the participants believed they were not affected by advertisements although they *often* or *sometimes* paid attention to them. However, when asked if they believed to be affected by these ads, many of the students replied with *no* or *maybe*. Although the results from the entry and exit surveys are not directly related, they may link whom the students believe is more affected by advertisements, and how they view women within those promotions. This could help to determine if there is indeed a connection between how the students may subconsciously be affected by ads and their opinions of the genders represented. Questions such as this could be asked and answered in future studies.

It should be noted that each question asked in the exit survey assisted in determining the participants' understanding of sexual content within an ad, and how they saw these

promotions affecting those who view them. However, there were questions asked that could not be used due to inconclusive responses.

For example, question 1—Do you believe ads are becoming overly sexual?—was worded incorrectly and almost all of those who participated in the exit survey determined that ads were indeed overly sexual. In order to obtain more definitive outcomes, the question should be reworded so the students will not be led to an answer for future research. Similarly, question 2—How objectified have women become in advertisements?—led the contributors to the answer in which the author hypothesized they would answer. The results for these two questions were not used due to the wording of the inquiry, and must be rephrased for future testing and surveying.

In order to determine if the individuals were affected personally by the imagery they viewed in the survey, questions 5—This ad shows a woman being objectified, do you feel anything personally? (Figure 41)—and 6—After looking at these images, do you feel you will consider using this imagery?—were developed. The answers collected from these questions were quite valuable because they determined if the students were not affected personally by the imagery in the survey. Although the participants claimed to not being affected by the advertisements, there appears to be a disconnection between their answers from questions 5—This ad shows a woman being objectified, do you feel anything personally? (Figure 41)—and 6—After looking at these images, do you feel you will consider using this imagery?—and their answers in question 3—Do you believe the roles women and men play in ads affect YOU in any way—and 4—Do you believe the roles women and men play in ads affect YOU in any way (Figures 42 and 44).

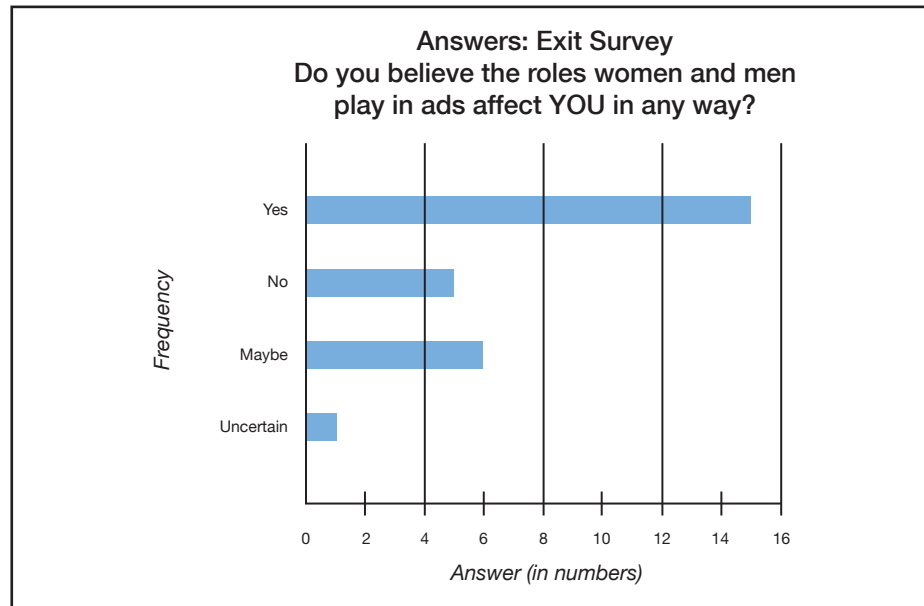


**Figure 41.** Skyy Vodka, Lambesis, 2008 – Question 6 Image of Exit Survey

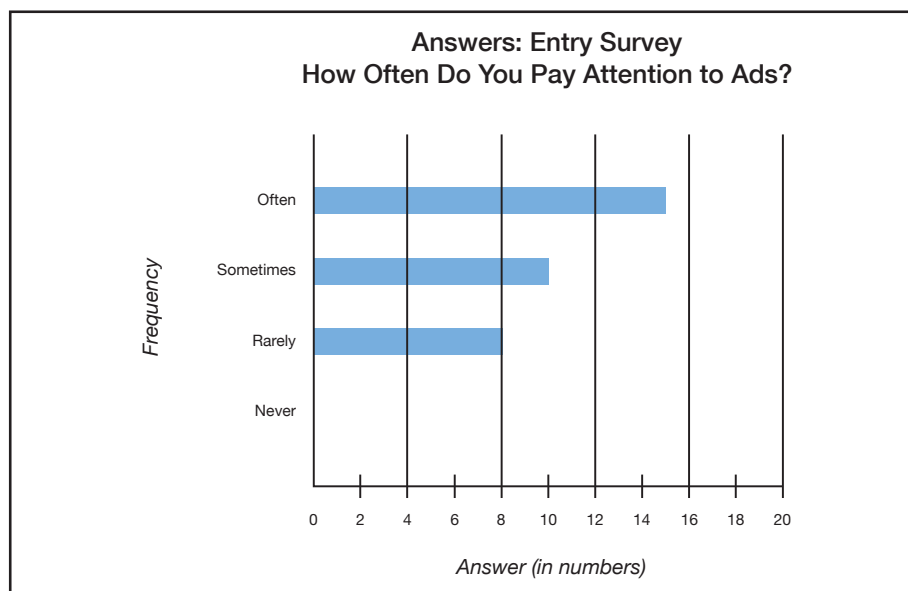
To better determine how students were affected by advertisements, additional information will be needed in order to produce concrete information. Further questions could have been asked to regulate how and if these students felt anything personally with these ads. Although many did not feel anything personally, some participants were affected, but did not see it as an issue for American society. Although it is difficult to determine how these students may be affected subconsciously by ads, or if they are affected at all, the exit survey assisted in clarifying their immediate thoughts on the sexually fueled imagery after the questionnaire was complete.

Looking at Figure 42, it is noticeable that all but two individuals found advertisements to affect others. However, when the results show in Figure 40 that many

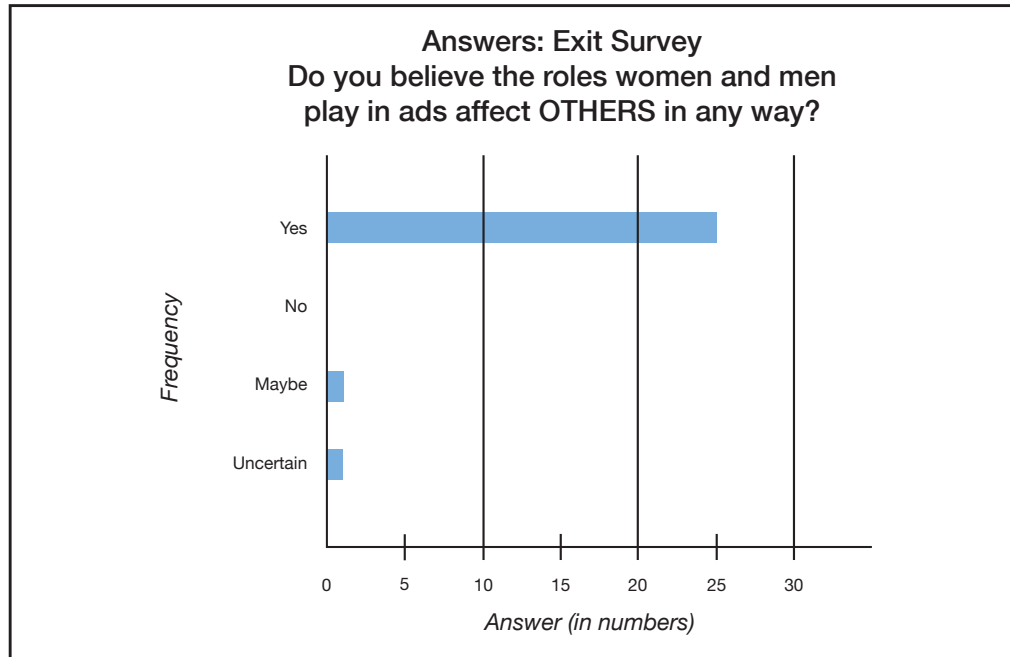
participants believed the advertisements in the survey and in everyday life do not affect them nearly as much. These results may suggest that the data found in Figures 27 and 29 of the entrance survey directly correlates with the answers of the exit survey.



**Figure 42.** Online Exit Survey – Question 3 Results



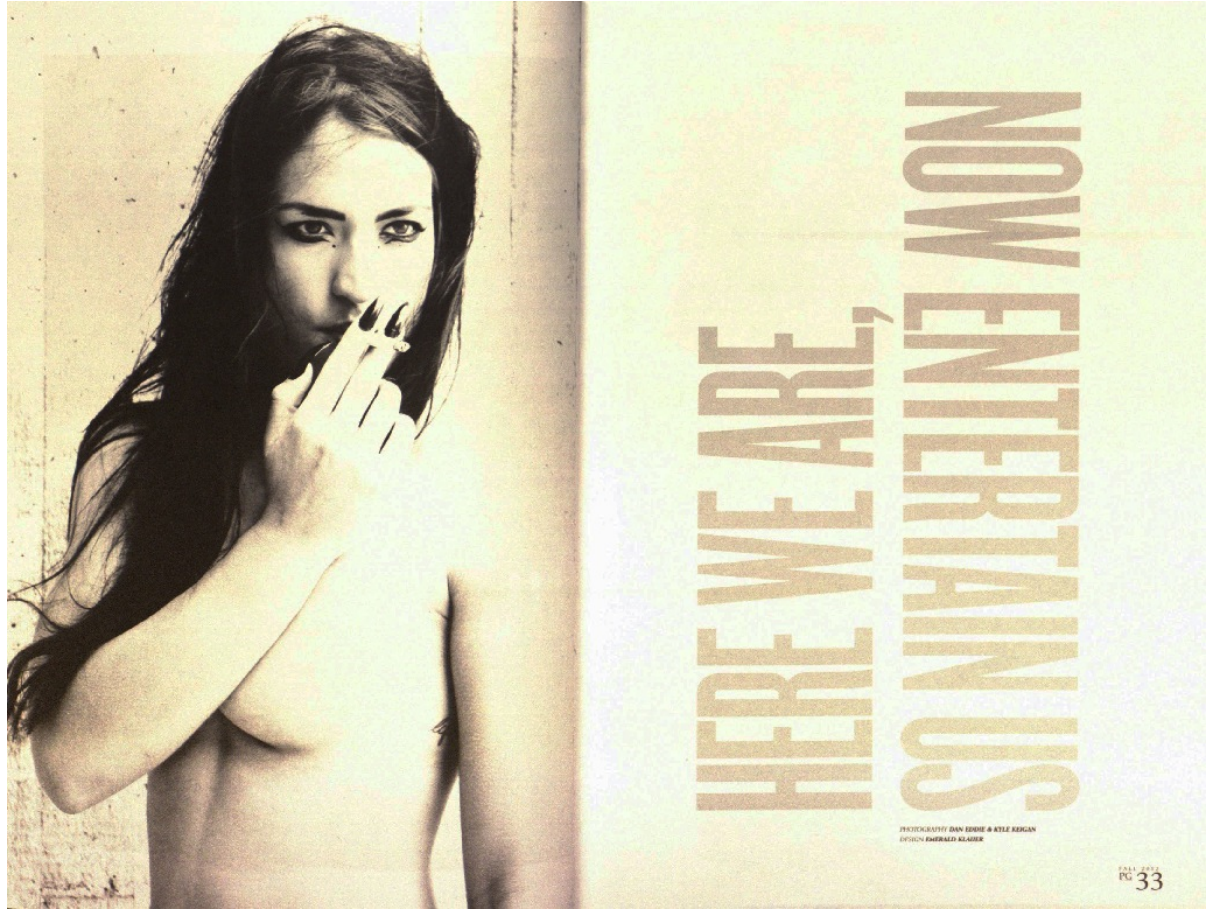
**Figure 43.** Online Entry Survey – Question 7 Results



**Figure 44.** Online Exit Survey – Question 4 Results

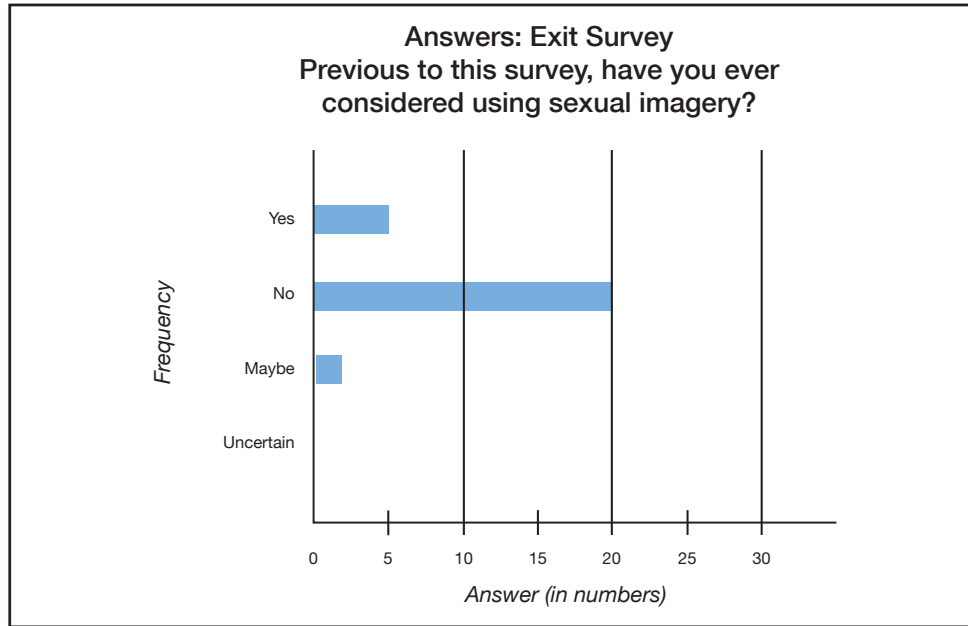
Interestingly in Figures 46 and 47, the results were drastically different. The majority of those who answer these questions, 5 participants out of 27 did consider using sexual imagery before the survey. However, after the survey, 14 participants out of 27 claimed they would notice sexual imagery within ads.

Figure 45 shows a magazine layout made by a design student in the Iowa State University magazine, *Revival*. This image show a half-nude woman, smoking a cigarette opposite of a tagline reading, “Here we are, now entertain us” a well-known lyric from 90s grunge band, *Nirvana*. Although only 5 out of 27 participants that did consider using sexual content, it may be concluded that many of the graphic design undergraduate students at Iowa State University are conscious of the sexual tone of advertisements and magazines, specifically that of fashion magazines.

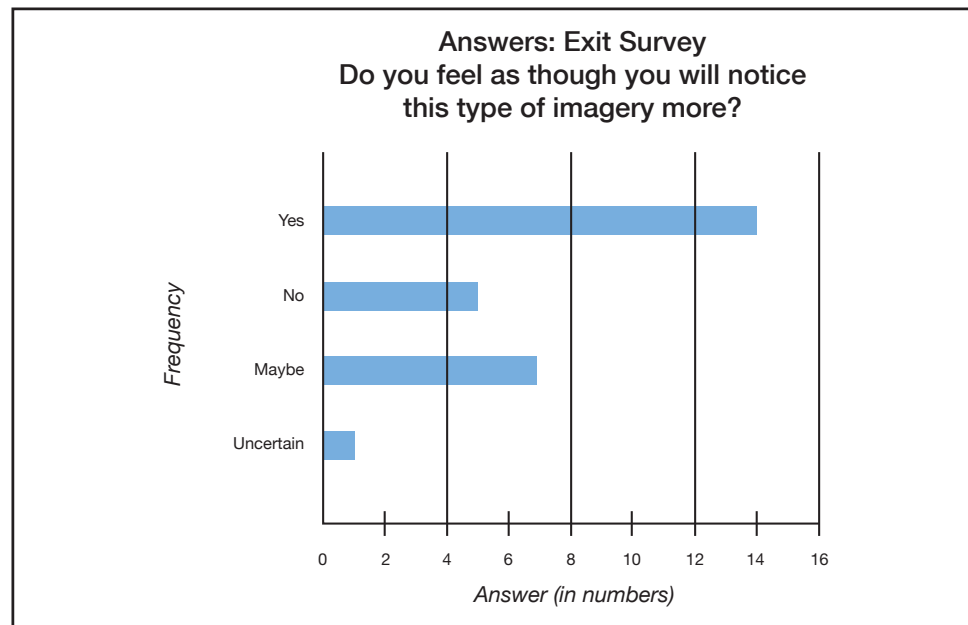


**Figure 45.** *Revival*, Iowa State University, Fall/Winter 2012-2013

These results (Figure 46) imply that the five contributors who answered yes in Figure 45 may have been unaware of the affects sexualized imagery may have on the viewer. This change may lead to more graphic designers coming out of the Iowa State undergraduate program with a better understanding of how women are represented in ads and how this could affect America's society if the objectification does not change. A more in depth explanation of the conclusions from the online survey will be reviewed in Chapter 5.



**Figure 46.** Online Exit Survey – Question 7 Results



**Figure 47.** Online Exit Survey – Question 8 Results



The results obtained from the exit survey appeared to connect with the questions asked in the entrance survey by linking the viewing frequency with ads and whom the participants believed were most affected. These results should be interpreted cautiously because the majority of those who were surveyed were female. According to work produced by Jean Kilbourne (1999 and 2010) women and young girls seem to be affected by the sexual tone and look of advertisements more than men and boys. Although strong connects were made between the entrance survey and exit survey, further studies and research is needed to determine a more concrete understanding of how the graphic design undergraduates at Iowa State University interpret advertisements.

## CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

This section outlines a discussion on how graphic design undergraduates interpret sexualized imagery of advertisements in reflection of the reviewed literature. First, the author focuses on the discovery of research questions developed for the study. Then, a brief overview of the results and methodology sections are made. Next, the limitations experienced within the study are discussed, followed by the declaration of an expansion of territory. This section concludes with important implications raised for future studies and research.

Many gender equality advocates (Cortese, 2007 and Kilbourne, 1999) argue the sexual objectification of women within advertisements is affecting our society's view of femininity and womanhood in the United States. Much of the literature found on the subject sees the representation of women and men within advertising to be alarmingly threatening to the public, specifically to that of young boys and girls growing up with gender stereotypes molded in their minds due to what they see in the media.

In this study, an online survey was designed to determine what perspective, if any, do the graphic design undergraduates at Iowa State University have on femininity and sexual objectification, and if they recognize the sexual content portrayed in ads. The research questions in this survey were developed from the reviewed literature, which discussed issues such as "the gaze," the pornography fantasy, masculinity vs. femininity representations in ads and domination and power.

The experimental results from the online survey could indicate that the graphic design undergraduates may notice sexual content or imagery within an ad, but do not see it yet as a serious threat to our society, or even a consideration in their own designs. The fact that the majority of the participants reflected on the message behind the advertisements supports the

notion of their acknowledgement or understanding of the ad agency's intentions when creating the promotion. Thus, the students' lack of concern for the affects these ads are building is conceivably a consequence of the advertisements seen in media outlets across the United States. Considering Jhally's (2010) arguments on the pornography fantasy of music videos, the frequency of the display of sexual objectification may have contributed to the lack of concern from the students.

Research has shown that advertisements project how society *thinks* men and women behave, not how they truly behave (Goffman, 1979 and Cortese, 2007). This study agrees with the literature on how women in ads are portrayed comparative to reality. However, the seemingly lack of alarm from the participants on the portrayal of women in ads could lead to a detrimental effect on real women. This means women and girls could develop body issues or other harmful issues. Overall, the online survey suggests that sexual objectification may not be seen as a major issue among students, which could lead to inspirations in their own work as seen in the student-led *Revival* and *Trend* magazines.

### 5.1 Shortcomings

Although the results from this study were promising, there were certain limitations that made the results from the online survey difficult to review. Often participants would answer in the same or in similar manners within the questionnaire and exit survey sections. This was particularly true for questions 2—Did you realize the last advertisement was promoting an alcoholic beverage—and question 3—What, if anything stands out to you the most about the Absolut Au Kurant advertisement—of the questionnaire. Likewise, the exit survey created similar answers amongst participants with questions 1—Do you believe advertisements are becoming overly sexual?—and question 2—How objectified have women

become in advertisements? These questions led the students to a specific answer—which was also a limitation—making the results the same and unusable in the study.

The empirical findings established in the Results section (Chapter 4) provide some support for the hypothesis except for the individuals who did not complete the survey, which altered the outcomes for each question. These shortcomings prevented the study from remaining consistent throughout the survey. With a more regular number of participants answering each question, the results may have been more reliable.

Another limitation was the number of participants who contributed in the online survey. As stated prior in the study (Chapter 3), there are currently 221 graphic design students in the program at Iowa State University. With only receiving 33 individuals to participate in the study—27 of those fully completing—there were not enough students to truly establish concrete results linking back to the hypotheses listed in Chapter 1. It should also be noted that no 1<sup>st</sup> year core students participated in the online survey. This could have been helpful in determining the change in image interpretation throughout the different education levels within the graphic design program.

Lastly, there was much difficulty in constructing the online survey. Creating the questions for the study proved challenging because the author had no prior experience with survey construction. The questions lacked consistency and often led the students to a particular answer. With more knowledge and background in forming a survey, the author may have had—and will have—a better grasp on the material and in the construction of questions. With these limitations, the exploration of further research may benefit the development of a more consistent study.

## 5.2 Implications for Further Research

This study may ignite the interest for follow up exploration in how to measure a student's understanding of sexual content within an ad. In this way, the investigation of how graphic design undergraduates image interpretation, and how they use it must be expanded and developed because the question of how to change these gender stereotypes has not been solved.

This thesis was created to understand how the graphic design undergraduate students interpreted potentially sexualized advertisements and if they were using the same sexual content found in those promotions in their own work. Although the results from the online survey are promising, further research is needed in the image interpretation of advertisements containing sexual imagery, particularly those in which women are objectified. To obtain more information of the topic, different approaches may be considered.

Instead of relying on an online survey to obtain information on the subject, small social groups, containing three to four individuals, could be used to better indicate direct feelings and interpretations of commercials or printed ads. These groups could also be split into two sections, one containing men and the other women, asking the same questions to each unit. When they are apart, the observer could record the interaction between the separate groups, documenting any keywords each group discusses. Later, the two sets could come together, and the observer would record how they interacted together, noting the differences.

This technique is often used in studies for design. In a study performed by Debra Satterfield, Sung Kang, Roger Baer—all Iowa State University faculty—and Nora Ladjahasan, Assistant Scientist, IDRO at Iowa State University, they broke individuals into peer groups to test the “people behaviors and actions” (Satterfield, Kang, Baer and

Ladjahasan, 2009). The study used both observation and recording methods in order to document the participants spoken responses about “emotion, physical and sensory properties of the products and packages” (Satterfield, Kang, Baer and Ladjahasan, 2009). Similarly, the social group study for the interpretations of women could determine emotion and physical responses to the images on display.

Another future study would test the 1<sup>st</sup> year core students attending Iowa State University. Although these individuals are not placed into a particular program at the end of their freshman year, this study could determine a change in opinion of women within advertisements and gender stereotypes within ads from 1<sup>st</sup> year studies to high levels of education.

Likewise, a comparison of how the undergraduate graphic design student’s interpreted images with advertising students could be made. In this study, the advertising students would be given a similar survey to determine if they had the same or different responses as the graphic design students. With this, the observer(s) could determine if the way women are displayed within ads is affecting our collegiate youth.

## APPENDIX A. IRB MATERIALS

<b>IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY</b> OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY		Institutional Review Board Office for Responsible Research Vice President for Research 1138 Pearson Hall Ames, Iowa 50011-2207 515 294-4566 FAX 515 294-4267
<b>Date:</b>	12/17/2013	
<b>To:</b>	Melissa McDonald 114A University Village Ames, IA 50010	<b>CC:</b> Dr. Paul R Bruski 158 College of Design
<b>From:</b>	Office for Responsible Research	
<b>Title:</b>	How Undergraduates in Graphic Design Use the Female Form and View Sex in Advertising and Their Own Work	
<b>IRB ID:</b>	13-587	
<b>Study Review Date:</b> 12/17/2013		
<p>The project referenced above has been declared exempt from the requirements of the human subject protections regulations as described in 45 CFR 46.101(b) because it meets the following federal requirements for exemption:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey or interview procedures with adults or observation of public behavior where           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects cannot be identified directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; or</li> <li>◦ Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could not reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to their financial standing, employability, or reputation.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The determination of exemption means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>You do not need to submit an application for annual continuing review.</b></li> <li>• <b>You must carry out the research as described in the IRB application.</b> Review by IRB staff is required prior to implementing modifications that may change the exempt status of the research. In general, review is required for any modifications to the research procedures (e.g., method of data collection, nature or scope of information to be collected, changes in confidentiality measures, etc.), modifications that result in the inclusion of participants from vulnerable populations, and/or any change that may increase the risk or discomfort to participants. Changes to key personnel must also be approved. The purpose of review is to determine if the project still meets the federal criteria for exemption.</li> </ul> <p>Non-exempt research is subject to many regulatory requirements that must be addressed prior to implementation of the study. Conducting non-exempt research without IRB review and approval may constitute non-compliance with federal regulations and/or academic misconduct according to ISU policy.</p> <p><b>Detailed information about requirements for submission of modifications can be found on the Exempt Study Modification Form.</b> A Personnel Change Form may be submitted when the only modification involves changes in study staff. If it is determined that exemption is no longer warranted, then an Application for Approval of Research Involving Humans Form will need to be submitted and approved before proceeding with data collection.</p> <p>Please note that you must submit all research involving human participants for review. <b>Only the IRB or designees may make the determination of exemption</b>, even if you conduct a study in the future that is exactly like this study.</p> <p>Please be aware that <b>approval from other entities may also be needed</b>. For example, access to data from private records (e.g. student, medical, or employment records, etc.) that are protected by FERPA, HIPAA, or other confidentiality policies requires permission from the holders of those records. Similarly, for research conducted in institutions other than ISU (e.g., schools, other colleges or universities, medical facilities, companies, etc.), investigators must obtain permission from the institution(s) as required by their policies. <b>An IRB determination of exemption in no way implies or guarantees that</b></p>		

*Figure 48.* IRB Approval Letter (p. 1)

**permission from these other entities will be granted.**

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns at 515-294-4566 or [IRB@iastate.edu](mailto:IRB@iastate.edu).

***Figure 49.*** IRB Approval Letter (p. 2)



**APPENDIX B. PARTICIPANTS NEEDED EMAIL**

Dear Participant,

I would like to invite you, as a graphic design undergraduate student at Iowa State University, to participate in this survey about the use of imagery in print and commercial advertisements. Your anonymous answers will help me to better understand image interpretation within public ads and your own work.

Before the survey begins, there will be an informed consent you must sign in order to take the survey. If you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to complete a brief entrance survey about yourself and your prior interaction with advertisements and the media in which it is displayed. Next, you will be asked to complete a 15-question survey. After completing the questionnaire, you will be given an exit survey to collect feedback about your thoughts and experience. The study should take up to 20 minutes, although it may take less time.

You do not have to answer any questions you may feel uncomfortable with, and if you ever become frustrated, you may always opt out of the study.

All personal information will be kept strictly confidential. Personal information will not be published or used on any document.

If you would like to take this survey, please click on the link below:  
[https://iastate.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_40XR0RzsooCGSWN](https://iastate.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_40XR0RzsooCGSWN)

Thank you for your time and consideration

Melissa McDonald  
MFA Graduate Student  
Iowa State University

**Figure 50.** Participants Needed Email

**APPENDIX C. PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FLYER**

*Figure 51.* Participants Needed Flyer

## **APPENDIX D. ONLINE INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

**Title of Study:** How undergraduates in graphic design use the female form in advertising and their own work

**Investigators:** Principal Investigator (PI): Melissa McDonald (mlm@iastate.edu)  
Co-Investigator: Paul Bruski (bruski@iastate.edu)

This form describes a research project. It has information to help you decide whether or not you wish to participate. Research studies include only people who choose to take part—your participation is completely voluntary. Please discuss any questions you have about the study or about this form with the project staff before deciding to participate.

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to determine how individuals in the undergraduate graphic design program at Iowa State University view different forms within a printed advertisement or television commercial. Through this study, I will be able to comprehend whether these students recognize certain imagery that portrays roles of each form making up the advertisement. From this, I will be able to determine if the students are learning this perspective from culture or through classroom experience.

You are being invited to participate in this study to fulfill the requirement for an MFA degree at Iowa State University. Your participation in this survey will also help to decipher the graphic design undergraduate students' understanding behind how using certain imagery within advertising and design could influence a negative view of individuals in the real world.

### **Description of Procedures**

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete a survey that displays images of advertisements asking you basic questions of how you view the imagery and other content within an ad. After the survey is complete, you will be asked to fill out an exit survey that asks questions about your interpretations of the survey. This information you provide will be collected after the test and compiled into charts to show the results. None of your personal information will be released. Your participation will last for about 15-20 minutes.

### **Risks or Discomforts**

While participating in this study you may experience the following risks or discomforts: No known risks/discomforts.

*Figure 52.* Informed Consent Form (p. 1)

## **Benefits**

If you decide to participate in this study, there may be no benefit to you. It is hoped that the information gained in this study will benefit society by advancing knowledge in the impact of imagery used in advertisements and commercials.

## **Costs and Compensation**

You will not have any costs from participating in this study. You will not be compensated

## **Participant Rights**

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part in the study or to stop participating at any time, for any reason, without penalty or negative consequences. You can skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.

If you have any questions *about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury*, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515) 294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515) 294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

## **Confidentiality**

Records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations and will not be made publicly available. However, federal government regulatory agencies, auditing departments of Iowa State University, and the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves human subject research studies) may inspect and/or copy study records for quality assurance and data analysis. These records may contain private information.

To ensure confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, the following measures will be taken: All information collected will be password protected and will not be seen by any individual other than the investigator.

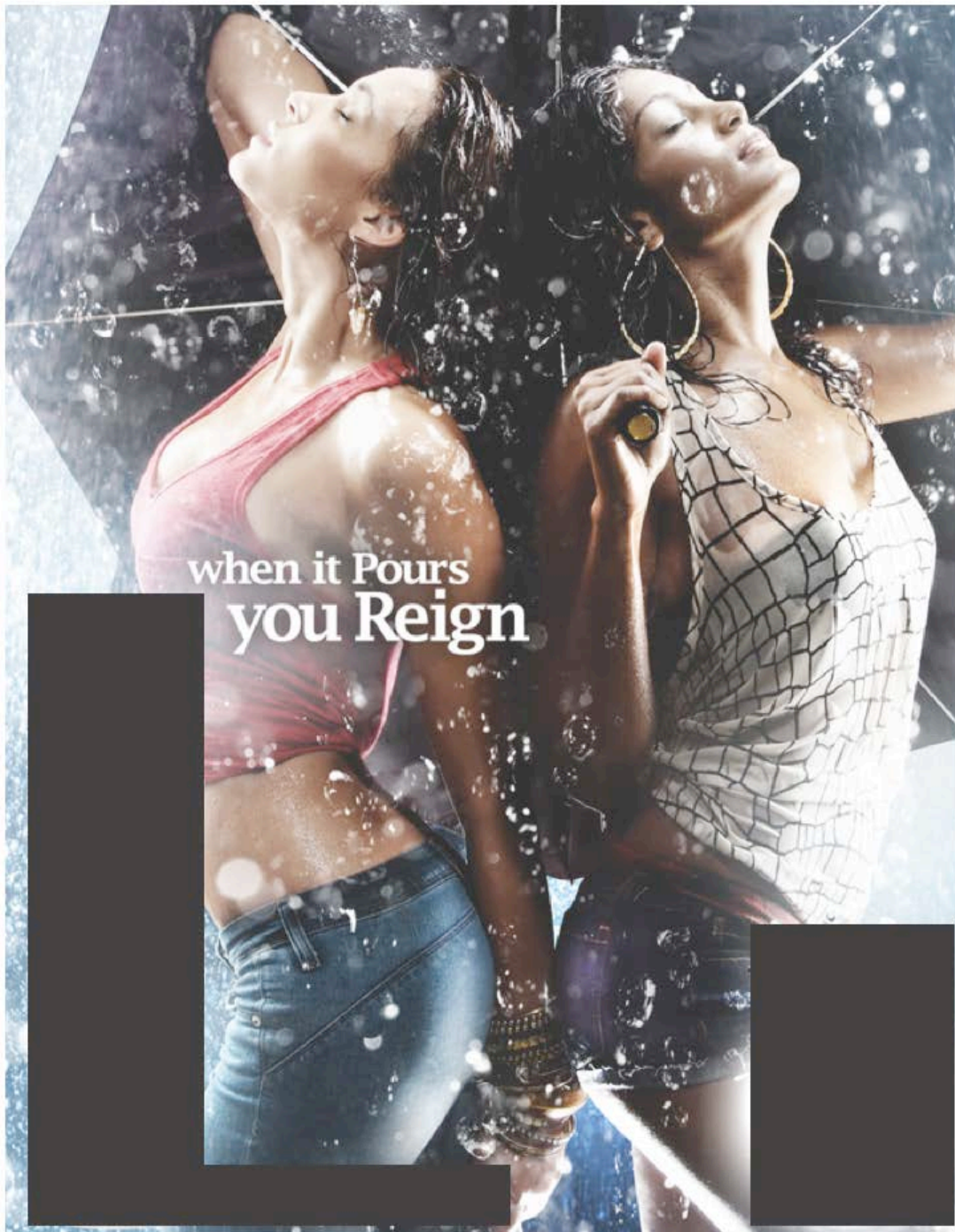
## **Questions**

You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during this study. For further information *about the study*, contact Melissa McDonald by phone at (815)303-5261 or by e-mail at mlm@iastate.edu. If further information is needed, please contact faculty member, Paul Bruski by e-mail at bruski@iastate.edu.

## **Consent and Authorization Provisions**

Your signature indicates that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document, and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You will receive a copy of the written informed consent prior to your participation in the study.

**Figure 53.** Informed Consent Form (p. 2)

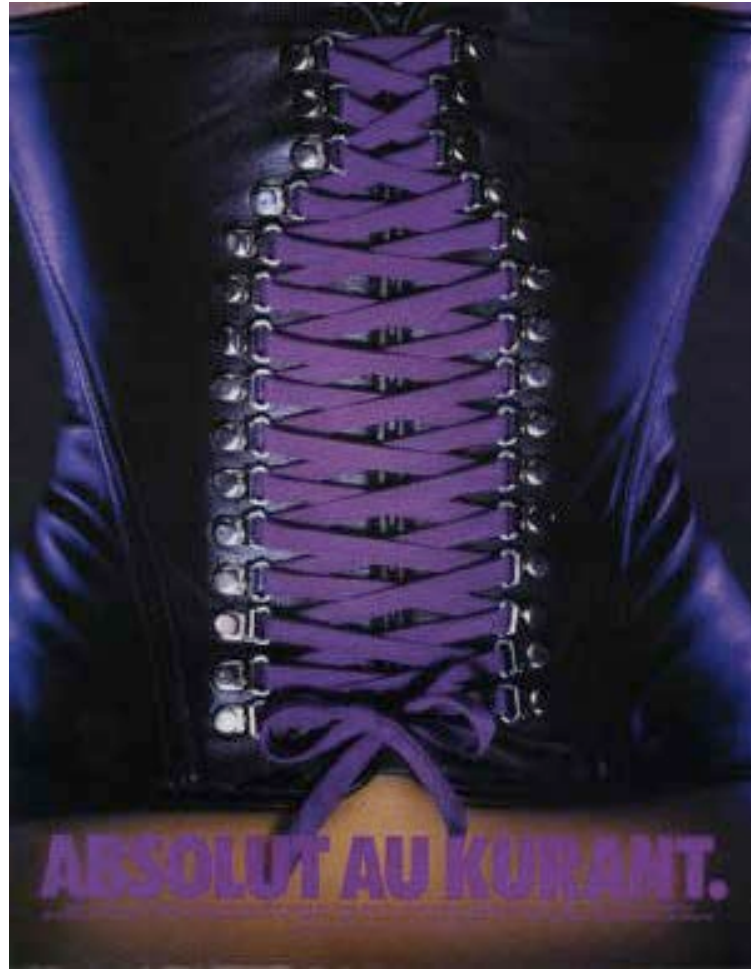
**APPENDIX E. ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE IMAGES**

**Figure 54.** Online Survey, Questionnaire – Question 1 Image

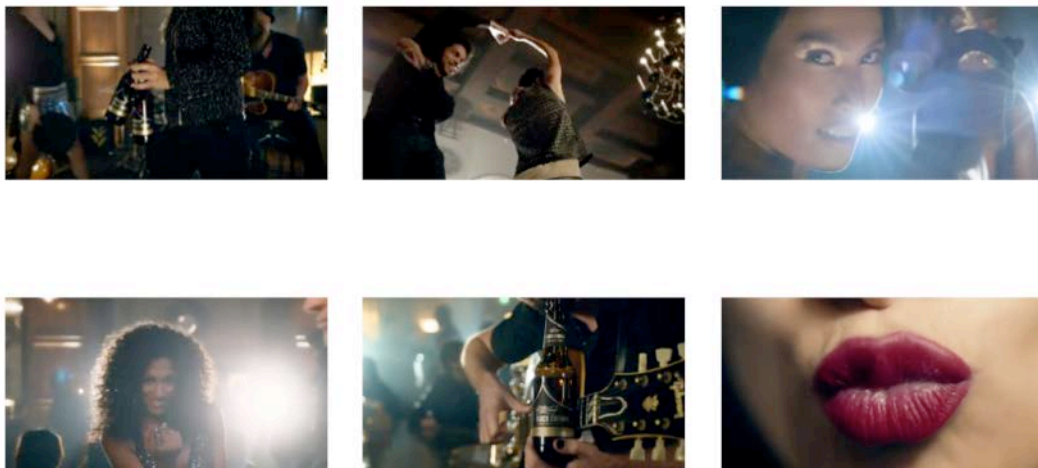


*Figure 55.* Online Survey, Questionnaire – Question 2 Image

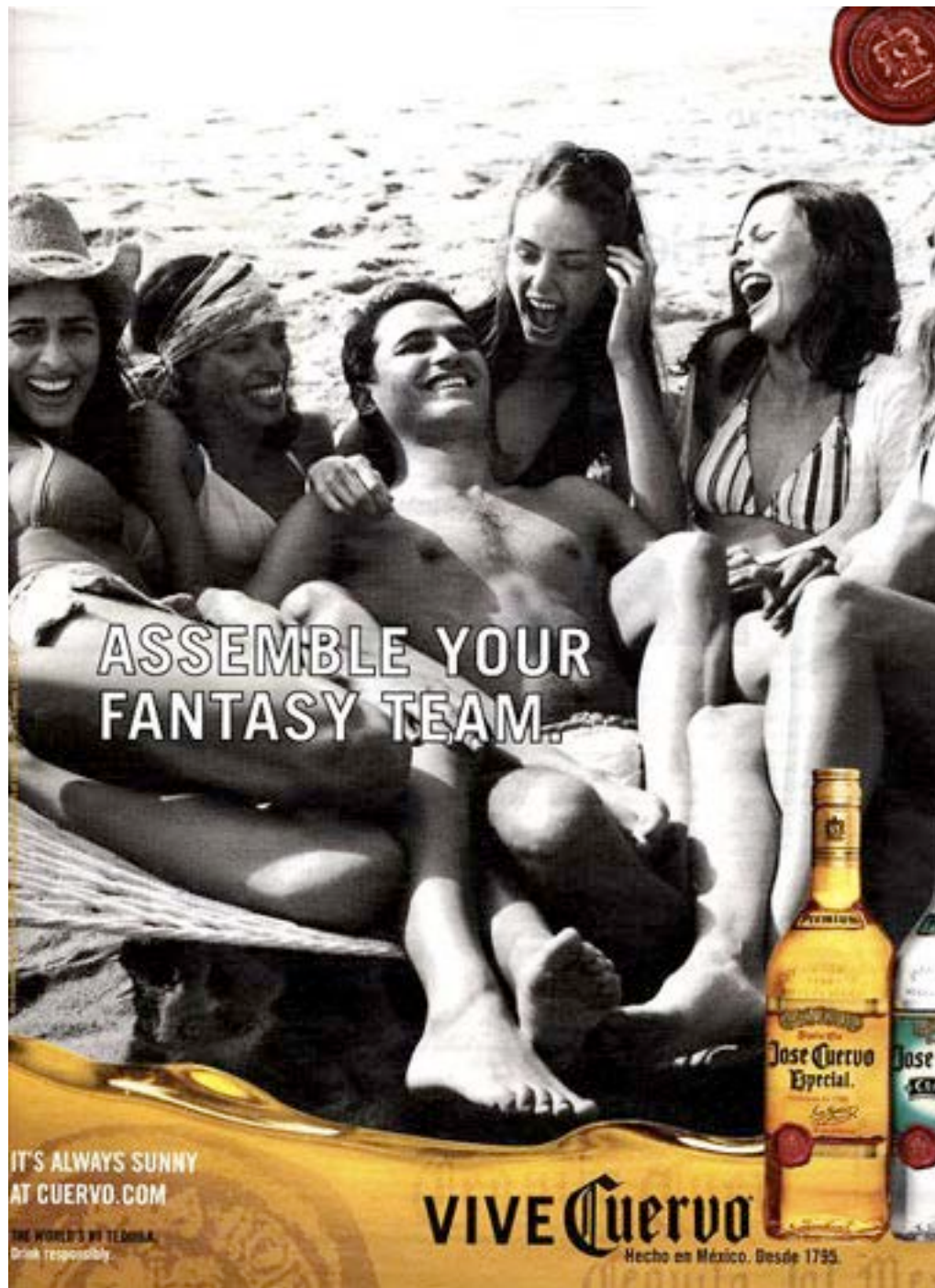




*Figure 56.* Online Survey, Questionnaire – Question 3 Image

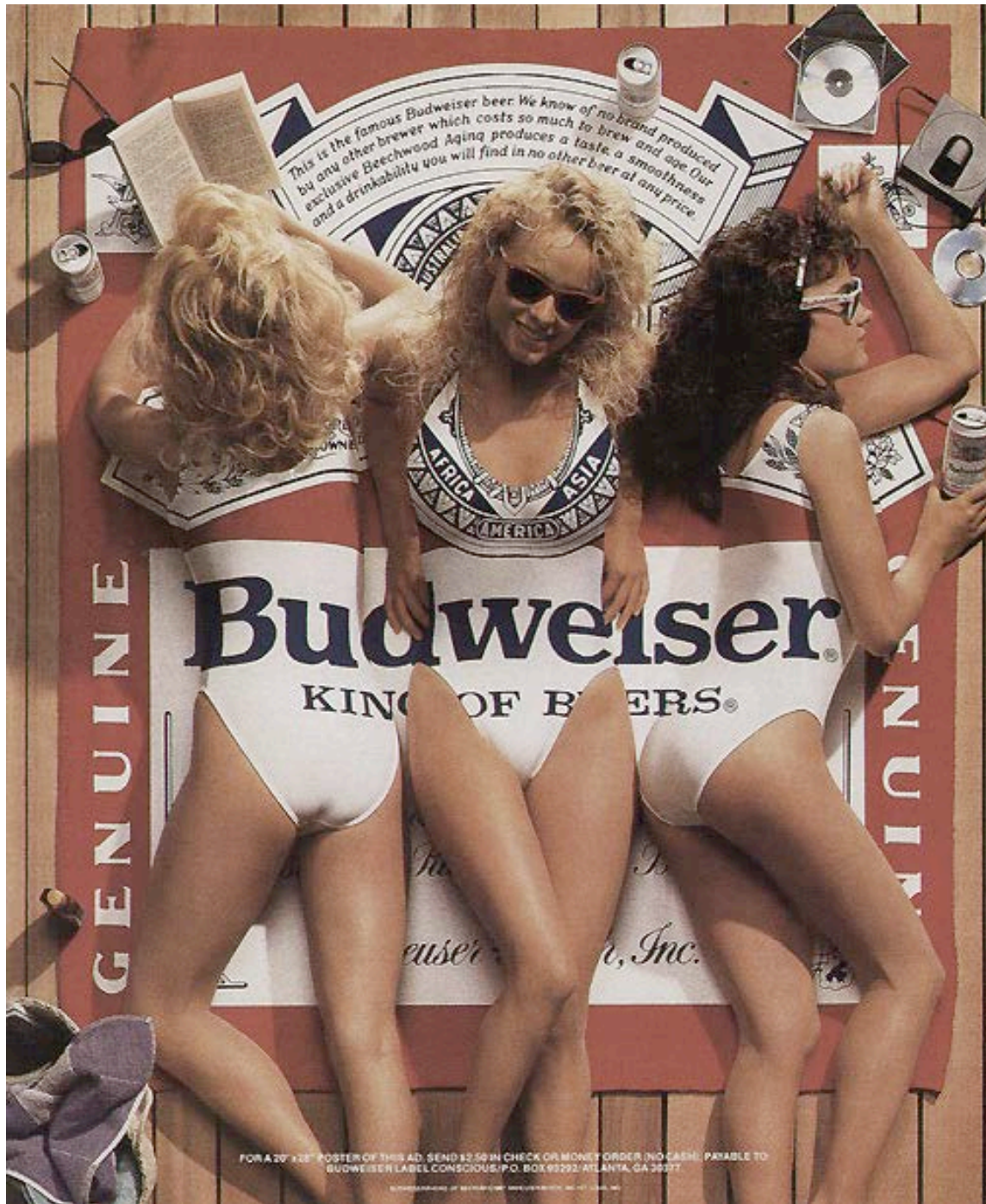


*Figure 57.* Online Survey, Questionnaire – Questions 4-6 Image



*Figure 58.* Online Survey, Questionnaire – Question 7 Image





*Figure 59.* Online Survey, Questionnaire – Question 8 Image



**Figure 60.** Online Survey, Questionnaire – Question 9 Image



**Figure 61.** Online Survey, Questionnaire – Question 10 Image

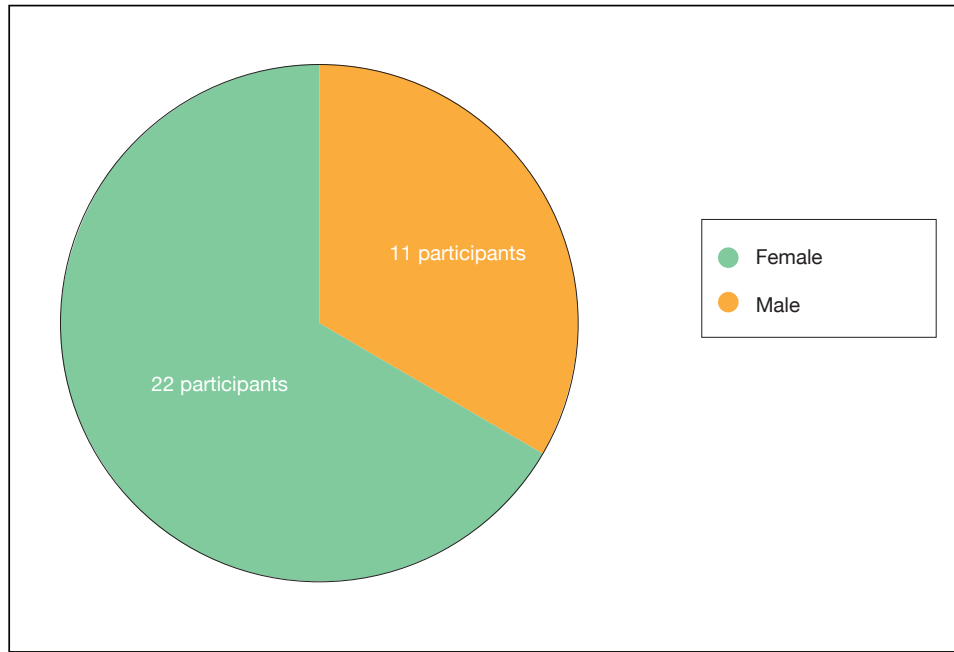




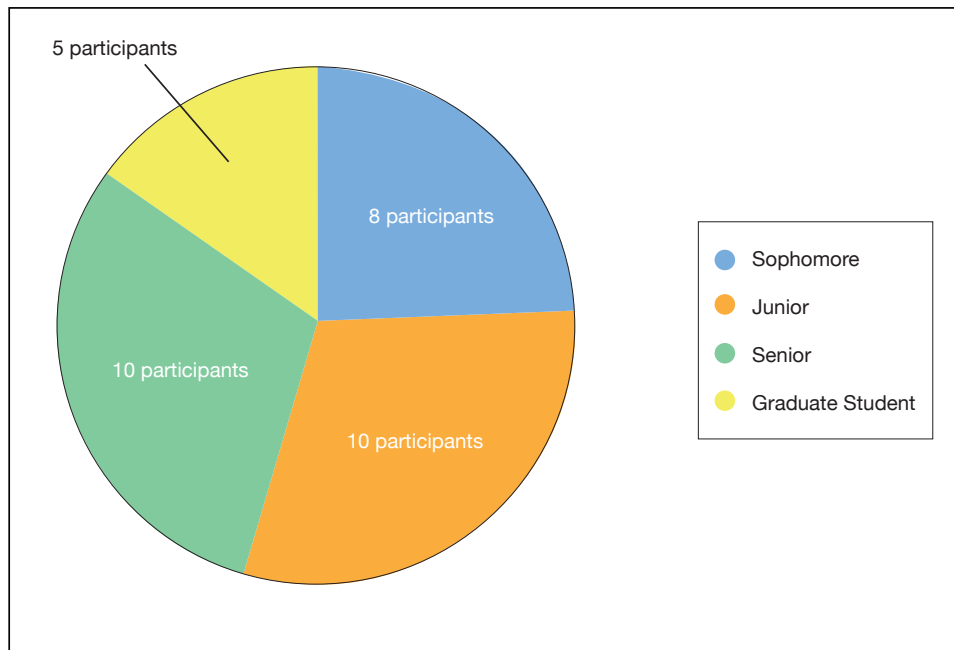
*Figure 62.* Online Survey, Questionnaire – Question 11 Image



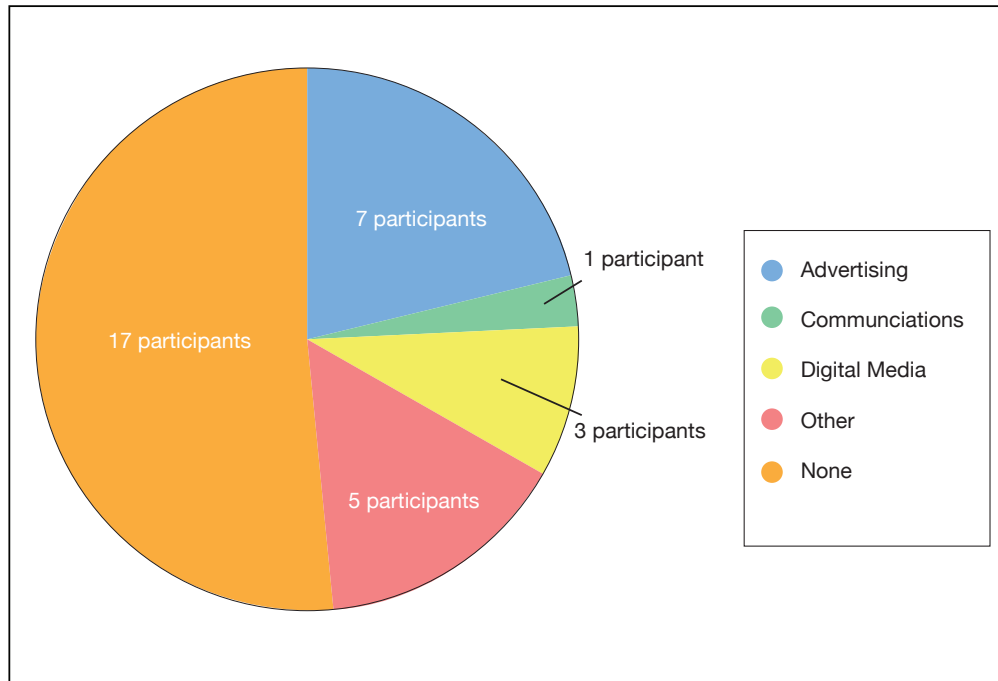
*Figure 63.* Online Survey, Questionnaire – Question 12 Image

**APPENDIX F. DEMOGRAPHICS**

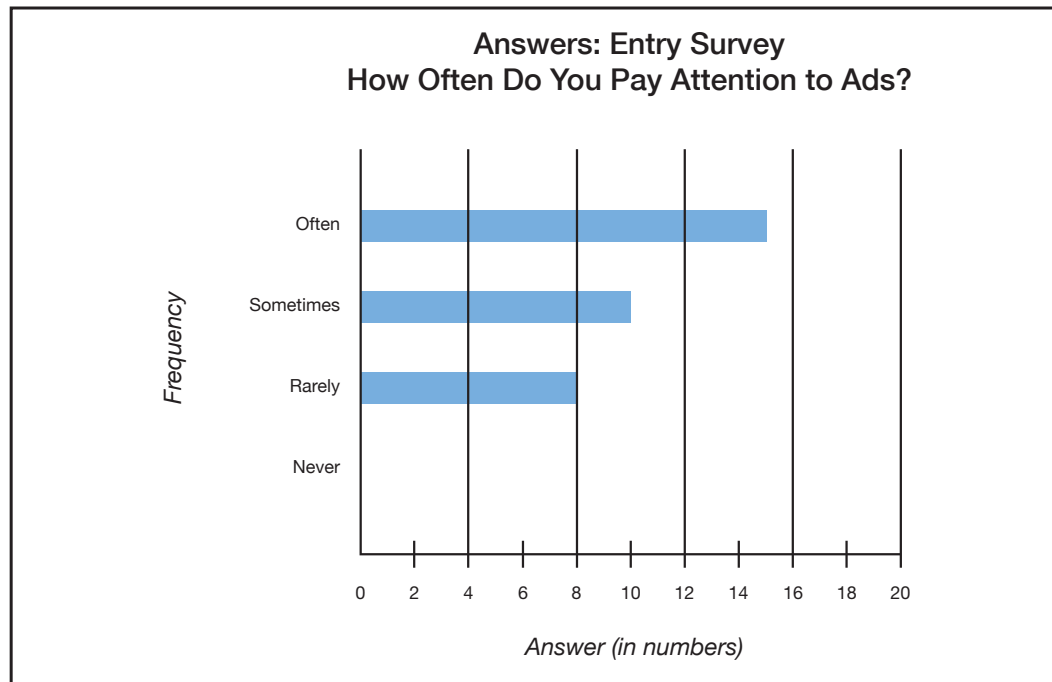
**Figure 64.** Survey Demographics – Gender



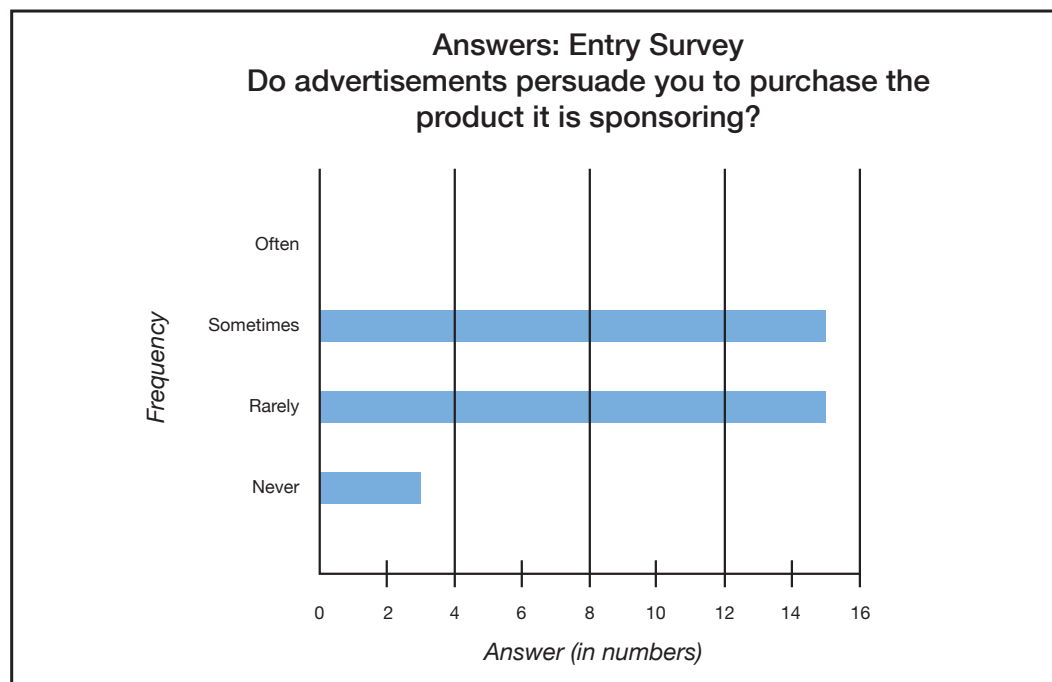
**Figure 65.** Survey Demographics – Education Level



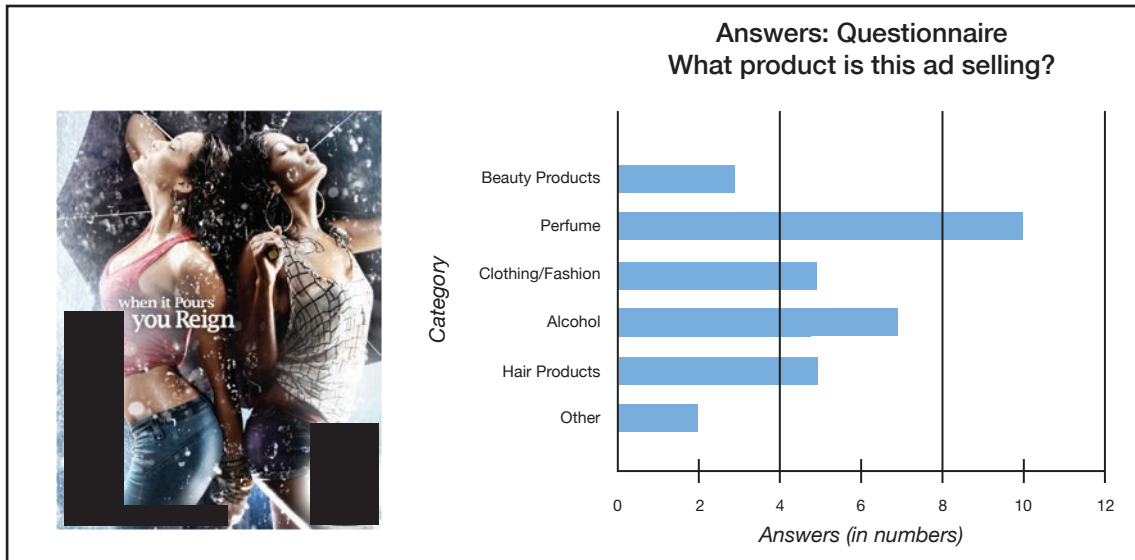
**Figure 66.** Survey Demographics – Minors

**APPENDIX G. QUANTITATIVE RESULTS**

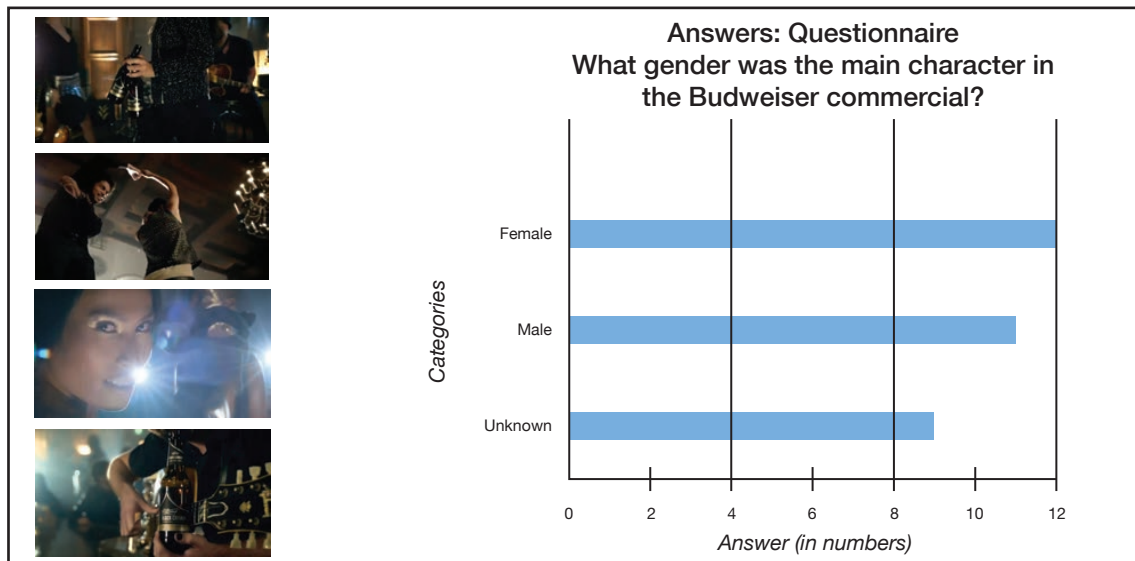
**Figure 67.** Entry Survey Quantitative Results (1)



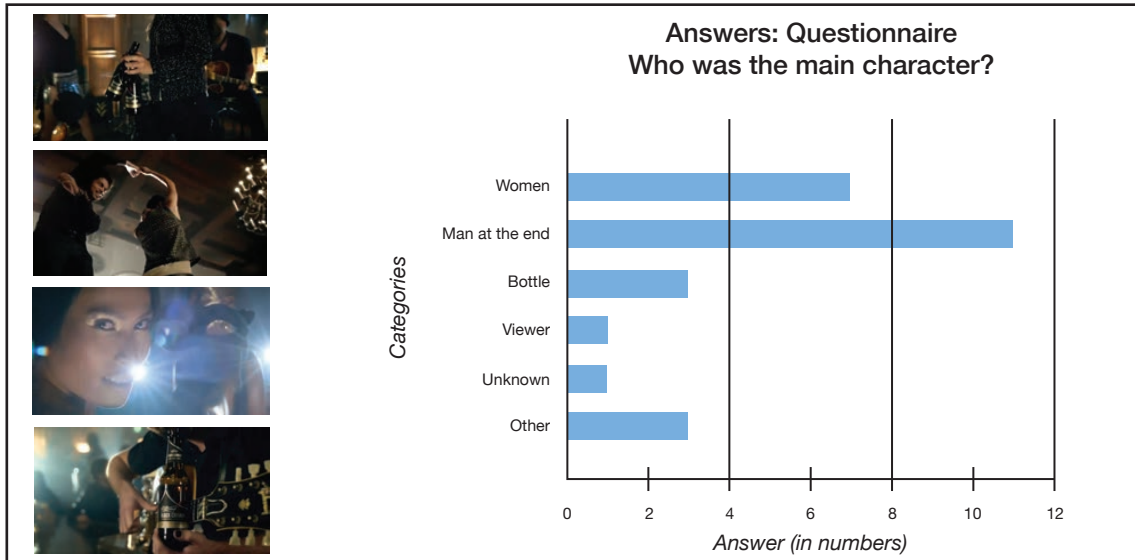
**Figure 68.** Entry Survey Quantitative Results (2)



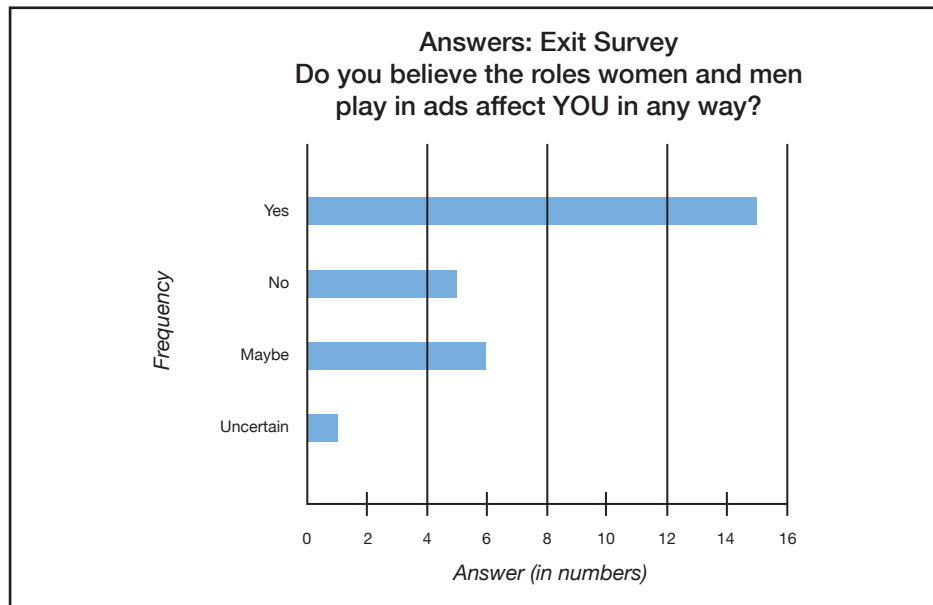
**Figure 69.** Questionnaire Quantitative Results (1)



**Figure 70.** Questionnaire Quantitative Results (2)

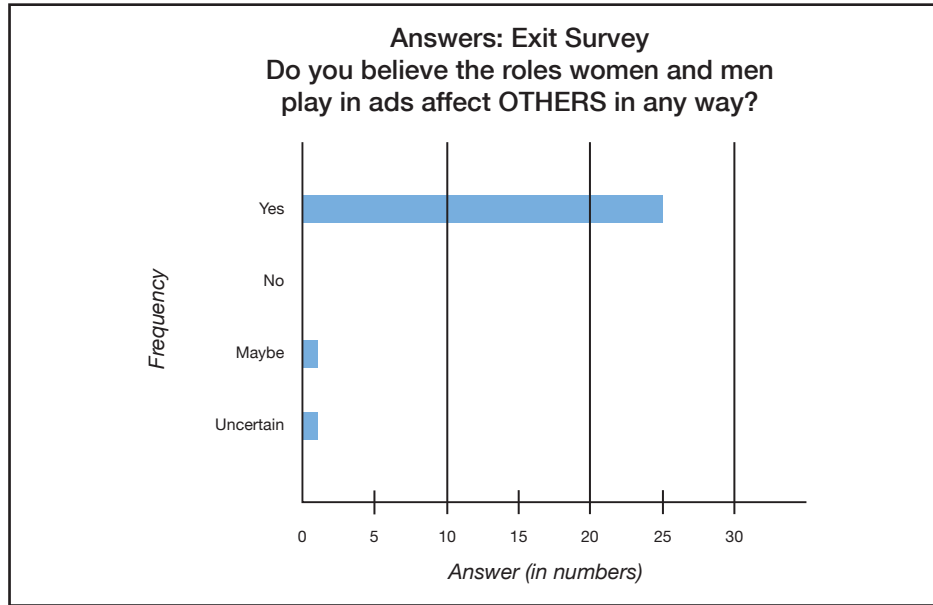


**Figure 71.** Questionnaire Quantitative Results (3)

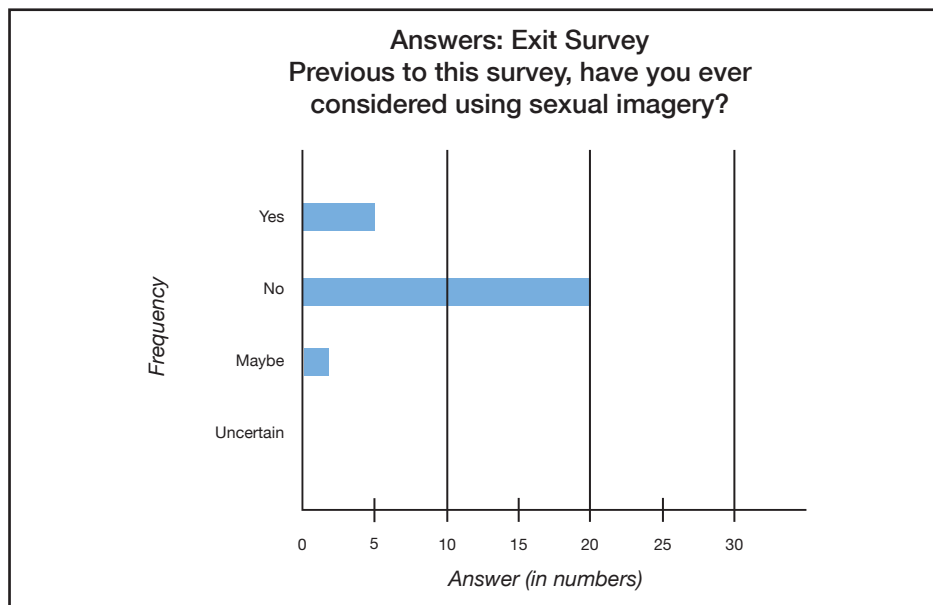


**Figure 72.** Exit Survey Quantitative Results (1)

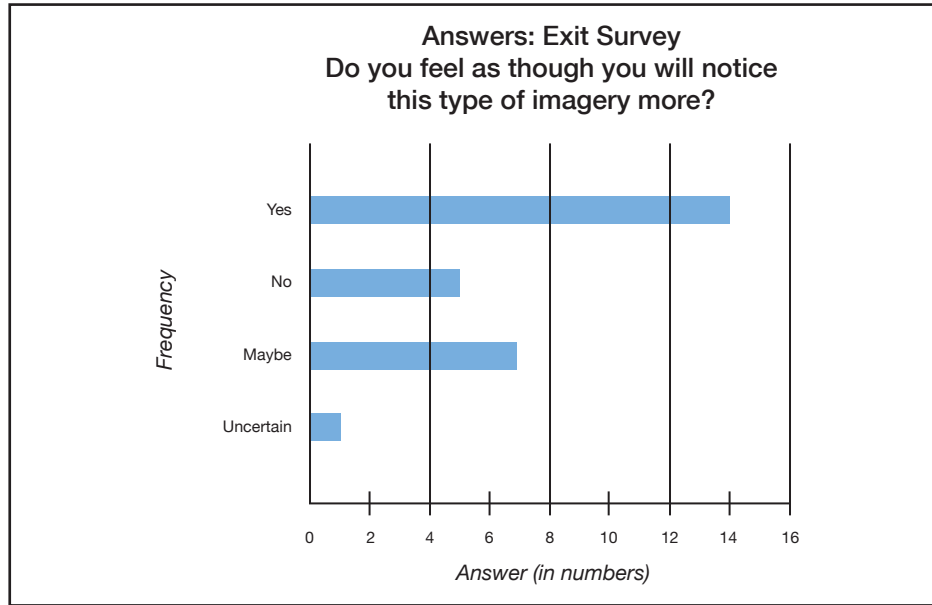




**Figure 73.** Exit Survey Quantitative Results (2)



**Figure 74.** Exit Survey Quantitative Results (3)



**Figure 75.** Exit Survey Quantitative Results (4)

## APPENDIX H. QUALITATIVE RESULTS – WORD ANALYSIS



### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 7

Women (15)	Fantasy (7)	Party (2)	Inebriation (1)	Sex (1)	Friends (1)	Appealing (1)
hot ladies sluts accessory girls are apart of a group	fantasy he chooses who he wants	fun surround team gaggle	get drunk drink Jose	getting laid	friends	attractive people

**Figure 76.** Questionnaire Word Analysis (1)



### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 9

Elite (9)	Sex (8)	Sophisticated (3)	Vintage (3)	Expensive (1)	Women (1)
mysterious	sex	sophisticated	vintage	luxurious	beautiful
secretive	sexy	smart	black & white		women
catchy	getting laid				
classy	get invited				
sleek	back to the hotel room				

**Figure 77.** Questionnaire Word Analysis (2)



### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 10

Sex (14)	Caught (6)	Crude (2)	Content (2)	Object (1)	Unknown (1)
sex	shocked	degrading	advertisement	lipstick	unknown
getting laid	caught	crude	is disconnected from	belt buckle	
go to bed	caught in the	disturbing	the product		
blow job	act				
acting					
inappropriately					

**Figure 78.** Questionnaire Word Analysis (3)



Image A



Image B

### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 11, Image A.

"The Gaze" (6)	Power (3)	Object (3)	Concept (2)	Nudity (1)	Inebriation (1)
"the gaze" desire attraction men look at woman like a piece of meat	gender roles women are sexually powerful	women are an object for men	innocence creepy	scantily clad women	drinking

### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 11, Image B.

Nudity (5)	Prostitutes (3)	Pleasure (3)	Picnic (2)	Relaxing (2)	Concept (0)
lack of clothes scantily clad naked nude women	prostitutes prostitutes in the park	dirty party in the woods woman's form is so pleasing it should be seen	strippers at a picnic picnic in the park	relaxing group of friends relaxing	

### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 11, Both.

"The Gaze" (1)	Sex (4)	Power (1)	Object (2)	Concept (1)
a woman is meant to be looked at	attaction of the opposite sex sex appeal sensual	women are powerfully sexy & should not be ashamed of that	women are objects & men are prowling over them women as desire able objects	evil

**Figure 79.** Questionnaire Word Analysis (4)



### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 12, Image A.

Position (3)	Power (3)	Sex (2)	Nudity (2)	Concept (1)	Object (0)
woman's position pushes limits	man is dominating woman man is demanding woman to drink man is in charge	sexual seductive	skin body parts	man is propositioning the woman	

### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 12, Image B.

Nudity (4)	Concept (4)	Position (1)	Power (1)	Sex (1)	Object (0)
the nude is respected exposure playful	elegant classic prostitute Roman painting	contortion	man is dominating woman	forbidden love	

### Word Analysis: Questionnaire - Question 12, Both.

Nudity(10)	Position (1)	Power (1)	Concept (1)	Sex (0)	Object (0)
exposed focus on nudity revealing boobs glowing skin	triangular composition	man is dominating woman	everyone is holding something		

**Figure 80.** Questionnaire Word Analysis (5)

## APPENDIX I. DEMOGRAPHIC TABLE

**Table 3.** Participants' demographics

Participants	Number of Participants
Male	11
Female	22
<b>Age</b>	
18-22	21
23-27	7
28-32	1
33-37	3
38-42	1
<b>Education Level</b>	
Sophomore	8
Junior	10
Senior	10
Graduate Student	5
<b>Minor</b>	
Advertising	7
Communications	1
Digital Media	3
Other	5
None	17

**Table 4.** Online Survey – Qualitative vs. Quantitative Answers

Entry Survey Questions (Ad Viewing Frequency)	Type
How often do you pay attention to advertisements?	Quantitative
Do advertisements persuade you to purchase the product it is sponsoring?	Quantitative
<b>Questionnaire</b>	
Without seeing the company logo or product, what is this ad selling?	Quantitative
What gender was the main character of the Budweiser Black Crown ad?	Quantitative
Who was the main character of the Budweiser Black Crown advertisement?	Quantitative
What is the main message of this advertisement?	Qualitative
How would you describe this advertisement in 1-2 sentences?	Qualitative
Describe this ad in 1-2 sentences?	Qualitative
What are the main messages of these images? Explain in 1-2 sentences.	Qualitative
What, if anything, stands out to you the most in these images? Explain in 1-2 sentences.	Qualitative
<b>Exit Survey</b>	
Do you believe the roles women and men play in advertisements and commercials affect YOU in any way?	Quantitative
Do you believe the roles women and men play in advertisements and commercials affect OTHERS in any way?	Quantitative
Previous to this survey, have you ever considered using sexual imagery for your own work?	Quantitative
Do you feel as though you will notice this type of sexualize or objectified imagery more?	Quantitative



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