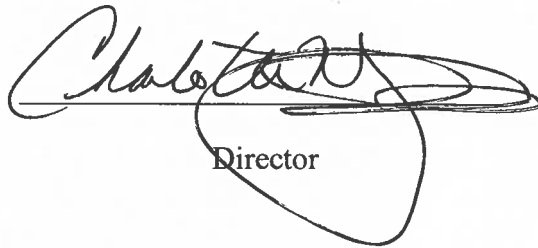


Prevent, Reverse, & Defy:
Ageism in Magazine Advertisements

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SIGNATURE PAGE

This thesis for honors recognition has been approved for the
Department of Communication Studies.



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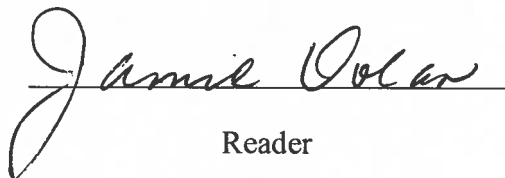
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Abstract

Prejudice based on one's age, or "ageism," is not a new phenomenon. Even though ageism has been known in scholarly literature since the 1960s, its influence on society is perhaps underestimated. The perpetual search for the "fountain of youth" continues today, and this contributes to making "getting older" an undesirable process in contemporary Euro-American culture. This study examines how print magazine advertisements portray age in two magazines specifically targeted toward males and females. Two magazines with a similar approach and style (i.e. similar themes, layout, target audience, demographics, content, etc.) were analyzed: female-targeted *Cosmopolitan* and male-targeted *Men's Journal*. I randomly sampled and analyzed 50% of *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Journal* issues from 2010 and 2011— a total of 24 issues in all. The study employed an inductive analysis combined with textual and content analysis, to examine positive and negative implications of age with regard to the text of the advertisements, images accompanying the advertisements, and the products that are advertised. Results from analysis indicated that there were in fact more ageist advertisements within the female-oriented *Cosmopolitan* magazines than there were in the male-oriented *Men's Journal* magazines. Approximately 30% of the ads within both years of *Men's Journal* were considered ageist. Contrastingly, approximately 68% of the ads within both years of *Cosmopolitan* were considered ageist. This indicates that the media is cultivating an anti-aging ideology, particularly through magazine advertisements and particularly towards females.

Chapter One

Introduction

When lotions failed to smooth the crow's feet around Cheryl Hoover's eyes and restore the firmness to her skin, the 41-year-old turned to Botox, collagen, and laser treatments. "I try to be proactive in heading off things. You want, as you get older, to appear youthful or at least look your age and not older. Our generation is looking for the fountain of youth, where it would have been more acceptable to age in previous generations" (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010, p. 129).

It can be argued that old age used to be a more valued and respected life process than it is in Euro-American society today. However, the new anti-aging ideology has exploded with success. Today, the aging process and signs of aging are misunderstood and feared, and Euro-American society is attempting to avoid old age all together by preventing, reversing, and defying a natural and inevitable life stage.

Fear is one of the main components of the anti-aging mindset. The term *gerascophobia* can be defined as "an abnormal and persistent fear of growing old ... Modern society's preoccupation with youthful beauty does nothing to alleviate their fears" (MedicineNet, Inc., n.d., para. 1). Thus, from gerascophobia to ageism, Euro-American society today has an overall negative view of aging. This negative portrayal of growing old not only impacts older persons, but affects everyone because the aging process is something that we are all experiencing.

Through plastic surgery, cosmetic products, supplements and vitamins, diet and fitness, fashion, and technology, Euro-American society is doing everything possible in

an attempt to freeze and rewind the aging process. Chasing the anti-aging dream can be costly, ineffective, and even dangerous. Many anti-aging procedure costs are not covered by health insurance, and some result in long periods of recovery that can add further monetary disadvantages. Regarding the financial implications, the *Associated Press* highlighted three anti-aging options and their associated costs: cosmetic surgery procedures costing \$10,000 or more, human growth hormone treatment costing about \$15,000 per year, and a skincare product called Peau Magnifique that costs \$1,500 for a 28-day supply (Darden, 2000, Options for Aging Americans section, para.1). As these figures reveal, anti-aging procedures and products can have severe financial repercussions on consumers. And while the anti-aging industry is booming today, it is only expected to continue to grow. Darden (2000, Market for Skin Care & Anti-Aging Products to Hit \$114 Billion by 2015 section, para.1) reported that, "... today's baby-boomers are now 'seeking to keep the dreaded signs of aging at bay,' and will drive the U.S. market for anti-aging products from around \$80 billion (skin care is around \$20 billion) in today's market to more than \$114 billion by 2015." In contrast, *USA Today* (2011) explained that, rather than exuding money to the anti-aging industry, many organizations such as the National Institute on Aging recommend living a healthy lifestyle in order to age well, by maintaining a healthy diet, exercising regularly, and refraining from smoking. As S. Jay Olshansky, a professor at the University of Illinois-Chicago's School of Public Health stated: "If someone is promising you today that you can slow, stop or reverse aging, they're likely trying hard to separate you from your money ... Invest in yourself, in the simple things we know work" (USA Today, 2011, para. 7,8).

Not only are these anti-aging pursuits costly, but in the end, they are ultimately ineffective in the long-term. Chicago plastic surgeon Mary McGrath, MD, stated that, “Although these operations are effective, they are ultimately limited by the continual aging of the skin ... Reaching the next plateau in aesthetic surgery may involve addressing the intrinsic changes that occur with aging” (ASPS, 2002, para.4). While anti-aging products and procedures may provide temporary results, there is no way to completely stop the aging process and signs of aging will continue to advance as one ages. The National Institute on Aging contributed: “Our culture places great value on staying young, but aging is normal,” the institute says. “Despite claims about pills or treatments that lead to endless youth, no treatments have been proven to slow or reverse the aging process”(USA Today, 2011, para.5). Though aging is not a disease, Euro-American society treats it as such. Yet there is no prove “cure” or “treatment” for aging at this time, which makes the anti-aging efforts ultimately ineffective.

In addition to the immense costs and lack of long-term effectiveness, these anti-aging pursuits can be potentially dangerous. The Mayo Clinic warns that with any cosmetic surgery, the following risks may pertain: hematoma (excessive blood loss), temporary numbness or loss of feeling, seroma (collection of watery fluids), scarring and skin breakdown, infections, and anesthesia-related complications including pneumonia, blood clots, comatose, and rarely death (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, n.d.). Moreover, unexpected risks of cosmetic surgery include unrealistic expectations, disappointment in results, mental and emotional costs, and lengthy recovery time (Goudreau, 2011). In a similar fashion, dietary supplements used for the purpose of anti-aging can be extremely dangerous. According to Dr. Evan Hadley, director of the

institute's Division of Geriatrics, hormone replacement drugs can have harmful side effects. In order to identify potential risks and benefits, there is need for more research in such fields as testosterone therapy (USA Today, 2011, para. 28). Some dangerous supplements not approved for anti-aging, such as the Human Growth Hormone (HGH), can have negative and even fatal effects on users. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration alerted the public that, "Among the possible long-term side effects of HGH is an increased risk of cancer, and other dangerous side effects have been reported, including nerve pain and elevated cholesterol and glucose levels. For this reason, HGH is carefully regulated in the U.S." (2011, para. 2).

What is more, many consumers are unaware that anti-aging is not a specialty that is recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties. Traditional doctors such as endocrinologists and geriatricians are specifically trained to treat age-related conditions (Voss, 2011). As Voss revealed, "In fact, anti-aging isn't a specialty that's recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties, meaning doctors can't officially be board-certified in it" (2011, The rise of the anti-aging doc section, para. 4). In addition to the financial, psychological, and physical threats that may accompany anti-aging products and procedures, it can be argued that the ultimate danger of the anti-aging phenomena is the stress, worry, and fear of aging that terrorizes Americans of all ages and in some cases can even make death seem like a more appealing option to growing old.

Anti-aging procedures are not the only means of danger regarding ageism. Ageism itself can negatively affect individuals and even shorten their life expectancy. As discussed in "Aging in America" on msnbc.com,

Some researchers believe that ageism, in the form of negative stereotypes, directly affects longevity. In a study published by the American Psychological Association, Yale School of Public Health professor Becca Levy and her colleagues concluded that old people with positive perceptions of aging lived an average of 7.5 years longer than those with negative images of growing older (Associated Press, 2004, para. 12).

Therefore, ageism is a potentially fatal threat to older generations. Levy and colleagues discussed the aftermath of negative approaches to the aging process in a live interview at the *Washington Post*: "... when we activate negative age stereotypes, older individuals tend to show a decline in memory performance, self-confidence, will to live and handwriting ... when we activate positive age stereotypes we tend to find beneficial changes in these same areas" (Levy, n.d., as cited in Trafford, 2011).

Presently, the anti-aging industry is booming, and this growth is only expected to increase. Voss (2011, para.4,6) discussed the rise in anti-aging products and procedures: Today, thousands of physicians are catering to the 78 million baby boomers who are hoping to feel younger, longer -- and willing to pay for the privilege. The anti-aging industry is expected to gross more than \$291 billion worldwide by 2015...Even worse, they peddle therapies -- most notably, the unapproved use of hormones like HGH and customized drug cocktails -- which are unproven and can even be deadly.

Professionals and researchers suggest that the recent increase in plastic surgery treatments, and cosmetic surgery procedures in particular, could be a result of the anti-aging phenomenon bombarding Euro-American society today. As ASPS President

Malcolm Z. Roth, MD stated, “We are seeing notable increases in surgical procedures, such as facelifts, that reflect the demands of an aging boomer population” (The American Society of Plastic Surgeons, 2012, para. 5).

The aftermath of this anti-aging phenomenon results in society maintaining a negative depiction and rejection of the natural aging process. This mindset is leading young and middle-aged adults to reject the notion of growing old and the older population, on the other hand, to view themselves in a negative light. According to Levy (n.d.), “... many Americans start developing stereotypes about the elderly during childhood, reinforce them throughout adulthood, and enter old age with attitudes toward their own age group as unfavorable as younger people’s attitudes” (Associated Press, 2004, Number of seniors expected to double section, para. 4). With ageism developing at an astoundingly young age and being reinforced throughout life, the realities of the aging process are often misunderstood, exaggerated, or distorted to the extent that aging can seem worse than death. Gullette (2011) explained that,

Ageism is more than a ‘negative view’ of old age or middle age. It provides a set of terrifying anticipations ... Younger people learn quite early on that there may be no good future after youth. And younger people are beginning to dread aging into old age: Some say they will commit suicide to avoid it (Gullette, 2011, as cited in Klein, 2011, para. 1).

Furthermore, the youth are becoming increasingly interested in anti-aging procedures and products, illustrating the preventative aging trend of Euro-American society. Goudreau (2011) divulged: “Women, already 91% of cosmetic patients, are electing to make these

quick fixes more than ever, undergoing 5% more procedures in 2010 than the year before ... Greater numbers of *young* women are now going under the knife” (para. 1,2).

So how is this negative view of age communicated? Unbeknownst to many consumers, the media is one major culprit in the perpetuation of anti-aging attitudes. The advertising and marketing industries have been particularly influential in drumming home people’s attitudes toward the anti-aging ideology. As Binstock and Post (2004) explained,

The marketing and use of anti –aging products and services claiming to prevent, retard, or reverse aging have skyrocketed in recent years (e.g., Shelton, 2000; U.S. General Accounting Office, 2001), accelerated by the advent of the Internet (e.g., Youngevity, 2003). Increased consumer interest in them appears to be fueled by their appeal to baby boomers trying to preserve their youthfulness as they approach old age as well as other persons attempting to rejuvenate themselves (p. 207).

Central to the issue of ageism in advertising involves the target audience of products and advertisements. The *Associated Press* (2004) reported: “Though adults of all ages drink beer and buy cars, for example, TV and print ads for those products almost invariably feature youthful actors and models” (More geriatric specialists needed section, para. 5). Despite what product is being sold or what the target audience is, advertisements frequently feature youth exclusively. In addition, “According to AARP, the lobbying group for people 50 and over, Americans in that age bracket account for half of all consumer spending but are targeted by just 10 percent of marketing.” (Associated Press, 2004, More geriatric specialists needed section, para. 6).

The media contribute to the anti-aging phenomenon through such methods as digital manipulation, false advertising, promoting anti-aging products, little representation of older persons, and creating unattainable beauty and health standards for older persons. This is manifested in magazine advertisements that use Photoshop retouch and airbrush technologies utilized to decrease the appearance of natural wrinkles whilst increasing the appearance of youthfulness. British national daily newspaper, the *Guardian*, printed: "Pictures of flawless skin and super-slim bodies are all around, but they don't reflect reality ... Excessive airbrushing and digital manipulation techniques have become the norm" (Swinson, n.d., cited in Sweney, 2011, para. 10). These advertisements often fail to give an honest portrayal of real people, real ages, or real product results. The opinion of Lumby (2011) was published in *The Sydney Morning Herald* in response to a banned ad campaign in Britain: "The issue of what 'real' women should look like has been complicated by the rise of digital technologies that give photographers, advertisers and agents enormous license to touch up images of models and celebrities" (Swinson, Moss, Lumby, & Leesong, The Academic section, para. 5).

Although ageism has been documented in media in general, ageism in print magazine advertising has not been well researched to date. Particularly, the issue of gender and ageism in print magazine advertisements has not been broadly investigated. Thus, this research project aims to expand the parameters of research in this area. Specifically, this project asks how print magazine advertisements portray age in two magazines specifically targeted toward males and females.

To investigate this research question, this thesis is organized in the following way. Thus far, we have discussed the aging process and the definitions of ageism, revealed the

detriments associated with anti-aging procedures (i.e., financial costs, ineffectiveness, and health risks), and we have alluded to how the advertising and the media have played a major role in this anti-aging phenomenon. We noted the lack of existing research on the gender comparison of ageism in magazine advertisements, and have stated our intent to contribute to research in this area through the current study. In Chapter Two, the study will look at the previous literature and related studies in order to gain a full understanding of what knowledge already exists and what gaps are still waiting to be filled. In Chapter Three, the study will explain the methodology utilized within the study during the analysis stage of research. In Chapter Four, the analytical findings and results will be revealed and discussed. Finally, in Chapter Five, the thesis will finish with conclusions and implications, which includes assessment of the limitations of the study, as well as possibilities for future research extensions on the topic.

Chapter Two

A Review of the Literature

Ageism in general, as well as the role that gender and the media play in ageism, have been discussed by numerous researchers. Therefore, a review of the previous literature is provided to inform the reader of existing research and findings, and to reveal the lack of contemporary research on the issue of gender and ageism in print magazine advertisements. First, ageism will be defined and discussed. Second, the relationship between ageism and the media will be explored. Third, a review of the findings on gender and ageism in advertising will be included. These include findings involving visual images as well as language and copy. Fourth, the Critical Communication Theory will be reviewed because this study was approached through a critical perspective. Finally, the research question will be explained and justified.

Ageism. The term ageism was first defined in 1969 as “prejudice by one age group toward other age groups,” that, “...reflects deep seated uneasiness on the part of the young and middle-aged—a personal revulsion to and distaste for growing old, disease, disability, and fear of powerlessness, ‘uselessness,’ and death” (Butler, 1969, p. 243). Butler is often referred to as the father of geriatrics, which is defined by the Merriam-Webster online dictionary as “1: a branch of medicine that deals with the problems and diseases of old age and aging people; 2: an aged person” (n.d.). Butler’s (1969) research is the foundation for the study of ageism and is now commonly referenced in almost any publication on ageism. Harris (2011), quoting Robert Butler in his 1969 article in *The Gerontologist*, stated “According to ‘Ageism: Another Form of Bigotry,’ ageism is ‘the systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against people

because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplish this with skin color and gender' (p. 27).

Ageism is manifested through negative stereotypes that Euro-American society holds true for older persons: "There are *at least* nine major stereotypes that reflect negative prejudice toward elders: illness, impotency, ugliness, mental decline, mental illness, uselessness, isolation, poverty, and depression" (Palmore, 1999, p. 20). Yet the majority of these stereotypes are far from true in most cases. Also significant to the study of ageism are five of the eight fundamental value orientations of the United States, which were identified in 1960 by R. Williams as supporting ageist ideologies. These five values are foundational to the negative stereotypes our society gives to older Americans.

According to DeRenzo and Malley (1992, p. 106), the five value orientations pertaining to this study are as follows:

1. Rather than seeking to actively master new tasks and skills, elders were believed to engage passively with their world.
2. Elders were thought to be less concerned with the external world than with internal experiences.
3. Elders were perceived as more traditional, that is conservative and past-oriented, than rational, defined as future-oriented and interested in change.
4. Elders were more particular, that is they were thought to be more concerned with the activities of their immediate family and friends, than with being universalist, i.e., concerned with uniform rules and principles.

5. Elders were perceived as more concerned with vertical relationships, such as children and servants, than with the horizontal relationships of siblings and co-workers.

Ageist sentiment can be traced back to Aristotle during the Golden Age of Greece and can be found in Shakespeare's plays (DeRenzo & Malley, 1992, p. 107-108). For instance, McFee discussed how Aristotle referred to older men as cynical and only interested in a means of staying alive (as cited in DeRenzo & Malley, 1992, p. 107, 108).

This negative portrayal of old age suggests that older people are cynical and selfish, and that stereotype may have been carried over to society today. In a similar fashion, DeRenzo and Malley (1992) identified how Shakespeare creates the illusion that late life is lacking in everything from body parts such as teeth and eyes to taste in *As You Like It*. As he sailed across the Atlantic to the New World, Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon, was driven by his obsession with the Fountain of Youth (JH Tatroe, 2009, para. 2). Some of the earliest known forms of anti-aging treatments include having sexual relations with younger girls, injecting oneself with extracts of testicles, ovaries and other parts of animal species, and cryonics, or the practice of deep freezing a dead body in the hope of someday discovering a cure for the incurable disease they died from (Binstock & Post, 2004, p. 199-202). While these practices may seem extreme, the most recent approaches to anti-aging come from the same mentality and drive for immortality.

Ageism in the media. It is no secret that the media often portray older people in a negative way: "Ads typically depict senior citizens as passing their time away in rocking chairs, as old fools, or as feeble (as in the 'I've fallen and I can't get up' commercial)." (Sivulka, 1998, p. 394). Today, advertisements also feature the extreme

opposite of the stereotypical “old fool”— the superhuman older person as Sivulka (1998) described them. According to Sivulka (1998, pg. 394), “...one of Nike’s ‘Just Do It’ commercials showed an 80-year-old man who ran a daily marathon. How did he keep his teeth from chattering on a cold day? He left them at home.” Images such as this can have a profound impact on viewers, even though they may not be conscious of its effects. Many images in magazine advertisements feature youthful looking models only, and if older persons are included, they are often airbrushed to look much younger than they actually are. In this way, viewers still perceive the image as youthful despite what the actual age of a model is. Perceived reduction of age within magazine advertisements can be considered as ageist, along with the underrepresentation of older persons within magazine advertisements. Beauty and attractiveness are often associated with youth in magazine advertisements.

Gender and ageism in advertising. Ageism in general, as well as the idea that females face more intense and frequent targeting of anti-aging sentiments than men, has been discussed by numerous researchers. The gender implications of ageism can be seen in many different ways, from male disinterest in older women to unattainable standards expected of older women. It has been suggested that the media allows males to age “gracefully” and even encourages males to flaunt their age in order to show experience, wisdom, and attractiveness. On the other hand, females are constantly bombarded with the idea that growing old is unattractive and completely preventable. According to Gullette (2011), “The cult of youth has meant that men look for younger women and ignore perfectly nice sexy women

their own age. Boys need to be raised to be nonsexist and anti-ageist” (Gullette, 2011, as cited in Klein, 2011, para. 10).

Another trend related to gender and ageism in advertisements is the idea that men focus more on performance, whereas women focus more on appearance. As Calasanti (2007) explained: “Anti-aging ads directed at aging men emphasize bodies that perform while those for aging women focus on appearance” (p. 343). Advertisements directed toward females tend to involve beauty, hair and skin products that all center on image and appearance. On the other hand, advertisements directed toward males highlight appearance less and performance more. Regarding online advertisements in particular, Calasanti (2007) observed, “Aging men are given a similarly gendered and age-based message concerning how they should defy old age. These sites warn that even the most privileged men will lose their masculinity—hence, power—if they age. Performance is thus a main theme on these sites; the vast majority of ads urge men to stay young by enacting a masculinity that involves performance in areas of physical strength and sex” (p. 345). Although advertisements for both men and women can be ageist, marketers use different tactics for each sex in order to persuade them of a product or even an ideology such as ageism.

Visual images. A large majority of ads feature visual images that represent youth rather than older persons; this has been found to be doubly true for females. Negative ageism can be found in advertising images and messages today, especially in regards to females:

An analysis of editorial and advertising images reveals that despite proportions of older readers ranging as high as 23%, fashion magazines portray women over 40

sparingly, if at all. Even in magazines geared toward aging baby boomers, the images collectively present a thin, youthful, wrinkle-free ideal that's impossible to maintain later in life. Now experts are saying the ideal threatens to cause older women to abandon their sexuality (Pappas, 2011, para. 3).

Therefore, representation of older women is considerably infrequent, which creates an unattainable ideal for older women today.

Not only do advertisements feature youth more often, but they also imply that youth and beauty are synonymous. According to Sivulka (1998), "Advertising has been slow to recognize that a woman can be beautiful at 40, 50, and even older. One study, for example, found that only 5.9 percent of ads in seven national magazines showed the face of anyone over age 40" (p. 394). Though there are exceptions to this trend, the norm is to represent youth and exclude older persons, especially in advertisements promoting beauty products. For example, "...young, waiflike models dominate the skin-care, scent, and cosmetic ads in national magazines" (Sivulka, 1998, p. 394).

Language and copy. In addition to visual images that primarily represent youth, ads also incorporate ageism within the language and copy of print advertisements. These trends are particularly apparent within our language and subsequently the copy that is found within our magazines, newspapers, literatures, etc. The Whorf (1956) linguistic relativity hypothesis, "...postulates a direct relationship between the structure of language and how speakers of a particular language think" (DeRenzo & Malley, 1992, p. 109). Therefore, when we read something that is ageist or has ageist implications, this can influence our thinking whether we are aware of it or not. Additionally, it has been found that ageist language is aimed more intensely at females rather than males:

Nuessel (1982) not only addressed the issue of the degree to which the English language is replete with ageist stereotypes but postulated that these stereotypes are doubly burdensome for women. Nuessel (1982) suggests that older persons, especially older women, are consistently described pejoratively” (as cited in DeRenzo & Malley, 1992, p. 111).

Similarly, words used to express ageist sentiments are not always gender neutral. Ageist words aimed at females are used much more liberally and frequently than ageist words aimed at males, according to Nuessel (1982). Nuessel (1982) explained that, “ ... many ageist words are doubly offensive in that they demean persons on grounds of both age and gender, and that on this count, women get the double whammy more often than men” (as cited in DeRenzo & Malley, 1992, p. 111).

Covey (1988) agreed that women face more ageist stereotypes and language, and in a more liberal fashion than men. Terms for older women are often focused on mysticism, bad temper, disagreeableness, spinsterhood, bossiness, unattractiveness, spitefulness, and repulsiveness—most of which are connected to aesthetic appeal in one way or another (as cited in DeRenzo & Malley, 1992). Furthermore, Covey identified three primary trends of ageism and sexism (as cited in DeRenzo & Malley, 1992, p. 111):

1. Gender plays a key role in old-age terminology and that women are pejoratively labeled for age earlier and for more years of their lives than are men;
2. Language usage pays substantial attention to the negative consequences of aging, and;

3. Urbanization and industrialization have contributed negatively to images of older persons.

Researchers have found mixed messages—positive, negative, and/or neutral—regarding age within a single ad. For instance, while the copy within an ad may be positive or neutral towards age, the visual images may portray negative ageism. According to DeRenzo and Malley (1992), “...investigations examining the portrayal of the elderly in magazines have produced consistently mixed findings” (p. 112). Language, pictorial representations, and gender inequalities are all sources of confusion and debate in the ageism sphere. For instance, “In researching the elderly in advertisement pictures, Martel (1968) and Smith (1976) found that even though the older models were pictured as active, the copy describing them was negative” (as cited in DeRenzo & Malley, 1992, p. 112). Similarly, Schueman et al. (1977) found that images of aging in women’s magazines were seen as overly positive and unrealistic (as cited in DeRenzo & Malley, 1992, p. 112). In order to unearth these distortions within print advertising, critical communication theory can aid in our investigation.

Critical Communication Theory. Essentially, critical communication theory allows people to reflect on their assumptions about communication and society and to unearth the distortions within these assumptions. Critical communication theory is defined by Craig and Muller (2007) as “discursive reflection” (p. 75). Craig and Muller (2007) identified the three sources of distortion as unexamined habits, ideological beliefs, and relations of power (p. 425). Both the first and second distortions can be exemplified by the everyday habits, routines, and ideologies of society. Habits, opinions, stereotypes, philosophies, and traditions are often passed down through cultures and are rarely

questioned or challenged. Oftentimes, individuals and societies are not even aware of these unexamined habits because they are so ingrained in a culture. It is very difficult to unearth distortions and propose positive change when habits are not even viewed as communication problems in the first place. The third distortion, relations of power, is greatly tied to politics, democracy, equality, and social class. The idea of relations of power suggests that there is some entity that benefits or gains power by the fact that others do not hold as much knowledge or power as they could or should. Extremely difficult and often seen as impossible, is the purpose of critical theory to expose these sources of distortion, “Critical theory exposes hidden social mechanisms that distort communication and supports political efforts to resist the power of those mechanisms” (Craig & Muller, 2007, p. 425). Based on this, we can postulate that the critical communication theory allows us to measure how mass media, and magazine advertisements in specific, fall short of the ideal speech situation in creating truthful, undistorted, realistic, and unbiased representations of society today.

A final aspect of the critical tradition that is necessary to discuss is the idea of “personalized media,” which exposes the way in which media outlets tailor their material and content to reflect the opinions and liking of their audiences. Jansen (2002) explained that:

Computer-enabled target marketing and consumer tracking further erode these democratic requirements. Intended to use advertising dollars more efficiently, these practices not only respond to self-selecting taste cultures and lifestyle differences, they cultivate them. Segmenting markets and media audiences, these

profit-maximizing strategies also divide consumer/citizens based upon age, gender, race, class, and other variables (as cited in Craig & Muller, 2007, p. 484). It is clear through critical communication theory that advertisers have helped to cultivate the anti-aging phenomenon through segmentation of such variables as age and gender.

Research question. Considering the previous research reviewed above, several observations can now be made. First, we can see that the research to date is insufficient. We are currently lacking a complete picture of the communication problem at hand. Further research is vital in obtaining a thorough comprehension of the age and gender implications that may distort magazine advertisements today. Secondly, the limited research that is available on this topic is filled with mixed findings, making a solution to the problem even more difficult to find. A more consistent argument would be beneficial to the continued evolution and progress of research within this area. Finally, there does not seem to be an adequate amount of contemporary research on the topic. As the review of the literature has revealed, much of the research currently available on the topic is from 20 years or more ago. Society, technology, advertising, and the media are constantly evolving, making new and more recent research critical to our success to understand ageism within magazine advertisements. More current research might help us to uncover the prevalence of ageism within magazine advertising. Today, limited research has been done that shows how language can be ageist, older persons are underrepresented in magazines and advertisements, advertisements for skin care products have ageist implications, the evolution of ageism within advertising over a long period of time, and the intensity of ageist advertising toward females. However, we have not yet come across any research that has compared male and female magazines of the same

genre and from a more recent time period, focusing on advertisements of all kinds and examining both language and visual images for age and gender implications. So this study will focus on these gaps within the existing research in an attempt to add to existing research and most importantly to find more current and consistent results to one of Euro-American society's most harmful and unacknowledged communication issues.

RQ: How do print magazine advertisements portray age in two magazines specifically targeted toward males and females?

Chapter Three

Methods

This study uses content analysis, which is an inductive method of analysis that allows the researcher to focus on the data first. This is a bottom up or data up form of analysis in which patterns are revealed and observed. Also known as a naturalistic or qualitative approach, the inductive method maximizes the possibilities and results because you are not limited to a specific criteria or rigid set of parameters. This form of analysis also preserves the integrity of the data by allowing the subtle nuances and intricacies of communication to be more thoroughly observed. Content analysis was chosen because it is primarily used “to identify, enumerate, and analyze occurrences of specific messages and messages characteristics embedded in texts” (Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000, p. 236). Moreover, qualitative content analysis was particularly important to use in this study because it is more ideal in studies “where researchers are more interested in the meanings associated with messages than with the number of times message variables occur” (Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000, p. 237). This form of analysis allows for flexible guidelines that are changed and added to as analysis is in progress.

Data Set. The data set for this study consisted of print advertisements from two contemporary magazines, one targeted primarily toward females and one targeted primarily toward males. *Cosmopolitan* and *Men’s Journal* are two entertaining and informative magazines targeted toward a specific gender. Both magazines are multi-faceted, involving numerous topics and themes within each issue rather than just focusing on a single subject. The main themes that both of these magazines concentrate on are: beauty and style; health, fitness, and well-being; relationships and romance; fashion and

shopping information; pop culture and entertainment; and innovative products, gadgets, and accessories. The fact that both magazines contain these categories was imperative to the study because advertisements often reflect the content of the magazines. Both magazines include a combination of topics associated with appearance, physical ability, motivation, mental aptitude, and usefulness to society. All of these factors are relevant to the study of ageism, which is why this category of magazines chosen fits so well. Both magazines frequently feature a single individual on the cover, usually a male for *Men's Journal* and a female for *Cosmopolitan*, and include a photo shoot and interview inside. These stories are often meant to inspire, entertain, or encourage readers.

Cosmopolitan. According to the 2011 *Cosmopolitan* media kit, *Cosmopolitan*, has been the “best selling magazine in its category” and has 64 international editions, is published in 35 languages, and is distributed in over 100 countries, making it one of the most “dynamic brands on the planet.” According to College Store Executive and available on the *Cosmopolitan* media kit, the national news magazine of the college store industry, *Cosmopolitan* is the best-selling magazine in college bookstores for 25 years. The content within this fun and upbeat magazine focuses on relationships, sex, fashion, beauty & health, celebrity interviews, shopping information, fitness guides, and true stories that relate to and inspire women. *Cosmopolitan* is targeted toward females ages 18-49 primarily, according to The Hearst Corporation (2011). *Cosmopolitan's* highest readership can be found in the 18-34 range, with an audience of 9,086 women, according to the 2011 *Cosmopolitan* media kit. However, it is also reported that there are 3,945 women between the ages of 35 and 49 that read *Cosmopolitan*, making it a magazine for all ages of women (The Hearst Corporation, 2011). This means its influence is

substantial to our society. According to the 2011 *Cosmopolitan* media kit, *Cosmopolitan* has a 3,032 total paid circulation, as given by the June 2011 Fas-Fax. This is by far the highest circulation rate in its category.

Men's Journal. The male-oriented magazine, *Men's Journal*, can be considered as a male-equivalent of the female-oriented *Cosmopolitan* magazine. After comparing and contrasting a number of the top male magazines such as *GQ*, *Maxim*, and *Rolling Stone*, it was decided that *Men's Journal* was most similar to *Cosmopolitan*. Though smaller in readership than *Cosmopolitan* (MPA Info Center from Audit Bureau of Circulations, 2011), *Men's Journal* was the most suitable equivalent for the purposes of this study due to the shared themes of advertisements and content. For instance, *Men's Journal* covers a wide variety of topics such as drink and food ideas, travel, health and fitness, mind and body, the outdoors, books and movies, music, sports, fashion, automobiles, technology and gadgets, interviews with influential men, and other stories focused toward the male sex. According to the 2011 *Men's Journal* print media kit for 2012, the magazine stands out in the crowd of male-targeted magazines and maintains an audience of 700,000. The media kit also reveals that the 2010 Rate Base was 700,000, with 84% of those readers being male and the remaining 16% female (The Hearst Corporation, 2011). *Men's Journal* is also comparable to *Cosmopolitan* in terms of audience age. The majority of *Men's Journal* readers consist of males in the age ranges 18 to 49, with 2,906 readers, 25 to 54 with 2,882 readers, 25 to 49 with 2,507 readers and 18 to 34 with 1,643 readers (Men's Journal, LLC., 2011). As stated in the 2011 media kit, the median age of *Men's Journal* audience is 38.3 years old. These figures illustrate the large influence *Men's Journal* has on males of all ages. Furthermore, according to

the Association of Magazine Media, the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) reported that for 2010, *Men's Journal* had a total paid and verified circulation count of 723,352 (MPA Info Center from Audit Bureau of Circulations, 2011).

Data Sample. The two most recent complete years of these magazines were included, and the sample was chosen using the random number table. The study consisted of a random sample of 50 percent of *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Journal* issues respectively from 2010 and 2011– a total of 24 issues in all. In the analysis stage, three main factors were examined: age indications, gender indications, and products or ideas being sold.

Pilot Study. As part of the inductive process, a pilot study was conducted to uncover initial patterns and themes to be compiled. The random number table was used to select two magazines outside of the data sample to be used in this pilot analysis. *Men's Journal* March 2009 issue was chosen to represent the male-oriented magazines and *Cosmopolitan* March 2009 issue was chosen in representation of the female-oriented magazines. Once these issues were chosen, the ads were analyzed for recurring patterns. These initial patterns were documented for the full analysis. Initial categories from the pilot study were then used as a guide for analysis of the remaining data and are displayed in Appendix C. Additional patterns were revealed in the main analysis.

Reliability Check. In order to ensure reliability and accuracy of the study, a reliability check was performed using one magazine issue. Using the random number table, *Men's Journal* October 2011 was chosen as the reliability check sample. The interobserver was given instructions on how to analyze the magazine advertisements and went through the magazine just as the researcher had. When the answers were compared,

there was a .9387755 reliability coefficient, which far exceeds the minimum reliability coefficient of .70 (Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000, p. 112). Out of the 49 advertisements analyzed, 46 had the same analysis results. With a 94% reliability rate, the analysis was accepted as highly reliable.

Recurring Patterns. It is now helpful to provide some description of the patterns that emerged through inductive piling (i.e. occurrences of similar patterns were organized into groups).¹ Initially, explicit and implicit patterns of ageism were observed. Further analysis of these patterns revealed more subtle patterns involving ageism. The ads in the implicitly ageist pile included either implicitly ageist copy and/or implicitly ageist visual elements that reflect signs of aging and/or the aging process in a negative manner. An

¹ Dates within an advertisement did not specifically refer to age or the aging process and are therefore irrelevant to this study. For example, numerous ads featured copy such as, "Since 1864" or "For over 100 years" or even a timeline illustrating the history of the product or company. In most instances, the dates referred to the age or history of a product, company, or brand, and not of a human being. Therefore, dates within advertisements were not considered as referring to age. Tobacco products were not considered as marking or referring to age because, although one must be 18 years or older to use such products, there is no maximum age for tobacco use. Therefore, both youth and older generations can still be represented in advertisements for tobacco products in an equal and positive manner. The same rule applies for alcohol products. Though the legal drinking age in the United States is 21, there is no cutoff age for these products, so both youth and old age can be represented equally and positively. Medical products are to be analyzed through a situational lens. If the product does mark a minimum and maximum age range, than that is the age range that will be considered for the copy and visual elements within the advertisement. If copy and visual images fall within this age range and represent both youth and older individuals within the related age groups in a positive and equal way, the ad would not be considered ageist. However, if the copy and/or visual images of the ad fall outside of the age range and represent signs of aging or old age in a negative, deceptive, or unequal way, the ad would be considered ageist at some level.

Children in advertisement do refer to age. If the product is not specifically for children, the advertisement would be ageist if only a child is featured because it would have an implicitly negative connotation. Mascots within advertisements will not be analyzed unless the mascot is a human being. However, cartoons, fictional characters, or other non-human elements do not apply to this study. Ads promoting forms of entertainment such as movies and television shows will be analyzed for ageist implications, both in terms of the visual and copy elements. Although some forms of entertainment are aimed at certain age groups, there is the possibility for all generations can be positively and equally represented in most instances.

explicitly ageist ad can be described as an ad with explicitly ageist copy and/or explicitly ageist visual elements that reflect signs of aging and the aging process in a negative way. An advertisement was put in the inherently and explicitly ageist pile if it was promoting an anti-aging product because the advertisement was centered on the idea that signs of aging are negative, preventable, and reversible. A non-ageist ad was described as one that had neither implicitly nor explicitly negative references toward signs of aging or the aging process. Descriptions of other patterns revealed are included in Chapter Four, Results & Discussion.

It should be noted that any visual images on product packages were not included in the visual analysis section because these images were often smaller and less significant than the featured images, and had less of an impact on readers. Furthermore, this study was not aimed at analyzing product packaging, but at analyzing the components within advertisements. Likewise, small and insignificant images were rarely analyzed when a larger image was featured in the same advertisement. The details within these smaller images often made it difficult to distinguish age and many of these images went unnoticed in comparison to other images that the ad focused on.

Chapter Four

Results & Discussion

The findings are discussed in the following order. First, we will look at ageist occurrences for both the males and females in magazine advertisements in the magazines used for the study. Second, the products and brands promoted will be discussed. Third, we will explore whom the sponsors and spokespersons within the magazine advertisements were. Fourth, visual portrayals of age will be observed. Fifth, the quantity and positioning of advertisements will be considered. Sixth, we will compare appearance versus performance within the advertisements. Seventh, the language and copy of the advertisements will be inspected. The discussion section will conclude with a summary of the observations found through analysis.

Ageist statistics and findings. This section reveals statistics obtained during analysis for both the male and female magazine advertisements. In addition, key findings are delineated for both magazines. These key findings will include various degrees of ageism, represented age groups, and the differences in gender representation observed in the advertisements. The figures below summarize the results presented by year, for each magazine, *Men's Journal* and *Cosmopolitan*.

Table 1							
<i>Analysis Findings for Men's Journal 2010</i>							
Men's Journal 2010							
Issue	December 09/January 10	February 2010	March 2010	April 2010	May 2010	August 2010	Average per issue
Total Pages	216	112	128	116	172	152	149.33
Total Ads	90	25	41	30	59	52	49.5
Positive Copy	1	1	0	0	0	0	.33

Neutral Copy	3	3	2	0	0	0	1.33
Negative Copy	3	0	3	1	1	3	1.83
Positive Visual	7	3	2	3	6	3	4
Neutral Visual	5	1	0	0	1	2	1.5
Negative Visual	19	7	14	9	14	17	13.33
Child to Teen	0	0	0	0	1	1	.33
Teen to 20s	4	3	2	2	3	2	2.67
20s to 30s	16	5	12	9	10	14	11
30s to 40s	5	0	2	2	6	2	2.83
40s to 50s	6	2	3	2	2	1	2.67
50s to 60s	0	1	0	2	2	2	1.17
60s to 70s	2	0	0	0	0	0	.33
70s to 80s	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
80s and above	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Explicitly Ageist	0	0	2	0	1	1	.67
Implicitly Ageist	19	7	13	10	14	17	13
Not Ageist	71	18	26	20	44	34	35.5
% Explicit	0%	0%	5%	0%	1%	2%	1%
% Implicit	21%	28%	32%	33%	24%	33%	28.5%
% Non-Ageist	79%	72%	63%	67%	75%	65%	70%

Table 2							
<i>Analysis Findings for Men's Journal 2011</i>							
Men's Journal 2011							
Issue	February 2011	March 2011	May 2011	July 2011	September 2011	October 2011	Average per issue
Total Pages	120	140	168	148	156	136	144.67
Total Ads	40	39	62	46	51	49	47.83
Positive Copy	0	1	0	1	0	0	.33
Neutral Copy	0	0	2	1	0	2	.83
Negative Copy	4	1	3	1	0	1	1.67
Positive Visual	3	4	5	6	8	7	5.5
Neutral	1	0	1	4	3	2	1.83

Visual							
Negative Visual	12	14	20	12	15	12	14.167
Child to Teen	1	0	2	4	3	0	1.67
Teen to 20s	5	3	9	2	1	1	3.5
20s to 30s	7	11	14	14	16	12	12.33
30s to 40s	4	1	3	4	7	4	3.83
40s to 50s	2	3	5	5	5	4	4
50s to 60s	2	1	2	0	3	1	1.5
60s to 70s	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
70s to 80s	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
80s and above	0	0	0	0	0	1	.167
Explicitly Ageist	2	0	2	0	0	0	.67
Implicitly Ageist	12	14	20	12	15	14	14.5
Not Ageist	26	25	40	34	36	35	32.67
% Explicit	5%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	1.33%
% Implicit	30%	36%	32%	26%	29%	29%	30.33%
% Not Ageist	65%	64%	65%	74%	71%	71%	68.33%

Table 3							
<i>Analysis Findings for Cosmopolitan 2010</i>							
Cosmopolitan 2010							
Issue	January 2010	March 2010	May 2010	July 2010	August 2010	October 2010	Average per issue
Total Pages	186	238	280	238	268	270	246.67
Total Ads	44	79	110	80	101	101	85.83
Positive Copy	0	0	1	0	0	0	.167
Neutral Copy	3	0	1	3	1	2	1.67
Negative Copy	9	9	8	6	2	8	7
Positive Visual	4	0	3	1	2	1	1.83
Neutral Visual	0	1	0	0	0	0	.167
Negative Visual	28	53	74	46	61	69	55.167
Child to Teen	0	2	2	0	2	4	1.67

Teen to 20s	8	23	41	24	32	30	26.33
20s to 30s	17	21	25	14	17	24	19.67
30s to 40s	8	6	10	4	11	14	8.83
40s to 50s	4	6	8	7	6	10	6.83
50s to 60s	2	0	1	0	1	2	1
60s to 70s	0	0	0	0	1	1	.33
70s to 80s	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
80s and above	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Explicitly Ageist	6	10	7	6	4	9	7
Implicitly Ageist	25	48	73	42	60	66	52.33
Not Ageist	13	21	30	32	37	26	26.5
% Explicit	13%	13%	6%	8%	4%	9%	8.83%
% Implicit	57%	60%	67%	52%	59%	65%	60%
% Not Ageist	30%	27%	27%	40%	37%	26%	31.167%

Table 4

Analysis Findings for Cosmopolitan 2011

Cosmopolitan 2011

Issue	January 2011	February 2011	May 2011	July 2011	August 2011	September 2011	Average per issue
Total Pages	174	232	294	218	240	282	240
Total Ads	40	74	120	79	93	121	88
Positive Copy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neutral Copy	1	3	3	2	2	2	2
Negative Copy	6	5	9	4	8	11	7
Positive Visual	0	2	1	0	0	1	.67
Neutral Visual	1	0	1	0	1	0	.5
Negative Visual	24	45	76	47	61	85	56
Child to Teen	0	1	2	3	4	0	1.67
Teen to 20s	7	15	45	20	40	67	32
20s to 30s	20	31	43	34	28	50	34
30s to 40s	1	3	14	11	7	11	8
40s to 50s	2	4	4	0	1	3	2

50s to 60s	0	1	0	0	0	3	.67
60s to 70s	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
70s to 80s	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
80s and above	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Explicitly Ageist	4	4	7	3	5	10	5.5
Implicitly Ageist	23	43	74	46	61	78	54
Not Ageist	13	27	39	30	27	33	28
% Explicit	10%	5%	5.8%	4%	5%	8%	6%
% Implicit	57.5%	58%	61.7	58%	66%	65%	61%
% Not Ageist	32.5%	37%	32.5%	38%	29%	27%	33%

Male magazine advertisements. *Degree of ageism.* In all of the *Men's Journal* issues analyzed, for both 2010 and 2011, about one third of the ads were considered implicitly and/or explicitly ageist. The majority of advertisements were not considered ageist in any way. The average percentage of advertisements that were considered ageist within the *Men's Journal* issues was 30% for 2010 and 32% for 2011. Explicitly ageist ads within the *Men's Journal* issues were extremely low, with an average of 1% for both 2010 and 2011. Additionally, implicitly ageist ads were found to be low in numbers within *Men's Journal*. There was an average of 28.5% in the 2010 issues, and an average of 30% in the 2011 issues.

Represented age. The most represented age group in terms of visual elements was 20s to 30s, with an average of 11 advertisements per issue representing this age group in the 2010 issues and an average of about 12 advertisements per issue representing this age group in the 2011 issues. The second, third, and fourth highest represented age groups dropped to a much lower level of age representation, with teens to 20s, 30s to 40s, 40s to 50s all being represented in less than 5 advertisements per issue. Therefore, the majority of magazine advertisements in *Men's Journal* are exclusively targeting men in

their 20s to 30s, with all other age groups represented at a much more insignificant level. The age group represented the least within the visual elements of the advertisements in 2010 were 70s to 80s and 80s and above, with 60s to 70s and children-teenagers close behind. For the 2011 issues, the age groups represented the least within the visual elements of the advertisements were 60s to 70s and 70s to 80s with absolutely no representation, and 80s+ slightly above that.

Gender representation. Interestingly, although there are fewer ageist ads in *Men's Journal* than in *Cosmopolitan*, older females are mostly excluded. While the *Men's Journal* ads feature older males in a positive way, there are few to no older females featured. Therefore, *Men's Journal* is still contributing to the anti-aging phenomenon by exclusively featuring younger females in their advertisements. Once again, females are the ones who are pressured to remain young and youthful looking, not necessarily males. Females experience the double jeopardy from both female-targeted magazines such as *Cosmopolitan*, as well as male-targeted magazines such as *Men's Journal*. This intensity of the negative depiction of female aging is focused on females, but is exposed to both genders through magazine advertisements. The study illustrates the ageism within magazine advertisements, as well as the disproportion of the focus of this ageism in terms of gender.

Female magazine advertisements. Degree of Ageism. In all of the *Cosmopolitan* issues analyzed, for both 2010 and 2011, over two-thirds were considered implicitly ageist, and less than half of the ads were categorized as not ageist at all. The majority of advertisements were considered ageist in some way. The average percentage of advertisements that were considered ageist within the *Cosmopolitan* issues was 69% for

2010 and 67% for 2011. Implicitly ageist ads filled the majority of the magazine, with 60% in 2010 and 61% in 2011. However, there were fewer explicitly ageist ads in the *Cosmopolitan* advertisements than there were implicit advertisements. For explicitly ageist ads, there was an average of 9% in the 2010 issues, and an average of 6% in the 2011 issues.

Age representation. Both the teens to 20s age group and the 20s to 30s age groups were most represented in terms of visual elements. In 2010, there was an average of 26 ads per magazine issue representing the teens-20s age group and an average of 20 ads per magazine representing the 20s to 30s age groups. In 2011, those numbers rose to 32 ads per issue representing teens to 20s and 34 ads per issue representing 20s to 30s. The age groups represented the least within the visual elements of the advertisements in 2010 were 70s to 80s and 80s and above, with 60s to 70s close behind. For the 2011 issues, the age group represented the least within the visual elements of the advertisements were between the ages of 60 and 80+, all of which had no representation whatsoever within all 6 magazine issues.

Gender representation. Within the female magazines, there seemed to be more positive age implications toward males, while the intensity of negative age implications toward women intensified. It was fascinating to note that advertisements featured younger women with older men. The relationship between the female and male varied from romantic to platonic, and professional. The proximity, nonverbal communication, and context implied in representations of romantic relations most often. The message conveyed by these ads was clear: it is acceptable for older males and younger females to intermingle in most social situations. Contrastingly, the opposite situation of an older

female with a younger male in these ads was extremely rare, if existent at all. By featuring males with signs of aging in ads that also contain females without signs of aging, advertisements are implying that aging is more acceptable for males and that older males can correlate with younger females and no questions will be asked. For older females, this positive reinforcement was not the case. It was rare for older females to be featured in ads, much less be featured with young males. On the rare occasion that older females were featured, their appearance was almost always altered to ensure that no signs of aging are visible. Moreover, in extremely rare instances where older females appeared to represent their actual age, they were not accompanied by younger males in the ad. These limitations assigned exclusively to older females reflect the overall negative depiction of female aging found in *Cosmopolitan*.

Products and brands promoted. Several patterns emerged regarding the types of products and brands promoted within the female and male advertisements analyzed. Specifically, these patterns involved an emphasis on performance in male advertisements, as well as a more equal representation of younger and older generations. For the female magazine advertisements, appearance was emphasized, and interesting observations emerged in ads for cleaning and weight loss products.

Male magazine advertisements. Within the male-targeted advertisements, the ads were frequently focused on performance, with minimal attention paid to appearance. The products most frequently advertised in all ads included: watches, vehicles, men's fragrances, technology, tools, alcohol, tobacco, footwear, outdoor gear, and travel. Sunglasses, fitness gear, male enhancers, clothing, and entertainment were secondary products that were advertised at a less impressive rate. The most common products that

appeared in ageist ads were performance enhancers such as Viagra. Other products that focus on appearances, such as clothing, also featured more youthful spokespeople over older generations.

However, there seemed to be a much more equal balance of advertisements featuring younger and older generations, sometimes in the same advertisement. Thus older generations are more included in these ads. Moreover, older males are often featured in a positive light, and with minimal to no airbrushing or appearance-altering procedures to make them look younger than they actually are.

Males are featured with wrinkles and graying or even white hair in a positive light. In many instances, males with obvious signs of aging, such as gray or white hair and facial wrinkles, are portrayed as attractive, successful, happy, and even sexy. These ads are not encouraging men to change their appearance; they are highlighting their performance and who they are as a person.

Female magazine advertisements. The most common products featured in all of the ads found in the female-targeted magazines focused on appearance, such as hair care, nail care, makeup, and skin care. Approximately 90% of these appearance-based advertisements were identified as ageist. This finding implies that appearances and beauty are closely associated with youth and ageism in our society today. The majority of advertisements promoting beauty products were ageist, indicating that youth is identified as beautiful and old age is not. Moreover, the extremely high occurrence rate of these appearance-related ads not only suggests that females are primarily interested in appearances, but that magazine advertisements are contributing to the importance Euro-American society places on female appearances. Consequently, these ads may also be

contributing to the notion that the primary goal and purpose for a female is to look good (and therefore youthful), with less emphasis on performance and achievements.

It was intriguing to note that makeup and skin care ads were often ageist, but ads for cleaning products were not. Ads for cleaning products were almost exclusively found in the female-targeted magazines, which leads to two implications. Firstly, this observation relies on a gender stereotype of the female as the caretaker, stay at home mother, and primary household cleaner. By including advertisements for cleaning products and other household items in the female-oriented magazines, but not in the male-oriented magazines, advertisers are complying with traditional gender roles that may not necessarily apply to households today as they have in the past. Secondly, it was out of the ordinary for these cleaning product advertisements to include age implications or limitations on the age groups who use these products. This suggests that older women are “allowed” to use cleaning products, but not other products advertised exclusively to youth. The media seems to equalize females in terms of duties such as cleaning by omitting age implications from ads for such products as cleaning supplies. However, this age equality is infrequently the case in ads for such products as beauty and skin care.

Furthermore, it was noted that there were numerous advertisements promoting weight-loss in the female-oriented magazines, but significantly less or even none in the male-oriented magazines. *Cosmopolitan* featured many weight loss implications within ads, ranging from weight-loss supplements, formulas, and programs, to products that are not even specifically for weight-loss benefits but fall within the category of foods and beverages. This intensity of weight-loss messaging within female-centered

advertisements may be linked to the idea that females are more appearance driven while men are more performance driven.

Sponsorships and spokespersons. There were notable differences between the male and female magazines regarding sponsorships and spokespersons in the advertisements analyzed. *Men's Journal* sponsors and spokespersons were often notoriously successful in diverse fields such as sports, outdoor endeavors, and entertainment. Ads featuring these spokespersons highlighted their accomplishments and focused on their achievements more than appearances and age. Contrastingly, appearance and youth were significant characteristics of sponsors and spokespersons featured in *Cosmopolitan* advertisements. Accomplishments did not seem as important as physical appearances within these female-targeted advertisements.

Male magazine advertisements. Most of the brand or product sponsors featured in these male-centered ads are well-known for their accomplishments, not their appearances. For instance, ads often featured famous athletes, actors, or other inspirational men that have gained success and fame through the years with something other than their appearance. Though it is not a direct component of the study, I could not help but notice the frequency and consistency at which accomplished older males are also featured in the content of *Men's Journal*. While *Cosmopolitan* is primarily focused on telling the stories and accomplishments of younger females, *Men's Journal* highlights older generations in addition to younger generations. This overall respect and acknowledgment that *Men's Journal* pays to older generations of males has a positive influence on their advertisements as well.

Female magazine advertisements. Instead of focusing on the accomplishments and achievements of spokespersons featured in female-centered magazines, these ads primarily focused on appearance and youth. What is more, many of the spokespersons featured were not portrayed as their actual age, but as being younger. One of the most shocking examples of misrepresentation of age within *Cosmopolitan* ads includes one featuring a younger woman in her 20s or 30s in an anti-aging advertisement. This is deceiving with regards to the product because it may lead readers to believe that if they use the product, they too will look as if they are in their 20s or 30s. In addition, these ads may be leading older readers to believe that they should look that young despite their age, whilst also leading younger readers to believe that they must already begin to worry about sign of aging and begin preventative measures as soon as possible. Moreover, it is rare to see a woman featured in an ad who is not renowned for her appearance, through such careers as modeling, singing, or acting. This reliance on appearance rather than talent and accomplishments make these women harder to relate to. These females often do not reflect the appearance of the “everyday woman,” leading females of all ages feel inadequate in comparison.

Visual portrayal of age. The male-targeted magazines and female-targeted magazines differed in the implications and objectives generated from visual portrayals of age within advertisements. In *Men’s Journal*, the advertisements were more product-based. Moreover, between 50% and 100% of the ads featuring an older man were depicted in a more positive light; but this courtesy was not extended to older women. *Cosmopolitan* advertisements were more appearance based. They contained unrealistic portrayals of age, and often displayed perceived age instead of actual age.

Male magazine advertisements. The advertisements in *Men's Journal* were primarily product-based rather than people-based. When ads focus on the product instead of trying to highlight the “target market” or appealing image, ageist sentiment is reduced greatly or completely absent. Approximately 50% of the advertisements did not contain visual images of people, but instead, offered visual images of the product being promoted. This method of advertising removed any age implications that may have been generated through visual images. These ads focused on the product appearance, functionality, features, and quality rather than the target audience. Without visual limitations, the target audience can be more extensive and inclusive. When advertisements did feature people, visual limitations still applied in many instances. Models were often positioned in a way that made it difficult or even impossible to distinguish age. This ambiguity allowed the advertisement to target and include people of multiple generations and age groups. There are more action images in the male magazines, as well as images with either a silhouette, or only the side of their face showing.

Moreover, in the instances where age was apparent in advertisements, older men were featured more often, were portrayed more positively, and appear at an even ratio with younger men. Males with gray or white hair are often featured in positive ways for advertisements promoting products that are not marked by age but could be utilized by males in any age group. By positively highlighting the older generations, *Men's Journal* avoids ageism, negative stereotypes, and unequal representation. Furthermore, this acceptance and support of the aging process allows readers to associate old age with

positive factors such as family, good health, happiness and contentment, memories, wisdom, experience, and the achievement of goals and accomplishments.

Female magazine advertisements. Within the female-targeted advertisements, the ads were noticeably more focused on appearance, with most ads promoting products such as women's fragrances, makeup, hair care, clothing, and anti-aging products. The images featured in female-centered magazine advertisements frequently positioned models to look straight at the camera, capturing every detail and revealing age. In addition, it is important to note that many of these images were highly manipulated into unrealistic and deceptive images. For the most part, the advertisements were implicitly ageist rather than explicitly ageist. Almost all of the explicitly ageist ads were specifically for anti-aging products. However, a surprising finding was the excessive number of implicitly ageist ads found in *Cosmopolitan*. The majority of these implicitly ageist ads received this status through the exclusion of older-looking women within the image that accompanied the advertisement, or through the negative or unrealistic portrayal of older generations. For example, most advertisements feature a young female between the teenage years and 20s, with flawless skin and hair, a thin figure, and no signs of aging. If an older female was featured, it was most often a misrepresentation of age because of the intensity of airbrushing techniques and other appearance-altering technology used in the image. Advertisements deceive readers by featuring older females in a manner that suggests an age significantly younger than their actual age, with no signs of aging. This is a dishonest portrayal of age, which once again leaves out the older generation audiences. Furthermore, these advertisements could also lead readers to believe in false or exaggerated product results.

Additionally, it was immediately clear that this analysis is not necessarily based on a spokesperson/model's actual age, but at the perceived age. While the actual age of identified persons was taken into consideration, ultimately the categorization of each ad was based on perception and implication. It is assumed that most readers may be unaware of many of the real ages of these models, so if they appear young, viewers will only perceive a youthful representation. If viewers do know the real ages of models, they will perceive a youthful representation of those who are actually young. At the same time, they will be exposed to misrepresentation of age in models who are older because, overall, they appear younger than they actually are. This may lead viewers to believe that it is natural and expected for older people to look young, or that the product being advertised has something to do with this inconsistency between age and appearance, which could be argued to be false advertising. Because of the difficulties and flaws between actual age and perceived age, the age ranges were divided into more flexible sections. If a visual represented someone who was actually in their early 20s to early 30s, they would be categorized in the 20s to 30s columns. If a visual represented someone who looked younger than their actual age, they would be marked in the category of their actual age, but the ad as a whole would be categorized as implicitly ageist due to misrepresentation of age. If the actual age of a visual was unknown, the perceived age would be recorded.

Quantity and positioning of advertisements. In comparing the male and female magazine advertisements, three common themes were observed in terms of quantity and positioning. First, the total number of advertisements included in each magazine issue were equivalent. Second, the quantity of advertisements in various sections of the

magazines proved to be very similar. Third, the positioning (placement within a magazine) of implicitly and explicitly ageist advertisements was a major similarity found between the two magazines in analysis.

First, the quantity of magazine ads was a common theme found in both *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Journal*. In a random sampling of eight magazines, two 2010 issues and two 2011 issues from both magazines, 32% of the total pages from *Men's Journal* were advertisements and 36% of the total pages from *Cosmopolitan* were advertisements. While *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Journal* did not include advertisements on the front cover or first cover, both magazines featured advertisements on the inside front, inside back, and outside back covers (the second, third, and fourth covers).

Second, the magazines seemed to include a steady and consistent number of ads on every one to four pages. There was a noticeably higher concentration of ads at the front of back of the magazines, usually two to seven consecutive advertisements before the table of contents and before the back cover. However, there were fewer ads found within the main stories and articles. Perhaps the omission of advertisements breaking up the cover stories was a respectful design element. Almost as if giving that story the seat of honor within the magazine, there were minimal to no ads breaking up the flow of the story and photographs.

A third theme that emerged in both magazines was the placement of implicitly and explicitly ageist advertisements within the magazine. Disturbingly enough, there seemed to be more explicitly ageist advertisements toward the back of both magazines. This trend was especially prevalent within the *Men's Journal* issues analyzed. What is more, three of the *Men's Journal* issues contained an extremely ageist advertisement for

Human Growth Hormone (HGH) titled, “Choose Life Grow Young with HGH.”² These issues were May 2010, page 148, ad #51; May 2011, page 147, ad #58; February 2011, page 103, ad #32. My findings pertaining to placement and explicit ads definitely reflect the concerns of Voss (2011, para. 6), who discussed the dangers of anti-aging products and procedures: “Even worse, they peddle therapies— most notably, the unapproved use of hormones like HGH and customized drug cocktails— which are unproven and can even be deadly.” By using the critical communication theory, the findings from these analyses have revealed distortions within magazine advertisements and exemplify Craig and Muller’s (2007) application of critical communication theory and its purposes.

Appearance versus performance. One of the most significant observations noticed, also discussed by Calasanti (2007) in *Bodacious Berry, Potency Wood and the Aging Monster: Gender and Age Relations in Anti-Aging Ads*, is the notion that males are more focused on performance rather than appearance. This finding is so important to the study that it deserves further discussion. Males and females have been focused on different aspects of themselves since the beginning of time. Males have historically been more interested and focused on performance rather than appearance. Similarly, females

² Regarding the Human Growth Hormone, the Mayo Clinic Staff explained that, “It’s approved to treat adults who have true growth hormone deficiency — not the expected decline in growth hormone due to aging” (2011). HGH AntiAging claims to strengthen the immune system, reduce wrinkles and age spots, strengthen hair and nails, improve vision and metabolism, and increase energy levels (2012). Yet the company itself admits that there is no scientific proof of the anti-aging benefits of HGH AntiAging: “There are many staunch supporters of HGH supplements who claim HGH is a wonder-drug for anti-aging. This is yet to be scientifically proved ...” (2008). According to the FDA, “HGH products are new drugs and cannot be legally marketed in the U.S. without an approved application” (U.S. Food and Drug Administration, 2011). This incredibly controversial product is not FDA approved for anti-aging purposes due to the significant number of negative side effects that have accompanied its use. As the FDA stated in a 2011 import alert on the Human Growth Hormone (HGH) also known as Somatropin: HGH has important benefits, but also serious, known risks. Among the possible long-term side effects of HGH is an increased risk of cancer, and other dangerous side effects have been reported, including nerve pain and elevated cholesterol and glucose levels. For this reason, HGH is carefully regulated in the U.S (U.S. Food and Drug Administration, 2011).

have historically been preoccupied with appearance, and the media has cultivated this tradition. This carries over to the emphasis in the men's aging process, which is also focused on change in performance as men age and less focused on changes in appearance. This mindset in itself influences the male perception of aging and in turn influences the advertisements in male magazines.

This issue of male performance versus female appearance was manifested in several specific ways. First, due to the reduced importance of appearance, there seems to be much less Photoshop, airbrush, and other appearance altering and deceiving techniques applied to advertisements featured in male-centered magazines. Most males featured in *Men's Journal* look like real people and are accepted as they are. Contrastingly, advertisements in *Cosmopolitan* are heavily airbrushed and digitally manipulated with the intent to deceive readers about the appearances being portrayed. Second, it is also worth noting that the male advertisements are more inclusive of older demographics due, for the most part, to the male focus on product performance, and action rather than models, appearances, and age. Ads feature more children and older adults, and less of the "prime age group" representing young adults in their late teens and early twenties. This "family" orientation, including multiple generations, gives off a more positive perception of age. Whereas, *Cosmopolitan* ads featured a more youthful representation, with less older persons and children and a large majority of young adults in their late teens and twenties.

Language and copy. Regarding the language and copy, two major findings emerged in the male and female magazine advertisements.

First, analysis of the language and copy used in contemporary magazine ads found clear evidence of ageism. Keywords associated with aging that were emphasized within the copy of magazine advertisements included words such as: age, ageless, old, older, wrinkles, anti-wrinkle, line, gray, aging, fine lines, timeless, eternal, everlasting, unchanging, perpetual, old-school, old-fashioned, vintage, and new generation. Further investigation of these words revealed that the definitions and implications associated with each word could contain negative perceptions of aging. During analysis, these terms were categorized as either implicitly or explicitly ageist. The terms that were obviously stereotyping age and signs of aging as negative were deemed explicitly ageist. These terms include but are not limited to: age, ageless, old, older, wrinkles, anti-wrinkle, line, gray, aging, and fine lines. Terms that were less obvious but still implied a negative connotation to aging were deemed implicitly ageist. These terms include but are not limited to: timeless, eternal, everlasting, old-school, old-fashioned, vintage, baby-smooth, and new generation. Moreover, these classifications were modified depending on the context.

Second, analysis of the language and copy within the magazine advertisements revealed drastically different results for ads targeted toward males and those targeted toward females. As Tables 3 and 4 in Chapter Four illustrate, the negative copy within the *Cosmopolitan* magazine ads for both 2010 and 2011 came to an average of 7 magazine ads. These numbers dropped significantly for both neutral and positive copy found, with 1.67 neutral and .167 positive magazine ads in 2010 and 2 neutral and 0 positive magazine ads in 2011 issues. Contrastingly, Table 1 in Chapter Four reveals that *Men's Journal* 2010 only had 1.83 ads with negative copy, 1.33 ads with neutral copy,

and .33 ads with positive copy. For *Men's Journal* 2011, Table 2 shows 1.67 ads with negative copy, .83 ads with neutral copy, and .33 ads with positive copy. Therefore, the female-targeted magazine had over triple the amount of advertisements with negative copy than the male-targeted ads. The findings regarding positive, neutral, and negative copy found within both *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Journal* magazine advertisements agree with the findings of Covey (1988) and Nuessel (1982) that women face more negative ageist stereotypes in language, and with more intensity, than men.

Mixed messages within advertisements. Both the male and female magazines included advertisements that gave mixed messages about age. For example, an ad might have ageist copy but non-ageist visual images; or an extreme example would be an ad with copy that is positive in reference to age, but visual images that are ageist. It was also interesting to note that many anti-aging products such as face creams and serums did not feature any ageist copy or images, but were inherently ageist because of the product being promoted. The findings from this study agree with those of Martel (1986) and Smith (1976), who found mixed messages within advertisements: "...even though the older models were pictured as active, the copy describing them was negative" (DeRenzo & Malley, 1992, p. 112). In addition, the current findings matched those of Schueman et al. (1977), who observed images of aging that were overly positive and unrealistic in women's magazines (DeRenzo & Malley, 1992, p. 112). A large majority of the images featured in *Cosmopolitan* set unattainable and unrealistic standards for women of all ages, but especially for older women.

Summary. Chapter Five discussed the most noteworthy findings regarding ageism within the advertisements of *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Journal*. First, we looked

at ageist statistics and findings such as the degree of ageism, the represented age groups, and the gender representation observed in the advertisements. Second, we discussed the products and brands promoted within the advertisements. Third, examined the sponsorships and spokespersons. Fourth, the visual portrayals of age were analyzed. Fifth, we considered the quantity and positioning of advertisements. Sixth, we compared appearance versus performance within the advertisements. Finally, the language and copy of the advertisements were inspected for further implications. From the discussion, it is clear that this study sheds new light on the comparison between similar male and female magazine advertisements. Results illustrated how ageism is more intensely evident against females in advertising today, both through visual images and language.

Chapter Five

Conclusions

Summary. Prior to research and analysis of the topic at hand, the following research question was posed: How do print magazine advertisements portray age in two magazines specifically targeted toward males and females? Chapter One introduced the topic of ageism in contemporary Euro-American culture and the negative effects (such as the financial expenses, ineffectiveness, and dangers of anti-aging products and procedures).

In Chapter Two, a review of the literature revealed through visual images and language, negative ageist stereotypes can be created and perpetuated. Moreover, these negative ageist stereotypes have been found by researchers such as Covey (1988) and Nuessel (1982) to be more intensely targeted toward females rather than males. Therefore, previous research does suggest that the media incorporate ageism into advertising. However, several limitations apply to this previous research. First, these findings are outdated and more current research might help us to uncover the mystery of ageism within magazine advertising. Moreover, before the current study, there was not a study that compared male and female magazines of the same genre and from a more recent time period, focusing on advertisements of all kinds and examining both language and visual images for age and gender implications.

In Chapter Three, once previous research was examined, two magazines of the same category and with similar themes and advertisements were analyzed: female-targeted *Cosmopolitan* and male-targeted *Men's Journal*. Through random selection, 50 percent of *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Journal* issues from 2010 and 2011 were analyzed— a

total of 24 issues in all. Inductive analysis resulted in the following three means of advertisement categorization: repeated featuring of implicitly and explicitly ageist products; text that negatively portrays growing old and signs of aging; and images that either exclude older generations or feature them in a negative or unrealistic way.

In Chapter Four, the findings obtained from the inductive content analysis were listed according to magazine and year. These findings were discussed and expanded. It was observed that older males were featured in a positive light more often in advertisements featured in *Men's Journal* than were older females in *Cosmopolitan*. Furthermore, the majority of advertisements within *Men's Journal* were categorized as not ageist, whereas the majority of advertisements within *Cosmopolitan* were categorized as implicitly ageist.

For both magazines, the teens to 20s age group and the 20s to 30s age groups were most represented in terms of visual elements. Therefore, the majority of magazine advertisements were exclusively targeting youth, with all other age groups represented at drastically lower levels.

Moreover, it was revealed that females were subject to ageism at a higher rate and intensity than males in both *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Journal*. This illustrates the disproportion of the focus of ageism in magazine advertisements in terms of gender.

Patterns emerged that illustrated the emphasis on performance in male advertisements, as well as a more equal representation of younger and older generations. Contrastingly, for the female magazine advertisements, appearance was emphasized, and traditional gender stereotypes emerged in ads for cleaning and weight loss products. What is more, approximately 90% of these appearance-based advertisements were

identified as ageist. Consequently, these ads may be contributing to the notion that the primary goal and purpose for a female is to look good (and therefore youthful), with less emphasis on performance and achievements.

Approximately 50% of the advertisements within *Men's Journal* did not contain visual images of people, but instead, offered visual images of the product being promoted. This method of advertising removed any age implications that may have been generated through visual images. When persons were featured in ads, they were frequently positioned in a way that made age indistinguishable. In contrast, *Cosmopolitan* advertisements predominantly featured visual images that blatantly represented youth.

Furthermore, the female-targeted magazine had over triple the amount of advertisements with negative copy than the male-targeted ads.

By analyzing ageism and gender within magazine advertisements through a critical perspective, distortions were revealed in mass media, and magazine advertisements in specific, that exist in Euro-American culture today. This study unearthed communication distortions within magazine advertising today and proposed positive change for ageist habits, which are not necessarily viewed as communication problems at all in some cases. In this way, we are able to draw closer to creating truthful, undistorted, realistic, and unbiased representations of society today, and of age in particular.

It is clear that this study sheds new light on the comparison between similar male and female magazine advertisements. These findings illustrate how ageism is more

intensely evident against females in advertising today, through visual images, language and copy, and products being promoted.

Limitations. Several limitations of the present study are evident, but each offers opportunities for further research. The first limitation was the sample size. Due to resource and time constraints, 50% of *Men's Journal* and *Cosmopolitan* issues for 2010 and 2011 were analyzed. In the future, 100% of the issues could be examined for additional implications. Adding magazine issues from years prior to 2010 and 2011 would also allow for new findings and themes to emerge within the study. A larger sample size could open up the possibility for significant relationships and patterns within the data to emerge more clearly.

A second limitation was the single magazine genre analyzed. While *Men's Journal* and *Cosmopolitan* appeal to a wide range of age groups and individuals and contain a multitude of diverse information ranging from beauty and fashion to health and celebrity interview, analysis of different types of magazines that give more attention and focus to a specific topic might be beneficial. For instance, magazines devoted to health, travel, sports, and home and garden could significantly extend the scope of analysis.

Future Research. The limitations listed above provide an enticing opportunity for extensions on the research topic. By addressing the limitations of the current study, future researchers could delve further into the gender implications unearthed, as well as other factors discovered during inductive analysis such as body image and weight-loss implications and gender roles implied. For example, with a larger sample size and a wider range of magazine genres included in analysis, the amount of advertisements promoting cleaning products and products for household duties such as laundry detergent

found within magazines targeted toward males and females could be explored more comprehensively. Moreover, it would be intriguing for future researchers to continue the current study by analyzing the remaining 50% of advertisements that were excluded through random sampling. This extension of the current study would help determine the strength of the findings and track whether they continued in all issues of the magazines or if new patterns emerged instead.

Implications for magazine advertising. On Tuesday, July 26, 2011, an article was featured in the main section of the British publication *the Gaurdian*, highlighting two L’Oreal magazine advertisements that were pulled because of complaints from activists such as Jo Swinson, leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats. In an article that appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, on August 6, 2011, Swinson explained that, “From smoothing skin and removing wrinkles to enlarging muscles and slimming waists, airbrushing men and women to 'perfection' has become the norm in the advertising media. These images don't reflect reality, yet from a younger and younger age, people are aspiring to these impossible ideals” (para. 1). Swinson is not the only person who is upset by airbrushing, false standards, and unrealistic images of both young and more aged women. Tara Moss, a former international fashion model, author of six novels, and the host of a television show expressed her opinion in the same article featured in *The Sydney Morning Herald*: “Reality is not always so exciting and glamorous, which is why we don't necessarily aspire to it. Companies aim to show us what we collectively desire, and on that score it's worth noting that in European ads we tend to see more character, more wrinkles, irregular teeth and pale, natural skin. They use retouching sparingly for a

different aesthetic. (One I happen to prefer)” (Swinson et al., 2011, The author section, para. 4,5).

This awareness of the media’s influence on anti-aging is occurring in Britain, but seems to be less common in America. The current study provided implications for magazine advertising, illuminating the stereotypes and prejudices that reveal themselves both implicitly and explicitly. Though America faces ageism in the media, it has not taken a stand against this injustice in the same magnitude that Britain has. Therefore, the study suggests that America should form an overseeing committee modeled after Britain’s Advertising Standards Authority, whose goal it is to protect its people from ageism and the rejection of the natural aging process. This committee would be encouraged to monitor the media in all of its forms in an attempt to ban advertisements that present age unrealistically, exclude age groups, use excessive airbrushing and digital manipulation techniques, and misrepresent age and product effectiveness, especially in relation to aging. Perhaps if such a committee was formed, they could start by banning HGH anti-aging advertisements from any magazine on the grounds of explicitly ageist copy and product, distortion of the aging process, unrealistic claims of youth and product effectiveness, lack of acknowledgment of the severe side effects associated with the product, and possibly even illegal distribution practices. In addition to an American committee dedicated to exposing and eliminating ageism within the media, it would be beneficial to American society to create an organization such as Third Age in Ireland, whose goal is to help people celebrate the third age in life and combat ageism. According to Third Age, “Ageism harms us all because it denies the reality that one day we too will grow old. The kind of life I fear I may have tomorrow is more likely to

happen unless and until I begin to challenge ageist attitudes today” (n.d., How ageism harms us section, para.4). By accepting the fact that ageism exists and working toward the defeat of ageism, we can help make the natural aging process a celebrated life stage instead of something that is feared, misunderstood, and distorted. In conclusion, we leave you with a quote to contemplate and take to heart. Perhaps if this is the mindset Euro-American society adopts in reference to aging, we can eliminate ageism and create a society that is accepting of one of the most natural and joyous life processes that we have the privilege of experiencing.

Appendix A

Honors Thesis Magazine Selection: Female-Centered Magazine

Note: 50% of all magazines from 2010 and 2011 were selected for analysis using the random number table. All issues labeled with an asterisk were thoroughly analyzed.

Cosmopolitan 2010

1. *January 2010
2. February 2010
3. *March 2010
4. April 2010
5. *May 2010
6. June 2010
7. *July 2010
8. *August 2010
9. September 2010
10. *October 2010
11. November 2010
12. December 2010

Cosmopolitan 2011

1. *January 2011
2. *February 2011
3. March 2011
4. April 2011
5. *May 2011
6. June 2011
7. *July 2011
8. *August 2011
9. *September 2011
10. October 2011
11. November 2011
12. December 2011

Total *Cosmopolitan* Issues: 12

Appendix B

Honors Thesis Magazine Selection: Male-Centered Magazine

Note: 50% of all magazines from 2010 and 2011 were selected for analysis using the random number table. All issues labeled with an asterisk were thoroughly analyzed.

Men's Journal 2010

1. *December 2009/January 2010
2. *February 2010
3. *March 2010
4. *April 2010
5. *May 2010
6. June/July 2010
7. *August 2010
8. September 2010
9. October 2010
10. November 2010
11. December 2010/January 2011

Men's Journal 2011

1. December 2010/January 2011
2. *February 2011
3. *March 2011
4. April 2011
5. *May 2011
6. June 2011
7. *July 2011
8. August 2011
9. *September 2011
10. *October 2011
11. November 2011
12. December 2011/January 2012

Total *Men's Journal* Issues: 12

Appendix C

Magazine Advertisement Recurring Patterns Guide

Magazine Title:

Brand:

1. Type of product:
2. Does product mark age:
3. Does copy message refer to age:

Negative Neutral

Month/Year:

Positive

4. Does visual message refer to age:

Negative Neutral

Positive

5. Person(s) present:

Number:

Age:

Gender:

Description:

6. Ageist Ad:

Explicit

Implicit

None

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