

**The influence of advertising design in the print media on the
self-perception of selected South African and Polish women:
A comparative study**

by

Katarzyna Bozena Rytel

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Supervisor: Ms Alettia Vorster Chisin (MEd)

Co-supervisors: Mugendi K. M'Rithaa (MDes – Industrial Design)
Ms Andrea Grant-Broom (NDip – Graphic Design)

**CAPE TOWN
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DECLARATION

I, Katarzyna Bozena Rytel, declare that the contents of this thesis represent my own unaided work, and that the thesis has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Katarzyna Rytel
Signed

11/02/2008
Date

ABSTRACT

Magazines are highly specialised forms of mass media communication. Across cultures, women's magazines and advertisements systematically promote an ideal of feminine beauty that is embedded primarily in body-image. Mass advertised messages targeted at women promote dominant mainstream cultural and global standards regarding body-image. They also promote the use of various products and lifestyle patterns that are intended to enable women to achieve the desired 'look' of the moment. The influence of these advertised messages manifests in real-life consequences, which are either positive or negative, and which, in turn, influence women's role in society. Seen in this light, certain manipulative practices present in the print media have been identified, which are used extensively to influence women, to shape their perceptions of the world around them, and to coach them into embracing a consumerist lifestyle, with the ultimate aim of generating revenue. In this regard, this study focuses on the ways in which advertising design in women's magazines and the content of the South African and Polish *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*, as well as the South African *Fairlady* and the Polish *Twoj Styl* represent the image of contemporary women in South Africa and Poland. Throughout this research study a total of 3 263 full- and half-page advertisements in 60 magazines were analysed, exploring the advertising design and magazine content of the selected women's magazines dated from May 2005 to May 2006. In these magazines, elements of visual communication employed in the structure of advertising messages were analysed in order to explore the meaning thereof. This was done in order to establish how the sample groups of Polish and South African women as consumers are affected by the advertising design messages in these publications, and how their self-perception and body-image are influenced and reconstructed through exposure to advertising design. The study revealed that beyond visible messages contained in products and services, deeper meanings exist that contribute towards creating the subordinated representation of women in patriarchal societies. This research study concludes that the combination of marketing and the media transcends the input of the geopolitical realities of women's self-perception in recently democratised contexts.

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Glossary

Advertising is paid, one-way communication through a medium in which the sponsor is identified and the message is controlled by the sponsor.

Communication consists of the transfer of information or ideas from the source to a receiver.

Culture (from the Latin *cultura* stemming from *colere*, meaning "to cultivate,") generally refers to patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activity significant importance. Different definitions of "culture" reflect different theoretical bases for understanding, or criteria for evaluating, human activity.

Female (♀) is the sex of an organism, or a part of an organism, which produces ova (egg cells) and is used in the thesis to denote female gender.

Femininity refers to qualities and behaviors judged by a particular culture to be ideally associated with or especially appropriate to women and girls.

Feminism and most modern sociological theory maintain that the differences between men and women are, at least in part, socially constructed 'differences', (i.e. determined through history by specific human groups), rather than biologically determined, immutable conditions.

Gender in common usage, refers to the differences between men and women.

High-context and **low-context** communication refers to the degree according to which cultural communication is either implicit or explicit.

In philosophy, **identity** is whatever makes an entity definable and recognizable, in terms of possessing a set of qualities or characteristics that distinguish it from entities of a different type.

A **woman** is a female human. The term *woman* (irregular plural: *women*) usually is used for an adult, with the term *girl* being the usual term for a female child or adolescent.

Women's rights as a term, typically refers to the freedoms inherently possessed by women and girls of all ages, which may be institutionalized, ignored or illegitimately suppressed by law, custom, and behavior in a particular society.

Terms such as **feminist**, **female**, **femininity** and **woman** are used interchangeably throughout the thesis.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

As the subject of my research I have chosen contemporary advertising design, which functions as the “symbol” of a modern and “consumerist culture” (Szczesna, 2003). As a Polish woman living in South Africa, I have a unique perspective regarding the two different cultures, and it is from this perspective that I propose examining the ways in which advertising design and content target culturally diverse women. Additional reasons for choosing the Polish and South African nations were that, since the fall of communism in 1989 in Poland and the democratisation of South Africa in 1994, women in the two countries concerned have enjoyed more opportunities for empowerment within the societies concerned, which may have impacted on their self-image (Viljoen *et al.*, in Van Eden & Du Preez, 2005). However, in neither of these countries has the breakthrough in social barriers significantly changed women’s representation in the print media. Instead, it has been argued that the role of women has continued to be portrayed stereotypically in advertising (Viljoen *et al.*, in Van Eden & Du Preez, 2005).

Another reason for choosing these countries as the focus of the study is that the multicultural South African society can be described as an “individual, low-context culture”, while Polish society can be described as homogenous and a “collective, high-context culture” (Hall, in Patrzalek, 2004). Therefore, by analysing the advertising content of specific magazines, the differences between high- and low-context cultures may explain the differences in advertising messages, women’s representation in the magazines and also women’s responses to these messages, which ultimately shape their role in society (Hall, in Patrzalek, 2004:147).

In spite of the fact that the *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* are women's magazines, in some ways they contribute to the negative representation of women in the print media. The reasons for choosing *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* include that they raise a variety of issues regarding the nature of the representation of women in the media. In addition, the two magazines have some of the highest circulation figures (for instance, the South African *Cosmopolitan* had a circulation of 117 255 for July to December 2004, in comparison to 44 883 for *Femina* and 62 754 for *Oprah* for the same period) of popular magazines in those countries. Both magazines are also regularly awarded (by the print media industry) for being the best general interest women's magazines.

An additional reason for their selection is that *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* were originally developed in the USA, only later being distributed internationally, in response to market demand. Before targeting the global market segments, as represented by the media in Poland and South Africa, these magazines had to adapt their strategies in relation to the cultural context of the countries concerned.

1.1.2 The power of advertising in popular magazines

The power of popular magazines and advertising is evident in women's magazines that promote and reflect dominant mainstream cultural and global standards in terms of the size, beauty and shape of women (Krolikowska, 2004). Although a contested domain, such contemporary ideals of advertised looks in magazines have become a fundamental model for the judgement of women in many societies. According to Baehr (in Strinati, 1995:197), such judgement occurs due to "women's marginality in culture generally *and* in the media which contributes to their subordinated positions in society and the advertising world". Such marginalisation of women refers, amongst other things, to their consistently stereotypical representation in the media. The stereotypical representation of women includes, amongst others, women seen in traditional roles, for instance as housewives, mothers, or 'sexualised

bodies' – roles that often serve to illustrate the disempowerment of women. Despite such stereotypical representation, which is constructed as negative by many readers, many perceive this representation as desirable and therefore positive, a positioning which is evident in the consumer behaviour of women. Women make the most purchases of consumer goods, so shaping both the macro- and microeconomy through their purchases (Ganahl, Prinsen & Netzley, 2003:550, 545).

1.1.3 The marketability of advertised sex appeal

Previous studies have suggested that the advertising world shows women as being connected to their bodies, but not to their minds (Fay & Price, 1994). In this regard, the Minister of Gender Equality in Poland, Ms Sroda, lodged a complaint, in May 2005, with The National Council of Radiophone and Television regarding the negative representation of women in advertising. In her complaint, she stated that “advertising is harmful from the social point of view and that women are represented stereotypically as silly, subordinated dolls” (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2005). However, according to the Director of the Advertising Department of TVP (Telewizja Polska): “advertising uses what is beautiful, thus women’s beauty too” (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2005). The literature indicates that gender differences exist regarding the perception of beauty, stereotypes and representation and, furthermore, that female representation in advertising is a contested domain (Golebiewska, 2003; Wolf, 1990). Van Zoonen pointed out that the media represents women in various stereotypical ways because male media producers are influenced by the existing stereotypes (Van Zoonen, in Strinati, 1995:181). Similarly, Jane Talcott, a senior creative director at *Young & Rubicam* in New York, argues that “most ad agencies boast healthy representations of women (according to men) because senior managers at most advertising firms are males” (Talcott, in Vagnoni, 2005).

Another study which investigated trends in stereotyping during particular periods (1976, 1982, 1983 and 1988) in selected magazines, found that the *Cosmopolitan* magazine portrays “above-average figures on sex objects *and* also the non-traditional role of women” (Michel & Taylor, 1989:44). Helen Gurley Brown, editor of the American *Cosmopolitan*, argues that “a Cosmo woman likes being a sex object as long as she is also the object of respect and appreciated for other attributes” (Brown, in Endres & Lueck, 1995:54). Seen in this light, the role and the representation of women in the media is clearly a contested area, both from the female and male perspectives (Forbes, Adams-Curtis, Rade & Jaberg, 2001). For example, Centrum Badania Opini Publicznej (CBOS) research conducted in Poland has found that 61% of Polish women would love to live without constant worries about their looks and their families, just like the constructed feminine ideals do who are portrayed in advertisements (CBOS in Walter, 1999). Not surprisingly though, another research study has found that in only 9% of women’s magazines did advertised messages contain a direct statement about beauty, though many more emphasised the importance of “looks”, particularly “the look” as identified by Mirzoeff (Dittrich, 2003; Mirzoeff, 1998).

1.1.4 The influence of print media in terms of the advertising of unattainable looks

According to mass advertised images in today’s world, the healthy and natural body and its beauty (as represented by the wholesome, unaltered body) is not so important anymore, especially since the popularisation of plastic surgery (Shilling in Woodward, 2003). What is important, however, is “the look” (Mirzoeff, 1998). One research study has found that 58% of advertised messages are concerned with body image and that continued exposure to idealised body-images lowers women’s self-image (Kelly, 2000). Presently, in many cultures women are exposed to the message that a ‘perfect’ body can bring them happiness and success. Striving to attain such a ‘perfect body’ often achieves the opposite effect to that of happiness and success, such as illness and psychological disorder. Woodward suggests that “it is now clear that

reconstructive surgery, eating and emotional disorders like anxiety or depression for example, are to be found amongst women in all sectors of the population” (Woodward, 2003:133). It can thus be argued that advertising design in the print media may play an important role in stimulating social and cultural change in women regarding their body-image (Golebiewska, 2003). For example, research conducted in South Africa during 1995 highlighted the fact that Westernised South African women are highly susceptible to physical image dissatisfaction in comparison to less Westernised South African women (Haynes, 1995). Interestingly, it was also found that Western influences in advertising regarding ‘perfect’ body images in magazines contribute to the fact that black Westernised South African women may be “at risk for the development of body shape and weight concerns” (Haynes, 1995). These findings, however, do not support those of an earlier study conducted by Petersen from 1986 to 1989, in which he stated that women represented in South African magazine advertising are free from the Westernised, stereotypical representation, and therefore are not as susceptible to body shape and weight concerns (Petersen, 1986–1989). In Poland, research has found that, since the fall of communism, most magazine advertising has appealed to cultural values and traditional (stereotypical) roles in order to strengthen the existing cultural perspective (Golebiewska, 2003). However, 53% of Polish women indicate that they are not happy to be portrayed as fulfilling traditional roles in advertising (CBOS, in Walter, 1999). According to Bator, Polish publicists have already started to address the negative influence of advertised messages on women’s self-image in real everyday contexts (Bator, in Twardowska & Olczyk, 2001).

1.2 The role of the researcher

As a Polish woman living in South Africa, the current researcher has a unique perspective on the two cultures treated in this thesis, in terms of which she proposes to examine the different ways in which advertising design and content target culturally diverse women. The research questions dealt with in the thesis arise from her daily experiences with advertising and

its psychological influences, particularly as regards the sway that they hold over women. As a qualified graphic designer, textile artist and researcher, she is more exposed, and arguably more sensitised, to design issues in the print media than a non-visual literate person might otherwise be. In this light, she has identified certain manipulative practices present in the print media, which are extensively used to influence women, to shape their perceptions of their environs, and to coach them into embracing a consumerist lifestyle, with the ultimate aim of generating revenue. In her previous research work, while analysing the metaphorical meaning of visual communication, she noticed that advertising in both the Polish and South African print media proposes lifestyle patterns mainly for women. Although a substantial amount of cross-cultural research has been undertaken with regard to the influence of advertising design and content in the print media, South African and Polish women have received limited attention. Cross-cultural research focusing on Poland and South Africa has been undertaken in the area of mass media communication, specifically in the electronic media. The many parallels between the two countries provide fertile ground for the undertaking of additional cross-cultural research. The research is aimed at producing a new cross-cultural comparison of the content, including the advertisements, in *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines produced in South Africa and Poland, and its influence on women with different social identities.

1.2.1 Description of research methods

The research methods employed in the current research included an investigation of individual and collective views and perceptions of the research problem tackled in this thesis. Therefore, I used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in order to identify different approaches for collecting and analysing data to answer my research questions. Gathered data, however, is discussed in a qualitative way in order to discover the underlying meanings, patterns and conclusions inherent in the data.

1.3 Research questions

Research question 1. To what degree and in which ways have internationally distributed magazines such as *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* adapted their marketing strategies to the South African and Polish local markets respectively?

Research question 2. Are there cultural differences and similarities in women's representation in the local, culturally relevant magazines in South Africa and Poland and in the international editions of *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* in such countries?

Research question 3. In what ways does advertising design communication in *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* propose lifestyles and tastes that may influence the attitudes of sample groups of women towards self-perception and, in turn, towards their roles in the respective societies?

1.4 Rationale for the study

Worldwide, the thinking of culturally diverse women are arguably being influenced by the content and presentation of women's magazines. The current study focuses on the ways in which the advertising design and content of women's magazines serve to represent the image of contemporary women in South Africa and Poland by proposing certain prescribed lifestyles and tastes that influence women's attitudes in respect of their self-perception and body-image. Such an influence manifests in real-life consequences, which are either positive or negative, and which, in turn, influence women's role in society. The current research, therefore, serves to investigate the influence of advertising design in magazines on the culturally diverse women that such magazines target.

1.5 Aims of the study

The study is focused on the following three aims:

- To establish how the sample groups of Polish and South African women as consumers are affected by the advertising design messages in the aforementioned publications, and how their self-perception and body-image are influenced and reconstructed through exposure to advertising design – in other words, the influence of magazine advertising design on the culturally diverse women that such magazines target.
- to explore how exposure to advertising design influences women's roles in society, particularly regarding issues of empowerment and disempowerment in respect of disciplining of the body.
- to identify cultural similarities and differences between the respective countries' magazine contents and advertising design.

1.6 Focus of the study

The argument that women experience much ambiguity (regarding body-image), and that the power of the media is largely able to render negative the notions of body-image in feminine identity construction, provides the focus for this study. Additional focus is on the identification of the various prevailing combinations of factors in a cross-cultural content analysis of magazines that may influence purchase intention, as well as women's attitudes towards both themselves and one another. The identification of the relevant principles used in designing advertisements for the print media is aimed at exploring contemporary women's attitudes towards such advertising. The current research will also seek to understand the underpinning motivation of designers and editors that drives their use of such advertising.

1.7 Contribution of the study to the field of research

- The research aims to establish to what degree self-perception and the body-image of contemporary women in both countries is influenced by advertising and magazine content, and what the results of such influence are on women's role in society.

- The research highlights the similarities and differences present among the diversity of women regarding their perspective on advertising design and content in magazines. Such highlighting is aimed at obtaining relevant insights (for instance, the deconstruction of stereotypical representations, with a greater focus on the fostering of 'real' women) into the possible future development of creative advertising for women. The current research is, therefore, relevant to editors and/or art directors of such magazines, particularly since a willingness to transform women's representation in the print media has become more apparent during the last few years.

The research explores the following issues:

- cultural differences in terms of the meanings constructed by women as consumers;
- whether Polish and South African editions of culturally relevant magazines influence women's attitudes more, or in the same way, as do international magazines published locally in the countries concerned;
- how global Western female culture relates to the Polish and South African female cultures;
- the influence of magazine advertising on women, as well as the ways in which such advertising can modify women's behaviour.

- In doing all the above, the research aims to produce a new cross-cultural comparison of the content and advertisements in *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines from South Africa and Poland and their influence on women with different social identities.

- Finally, the research contributes to an improved understanding of culturally diverse females as consumers, as well as to a deeper understanding of the differences and similarities existing between the portrayal of women in magazines in an international context, and the role of women in society in the real-life everyday context.

1.8 Summary

Magazines are highly specialised forms of mass media that exert a powerful influence over women's appearance through advertising specific looks, which serve to link the body-image of women to their status in society. Therefore, contemporary ideals of advertised looks in magazines act as a fundamental model for the judgment of women in many societies.

Print media as a form of mass communication presents verbal and visual messages that are rich in symbolic content. By using imagination and skill to control contextual meaning and the visual elements present in them, magazines strive to create the desire in consumers to emulate certain advertised images. In contrast, however, all women are free to choose their source of information and to interpret advertised messages in the light of their beliefs, feelings and expectations. The current thesis sets out to compare the two positions and to examine to what degree the self-perception and body-image of contemporary women in both countries under review is influenced by advertising design and magazine content. The materialism exhibited in the 'fantasies' created in the magazines discussed, in terms of what is spoken and understood, as well as how it relates to women's perceptions, will be analysed. In brief, the investigation deals with the cross-cultural influence of verbal and visual communication in the print media on the attitudes of Polish and South African women towards their body and mental image, which may or may not influence their roles in society.

CHAPTER 2: THE INFLUENCE OF ADVERTISING IN THE PRINT MEDIA ON WOMEN'S IMAGE IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE SOCIETIES

From the advertising world and its influences there is no escape. As one can notice, it is even impossible to calmly look through newspapers or magazines. Firstly because one has to tear at a plastic case protecting the magazine which encloses inserts added to the magazine; and secondly one also has to gather spilled leaflets on the floor, and sponsored additions such as insertions, samples, CDs and DVDs. Theoretically after the lounge is tidied up, one can sit comfortably and begin reading. However, it turns out that this joy is premature. Between the magazine's pages are attached small samples of creams, tubes, gifts and "jewels". Wanting to read an interesting article, one again has to make an effort to carefully remove this nonsense from the paper. In the process, several pages of the magazine have to be torn up a bit, while the others remain plastered with small stains of sticky putty which make it impossible to page through the magazine easily. Finally, when one is ready to read, it turns out that it is late at night and time to go to sleep...

Magazines tend generally to be read differently from newspapers. The English agency Millward Brown (in Dolinski, 2003:9) indicates that "feminine monthly magazines are read for up to five months from the date of purchase. However, weekly magazines from the date of purchase are read by only 60% of the customers". Advertising content in magazines features high-quality paper and reproduces full-colour pictures that are more attractive than the paper and pictures used in newspapers. According to American investigations, "full-colour advertisements have about a 30% greater chance of being noticed than black and white copies" (Kall, 2002:138). In addition, the American Association of Publishers has found that "periodical advertisements are perceived to be more reliable, less exaggerated, less irritating, not as boring or as 'stupid' as those on television" (Kall, 2002:95). Ironically, women are frequently portrayed in periodical advertisements as 'silly creatures' who find difficulty in understanding the simplest matters.

In reading magazines, women are continually exposed to their stereotyped portrayal therein, which they eventually come to perceive as a true reflection of reality, so that the

impact of advertising ultimately influences their role in society. In fact, the way in which advertising constructs femininity has changed little over the past half-century.

Seen in this light, the following chapter introduces the development of magazines' advertising content and its global influence on women's representation. The discussion will also analyse feminism during the earlier phase of the idealistic representation of women as consumers, and the way in which women and femininity were viewed from inside the advertising culture which presently globally influences and subordinates women. The discussion will therefore endeavour to contextualise women's role in the development of magazines' advertising content.

2.1 A brief history of print media design and the impact of advertising design on women consumers

Since the development of printing technology by Gutenberg in 1450, the mass communication process has exerted a major societal influence. The development of written mass communication began with the spread of the printing press industry throughout Europe (Wood, 1983). Over time, books and other print materials became increasingly popular in the United States and Europe, and the need to mass-produce large quantities of paper contributed to the development of faster printing methods (Wood, 1983). By the 1850s there were 600 magazines in publication (Mogel, 1998).

At the beginning of the 20th century, with the intensive development of new technologies, the mass media became the fastest, most widespread tool for transmitting information, shaping opinions and exerting pressure. In short, the mass media have played a crucial role in shaping the social and cultural norms of the 20th century. Today, magazines are a growing industry. For example, only 50% out of 1 000 new magazines launched in the USA

during 1997 made it to their second issue, with only 10% making it to their second year, while many others only succeed after having been in publication for four years (Mogel, 1998). Such lack of success is partly due to a lack of a professional business plan and advertising support. In contrast, 43% of the magazines launched during the 19th century are still published today, including the *Journal of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy* (launched in 1825), *Scientific American* (launched in 1845) and *Cosmopolitan* (launched during the 1880s) (Mogel, 1998).

As magazines evolved, so did their capacity to pursue a topic or issue with more continuity than did books, due to their ability to interpret events more accurately than did newspapers (Wood, 1983). Such capacity is due to magazines operating in terms of a different timeframe to that of the mainstream press, allowing them to offer a seasoned commentary on affairs rather than merely systematically reporting the unfolding of events (Crowley, 2003). Early on, magazines were a luxury, as they were seen as a medium capable of presenting trends and articles which, in turn, helped form new opinions in society (De Fleur & Dennis, 1994). Such magazines served specific functions in society, with one of the earliest functions of the magazine in the 19th century being that of a primary outlet for literary works, such as essays, stories, serialised novels, entertainment or political commentaries, just as they remain today. Therefore, the term 'magazine', derived from the French word '*magasin*', meaning 'warehouse' or 'storehouse', alludes to the fact that a magazine 'stores' various topics (Wood, 1983).

Early magazines played an important role in the development of modern design principles, and in journalistic and visual expression (Owen, 1991). Throughout the 1700s and 1800s, magazines dedicated their front page to their title, table of contents, publication data, or a small illustration for decorative purposes, in this way mimicking the layout of the covers of books (see Figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3). In terms of design, early magazines could be.

distinguished from books by their flimsy cover, with their headlines resembling chapter headings; the symmetrical arrangement of type; text wrapped in either single or double columns, and illustrations either spread out over a full page opposite the text, or interspersed with it, as seen in Figure 2.1 (Grow, 2002).



Figure 2.1 *Penny Magazine*, 1838; Source: Grow, 2002

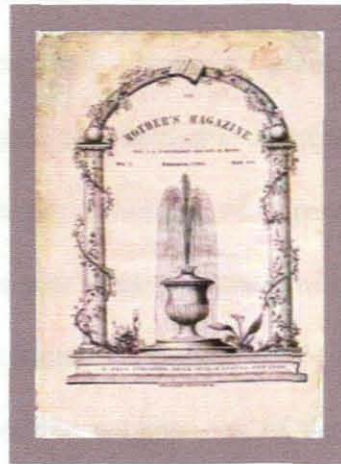


Figure 2.2 *Mother's Magazine*, 1844; Source: Grow, 2002

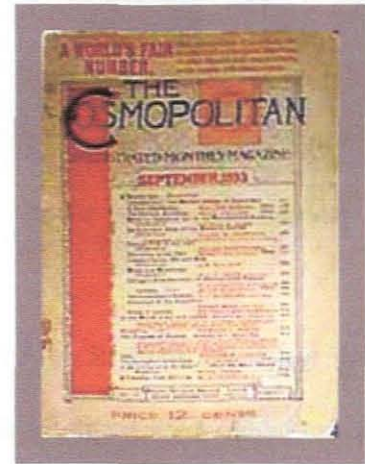


Figure 2.3 *Cosmopolitan*, 1893; Source: Grow, 2002

Many early magazines lacked covers (Grow, 2002), sometimes beginning articles on the front page, as with the *Penny Magazine*, dating from 1838 (see Figure 2.1). *Mother's Magazine* from 1844 is an example of a magazine with a symbolic cover, the illustration of which served as an allegorical message visually informing the readers that *Mother's Magazine* was the source, the fountain, and the instructor of their families (see Figure 2.2). In the later 1800s, cover lines began to appear, as shown on the *Cosmopolitan* cover from 1893 (see Figure 2.3). The cover illustrated represents the conventions followed by magazines as regards their covers at the time, showing the table of contents, the cover line (situated at the head of the page), with the identity of the magazine being reflected in the characteristic letter 'C' superimposed on the red band. In this way, a magazine formed a composite whole of cover, contents page, major and minor features and design, with a specific visual integrity all its own (Owen, 1991:22).

During the following decades, various advertising layouts in magazines started experimenting creatively, in the same way as they currently do (Rose, 2002). For example, in the 1910s and 1920s, modern movements, specifically futurism and constructivism, introduced asymmetric layouts that explored dynamic graphic composition. The goal of such an aesthetic approach (which was achieved through the synthesis of separate elements) was the creation of a new kind of balance which

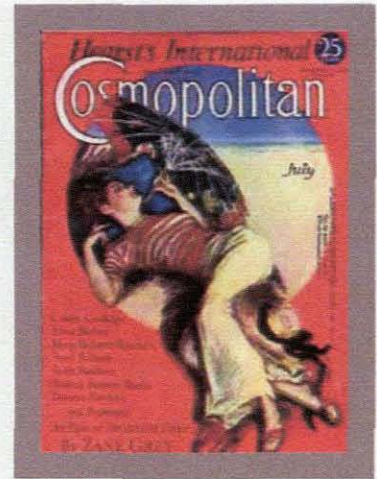


Figure 2.4 *Cosmopolitan*, July 1932; Source: Grow, 2002

expressed change and the revolutionary “machine age” (Owen, 1991). In 1916, art editor Will Bradley, who broke away from the conventions of the traditional illustrated magazine by treating a double-page spread as a single unit, supervised the typography of all Hearst publications, such as *Cosmopolitan*. In the 1940s and 1950s, elements of abstract language and compositional principles of modern art, as adhered to in the 1930s, were employed, as can be seen in Figures 2.4 and 2.6 (Crowley, 2003). The years 1945 to 1968 saw the ‘great age’ of magazine design development (Owen, 1991). In the early 1970s, technology contributed to advances in the design and production of magazines, with the first floppy disc being released in 1973 and the first Apple Macintosh computer starting production in 1984 (Mogel, 1998). Design and production principles both had to readjust to the new technologies. In the 1970s, the magazine industry rationalised its editorial and marketing strategies in line with evolving political and cultural events. Pop influences led to additional decorative, pre-industrial forms, multi-layered collage design and preference for the subjective art of illustration at the expense of photography (Owen, 1991).

During the 1980s “it seemed that many magazines were trying to list their entire contents on the covers”, as can be seen in Figure 2.5 (Grow, 2002:18). The 1980s’ magazine

style tended to be overbearing, oversaturated in typeface symbols, with text squeezed into an arbitrary layout lacking in typographic clarity. Not surprisingly, though, in 1985, at a symposium organised by the American Institute of Graphic Arts, the claim was made that “something happened to the magazine, much of contemporary magazine design has been disparaged for its lack of comparable simplicity and intensity, and also for its lack of the great design tradition established in the mid-century” (Owen, 1991:6).

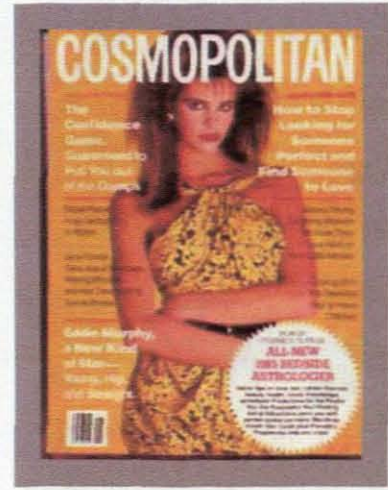


Figure 2.5 *Cosmopolitan*, 1980;
Source: Grow, 2002

In 1985, when *Elle* magazine (started in 1945 in France by Frances Hachette) came to prominence in the USA, its style influenced the content of leading fashion magazines, such as *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue* (Lueck & Endres, 1995). The American edition of *Elle*, designed and directed by Regiz Pagniez, represented the return to commercial publishing of strong, graphic values, such as the use of primary colours contrasting with full-length photography, following the style set in the 1960s by *Harper's Bazaar* (Owen, 1991). According to Anthony Davis, when the English language edition of *Elle* was published in the 1980s, a “new internationalism came to periodical publishing” (Davis, 1992:10). In the following years *Elle* became an international magazine, appearing in Poland in 1994 and in South Africa in 1996.

In recent years, colourful, strong, large, and loud cover lines (headings listed on the magazine cover) have come to vie for attention with powerful photographs, a trend which has emerged as a “worldwide phenomenon in the magazines of the millennium” (Grow, 2002:19). For example, by 1916 covers already exemplified many of the methods that would undergo

revision throughout the 20th century. Some of the original elements, namely the integration of a dynamic picture with a magazine logo, the full body pose of a model and the use of effective cover lines along all sides of the page, were still used in cover design during the 1990s. This trend, as represented in the *Cosmopolitan* cover from the 1940s shown in Figure 2.6, shows the skilful integration of the cover lines with the illustrations, typography, and colour (Lueck & Endres, 1995).

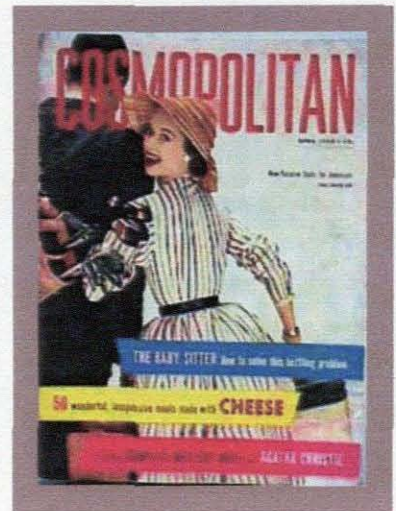


Figure 2.6 *Cosmopolitan* 1940; Source: Grow, 2002

According to De Fleur and Dennis (1994:125), “Magazines have been as varied in content as were readers’ interests and concerns”. Magazine publications of the previous century were constantly developing new formats and entering new markets: “it was a dynamic industry, constantly seeking new formats, new audiences, new appeals, and new ways to increase profits; and the real profit was in attracting advertisers” (De Fleur & Dennis, 1994:124). In this way, as technology progressed and circulation figures increased, magazines became an attractive medium for exploitation by the advertising industry, which then strove to reach specific segments of their audience.

2.1.1 The construction of women as consumers in the context of the print media and advertising

A parallel history concerning women’s representation in the mass media developed in the course of the mid-19th century. As the popularity of magazines increased, the need for advertisers to target specialised audiences evolved. At the time, many American and English magazines were directly aimed at meeting women’s needs, and asserting their rights, including that of suffrage. For example, the cover of the popular *Peterson’s* women’s

magazine of 1872, as shown in Figure 2.7, can be seen to be decorated with the leafy symmetry of Victorian embellishments and with small drawings symbolising “the various roles of women in the family”, placed at the foot of the cover (Grow, 2002:4).

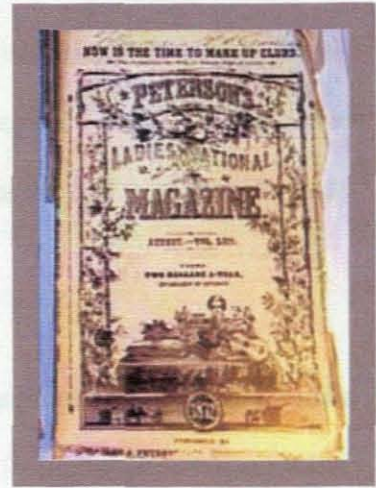


Figure 2.7 Peterson 1872;
Source: Grow, 2002

In the 1890s, women played a complex role in the formation of modern American consumer culture (Peiss, 1998). During this time in New York, The National Consumers' League was founded that mobilised middle- and upper-class women to use their purchasing power for social change. White middle-class women promoted consumption, which was propounded by the late 19th century economists as a kind of “work”. Department store merchandisers succeeded in persuading women of the desirability of goods and services, ranging from restrooms to restaurants, promoting goods through attractive displays (Peiss, 1998). During this period, most groceries were unbranded and sold in bulk quantities. The mass-circulated magazines, however, were preoccupied with cultivating the consumption by women of brand-name packaged products (Peiss, 1998). In this way, women started to give shape to the modern consumerist culture by purchasing branded products (Peiss, 1998). In 1909, according to the American sociologist Charles Horton Cooley: “the features of the popular media, which had come into existence in the 19th century, had forever changed the mental outlooks of those who used them” (Cooley, in De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach, 1982:9).

By 1910, advertisers had identified women as powerful consumers of clothes, appliances and other goods bought for their families. The female consumer was considered to be an emotional and impulsive buyer, who was highly susceptible to the social and psychological inducements of advertisers. Accordingly, the advertising industry developed

ways of persuasion that could speak “women’s own language” in their use of poetic images and feminine phrases (Peiss, 1998:3), imitating the “intimate conversations” of women (Peiss, 1998:4). As in the contemporary milieu, the strategy of employing the woman’s viewpoint in advertising was mainly used to promote products traditionally associated with women, such as food, fashion, and cosmetics (De Fleur & Dennis, 1994).

In the 20th century, the importance of advertising increased as the mass media developed (De Fleur & Dennis, 1994). Advertising as a kind of facilitator of communication, became “a great social institution linking a nation’s productivity, its mass media and its *consuming public*” (De Fleur & Dennis, 1994:327). The phenomenon of “the new woman” quickly became the focus of the popular media (Marchand, 2001:3), with the image of the female consumer making women increasingly noticeable. For example, since 1918, 14 countries, including Austria, Germany, Poland, Russia, Great Britain and Greece, have drafted some form of statement of the gender equality of rights, with such declarations amounting to little or much, depending on the general outlook of each country concerned (Holtby, 1941).

Women also came to be increasingly economically empowered through technological change and development. For example, during the 1930s, some women, who formed part of a minority of professionals working in advertising and publishing, promoted standardised goods, brand names, new inventions and styles on behalf of various manufacturers and magazines. However, the number of women employed in this field, mostly as copywriters or in the lower departments of magazine publishing, made up only 3% of all advertising professionals (Peiss, 1998). “Yet, their approach ultimately reinforced the stereotype of the female consumer” (Peiss, 1998:7), as early advertising promoted the “woman’s viewpoint” as regards women’s standing and careers (Marchand, 2001; Peiss,

1998:4). Presently, women still constitute the minority (30%) of professionals working in the publishing industry (Lowe-Morna *et al.*, 2006).

From a comparison of the results of more than a dozen studies conducted during recent years to those of studies conducted during the 1970s, it is clear that women's representation in the print media has remained on a par in terms of their roles in society, as well as in terms of issues of gender equity. For instance, advertisements still routinely indicate that "a woman's place is at home, that women are dependent upon men, that women do not make independent and important decisions, and women are still shown in only a few occupational roles, but above all that women view themselves and are viewed by others as sex objects" (Courtney & Whipple, 1983:45).

According to Wolf, women's magazines reflect historical change and "for over a century have been one of the most powerful agents for portraying women's roles" (Wolf, 1990:64). The following examples of illustrations and content, directly quoted from the original advertisements, indicate the development of advertising announcements and the various stereotypical roles assigned to women in the print media.



Figure 2.8 "His first love". Advertisement for *Palmolive Soap* in *McCall's*, August 1928 (Source: Marchand, 2001)

Figure 2.8 Text-selection of the advertisement:

"(...) Always be to him, the beautiful princess of fairy book delight. To keep youth, keep the skin clean and the pores open. Natural ways are best. Keep that schoolgirl complexion" *Palmolive Soap* (Marchand, 2001).

represented in the following examples from the 1930s and 1940s, society still largely



Figure 2.9 “Men fall in love with the Womanly Woman”. Advertisement for Lux Soap in Ladies Home Journal, April 1931.

Figure 2.9 Text-selection of the advertisement:

Clever girls like Elizabeth so often forget that a woman’s appeal to a man is in being feminine. Men fall in love with the womanly woman, not with copies of themselves. And this feeling is contagious – others respond to it at once (...) Lux Soap (Marchand, 2001).

As Figures 2.8 and 2.9 indicate, magazine advertisements systematically promoted an ideal of feminine beauty that was embedded primarily in their body image. Mass-advertised messages targeted at women attempted to promote various products and lifestyle patterns that would help women achieve the desirable ‘look’: the current ideal of feminine beauty. A similar approach can be seen in a contemporary advertisement for Clarins (see Figure 2.10) (SA¹ Elle, April 2005). Some advertisers still employ feminine phrases when targeting the female consumer:



Figure 2.10 Clarins advertisement, 2005 Source: SA Elle, April 2005

The most beautiful fruit of Summer, Autumn, Spring and Winter, is you. It’s your face. It’s a healthy-looking, radiant complexion that’s velvety smooth. It’s skin that is supple and full of light, in any light. It’s a fact. With Clarins, life’s more beautiful. (Text-selection of the Clarin’s advertisement, Figure 2.10).

As can be seen in Figures 2.8 and 2.9, similarly to the image currently promoted, the advertised ‘look’ for women is one of height, slenderness, youthfulness, and beauty. In addition, the various research studies conducted throughout the years show a consistent picture of gender stereotyping that has changed little over time

(Helms & Guffey, 1997; Marchand 2001; Wolf, 1990; Woodward, 2003). Currently, as

¹ SA - stands for South Africa

represented in the following examples from the 1920s and 1930s, society still largely perceives women as the mass media portrayed them at that time (Golebiewska, 2003).



Figure 2.11 "Just what is it to be A GOOD WIFE in the Modern Age?" Advertisement for *Better Homes and Gardens*, December 1929:63.

Figure 2.11 Text-selection of the advertisement:
In the heart of every woman – is that eager, wistful wish to be a good wife – You realize that in this advanced age your husband needs a mate as modern-minded as himself. He is moving ever forward. Let the Laundry do it. *Laundry Owners National Association of the United States and Canada* (Marchand, 2001).

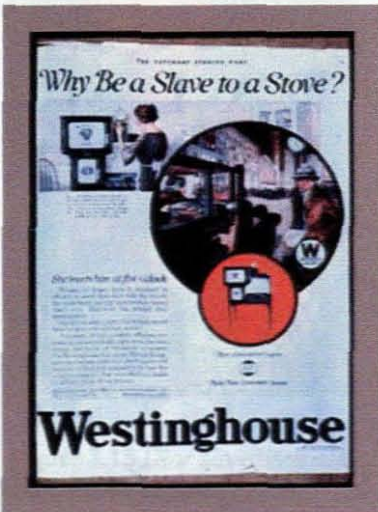


Figure 2.12 "Why Be a Slave to a Stove?" Advertisement for Westinghouse, *Saturday Evening Post*, January 1923.

Figure 2.12 Text-selection of the advertisement:
She meets him at five o'clock. (...) Electricity has worked their emancipation. For an enjoyable variation in the day's routine – ask your wife to come in and drive you home from the office. This is but one of the pleasant things the "Range with the clock" will make possible for you – and for her (Marchand, 2001).



Figure 2.13 "When Lovely Women Vote". *American Magazine*, October 1932:1.

Figure 2.13 Text-selection of the advertisement:
"To thousands of women of this type – charming, educated, well-to-do, prominent in the social and civic life of her city, we put this question. What toothpaste do you use? To our delight, the majority vote Listerine Tooth Paste" (Marchand, 2001).

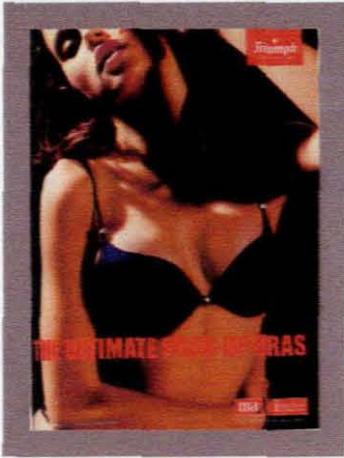


Figure 2.14 *Triumph* advertisement in SA *Cosmopolitan*, February 2003:41

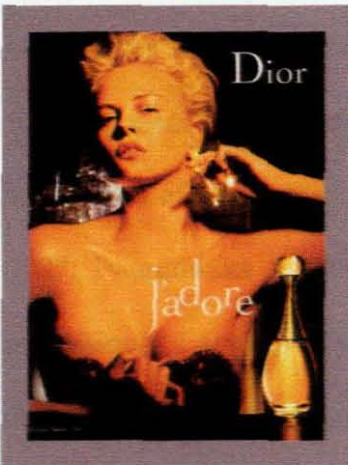


Figure 2.15 *Dior* advertisement in SA *Cosmopolitan*, April 2006:15

An analysis of the above-mentioned examples shows that, in previous eras, women filled the gap between male manufacturers and female consumers. In present times, the majority of manufacturers still consider women as their most important target market, who do most of the household shopping (Milner, in Dallmann, 2001). In most cases, therefore, advertising specialists create advertising campaigns that primarily refer to women, but which are also aimed at men. In addition, historical advertising either depicted women as preoccupied with concerns related to beauty, household duties, and motherhood, or which reflected their status as decorative objects. As seen in Figures 2.11, 2.12 and 2.13, advertising systematically emphasised passivity and lack of intelligence, a state of affairs which continues to oppress women (see Figures 2.14 and 2.15), which, in turn, reinforces the concept of male dominance (as discussed in Chapter 7, Section 7.6.1 and Chapter 8).

2.1.2 The woman as commodity

As has been discussed, women at present, as in the past, are seldom represented in their professional capacity. For instance, women, in their professional roles as doctors or stewardesses, advertise sweets, with their values being linked to a sexual agenda, and not to their professional identity, as illustrated in Figure 2.16. Rather than representing a female doctor, what is shown in the figure is more a tongue-in-cheek comment exploiting the “woman as commodity”: a promotional paradigm used to entice both male and female

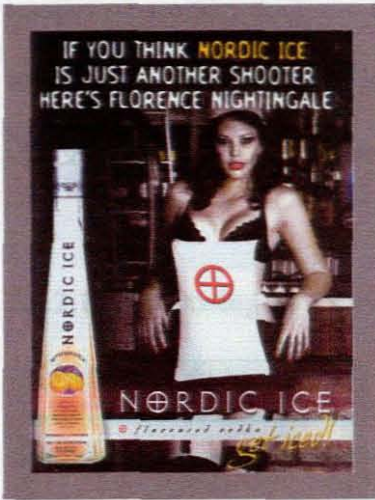


Figure 2.16 *Nordick Ice* advertisement in *Cosmopolitan*, May 2005

consumers. Research studies show that two main styles are distinguishable in advertising: a classical one that is based on the traditional stereotyping of women, and a more modern and popular imitation of reality, reflecting a liberated and independent woman (Mayne, 2000). Both types seem relevant in contemporary circumstances, since presently no single definition of femininity exists (Golebiewska, 2003). On the one hand, many still believe that the traditional family should consist of the man as head, with the woman, who is primarily a subservient

homemaker and who either does not work professionally or who only works for pleasure, fulfilling a subordinate role (Helms & Guffey, 1997). On the other hand, however, the reality is that 70% of women are employed – a far cry from the traditional picture (Helms & Guffey, 1997; Twardowska & Olczyk, 2001). As discussed earlier, women are hardly ever shown as professionally active; they are seldom associated with intellectual activity, and only 7% of advertisements portray women as professionals (Twardowska & Olczyk, 2001).

This objectified representation of women leads to increased stress and anxiety, as such portrayal is perceived simultaneously as both unrealistic and attractive, as Courtney and Whipple (1983:45) state: “women view themselves and are viewed by others as sex objects”. Creedon (1993:201) argues that “by using outdated stereotypes, advertisements are simplistically ignoring the complexities of modern women’s lives”, as they do not consider the burgeoning percentage of women doctors, lawyers or elected politicians. Hall (1990:2) interprets this largely stereotypical representation in the following way: “in advertising, models representing passive patterns of women’s behaviours become standards that perpetuate women’s subordinate roles in real life”. As shown in Figures 2.14, 2.13 and 2.16,

images of women continue to reproduce patterns of subordination. It is also clear that when women are not portrayed in stereotypical roles, they are most often shown as victims of violence as can frequently be seen in the newspapers (Lowe-Morna *et al.*, 2006).

2.1.2.1 Advertising as a form of controlled communication



Figure 2.17 Flora advertisement in *Fairlady*, May 2006: 182

In order to be effective, advertising attempts to manipulate the consumer by way of indirect appeals reflecting the audiences' shared values or by the use of photographs of well-known and attractive women. In the early stages of advertising development, it was difficult to distinguish between an advertisement and an article, a situation which still largely prevails today. Therefore, advertising strategies are still basically the same as they were in the earliest advertisements. The use of so-called 'advertorials' (a technique incorporating the advertised product into a magazine editorial resembling the format of an article) has become a successful technique for attracting attention, because they are viewed as a more objective commentary than is advertising, similar to the advice of a 'trusted friend' (McLoughlin, 2000). For example, popular advertorial strategies include employing a celebrity interview, during which the celebrity concerned refers to a product or food company that may sponsor the magazine's recipe pages, where their branded product features as the key ingredient of the recipes. For instance, this type of advertorial can regularly be seen in *Fairlady* magazine, since much of the content focuses on culinary articles, as illustrated in Figure 2.17. In this way, advertising as a complex and dynamic process can skilfully link a magazine's content with consumers' wants and demands for particular products (De Fleur & Dennis, 1994). As a form of controlled communication, such advertising becomes the "expression of the nation's commercial self" (De Fleur & Dennis,

1994:326), as well as the expression of beliefs and opinions, and the construction of identities (Hall, 1990).

2.1.3 The construction of femininity in advertising

Some of the first and most successful women's magazines in America were publications such as *Godey's Lady's Book*, started in 1830, *Lady's Home Journal*, started in 1883, and *Cosmopolitan*, which became the country's leading illustrated magazine in 1892 (De Fleur & Dennis, 1994). Women's magazines were mostly devoted to home decoration, cooking, beauty tips, sewing and other domestic pursuits. The ways in which different types of women's magazines constructed, and still construct, particular versions of femininity has been of great interest to feminists (Abrahamson, 1995). In the 1960s, Betty Friedan, the author of *Feminine Mystique*, claimed that such publications spread "*the housewife ideal as the only option available to women*" (Friedan in Crowley, 2003:118). In the 1970s many feminists argued that images of women in the mass media, and particularly in advertising, contributed to their subordinated representations. Their perspective of women's magazines and their interpretation of the relationship between the texts and their reader's self-perception was "concerned with the ways that magazines offered 'unreal', 'untruthful', or 'distorted' images of women" (Gough-Yates, 2003:8). The feminist perspective thus called for more 'positive' images of women "in line with the ethos and ideas of the feminist movement" (Gough-Yates, 2003:8). At the time, in London, Rosie Boycott and Marsha Rowe founded *Spare Rib* magazine, a publication concerned with feminist politics. In this magazine, artists often employed parody in order to increase awareness about women's stereotypes as represented in the mainstream media. This magazine was an important attempt to change the culture of subordination in women's magazines (Crowley, 2003).

In the following years many magazines, such as *Lady's Home Journal* and *Cosmopolitan*, were concerned with the feminist movement. For example, *Lady's Home Journal* was the target of 'angry' women (who fought against their sexual representation in media), while "*Cosmopolitan* represented a departure from the traditional women's magazines with its emphasis on female sexuality and career alternatives" (Wood, 1983:89). The first woman editor of *Cosmopolitan*, Helen Gurley-Brown, reoriented



Figure 2.18 Cover of SA *Cosmopolitan* 1980;

the content of the American edition of the magazine from that of a housewives' text to that of a guide for younger, 'sexy' career women – the so-called 'Cosmo Girls', as seen in Figure 2.18, but the role of women as housewives was left uncovered in issues of the South African *Cosmopolitan*. The South African *Cosmopolitan* magazine was launched in 1984 for the first time by a former editor of *Fair Lady*, Jane Raphaely, while the Polish version was launched in 1995 by *Marquard Media*. What did appear from the start, however, was a strong emphasis on women's sexuality, which emphasises yet again the positioning of female representation in the sexual arena (Woodward, 2003). Gurley-Brown defended such objectification of women by arguing that "a Cosmo woman likes being a sex object as long as she is also the object of respect" (Gurley-Brown, in Kathleen *et al.*, 1995:54). Feminists have criticised *Cosmopolitan* for featuring a sexual profile and for promoting images that could erode women's self-esteem. In these terms, women's magazines neither did nor do simply innocently present information to their readers; they were and are promoting stereotypical feminine identities that, in a social context, undermine(d) women's values and roles in society (Hall, in Woodward, 2003). Popular magazines have, however, always been accused of representing stereotypical views of gender. Even the earliest magazines of the mid-19th century were subjected to criticism regarding their articles on domestic topics, fashion and beauty. The counter-argument to such

objectification is that these popular fashion and lifestyle titles, such as *Cosmopolitan*, have “simply provided what their readers demand, and that contributed to their success” (Crowley, 2003:116). For example, the South African and Polish editions of *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* have some of the highest circulation figures. For instance, the circulation figure for South African *Cosmopolitan* was 117 255 from July to December 2004, in comparison to that of 44 883 for *Femina*. The circulation figure for the Polish *Cosmopolitan* reached 87 250 from July 2004 to June 2005, securing a second place among glossy magazines in Poland, after *Twoj Styl* with 159 723, which had the highest circulation figure in that country (Marquard Media Polska, 2006).

2.2 The feminist defence of women’s role in society

In Western culture, women’s status and roles have depended on industrial developments, capitalism and the transformation of patriarchal relations (Andersen, 1983). According to Andersen (1983), the transformation in women’s roles occurring during the 1950s and 1960s which influenced the development of feminism, included changes in women’s workplace force participation. The household and the economy were the basic factors of production and women’s empowerment; therefore, at the beginning of the 20th century the role of the woman as housewife was not perceived as unfavourably as it is today in many Western countries (Golebiewska, 2003; Holtby, 1941; Wolf, 1990). It is evident that women’s role in society and their representation in the media is a contested domain, one that is in flux and one which is, consequently, being constantly defined and redefined (Hall, 1990).

Researchers, such as the feminist Frances Maule (in Wolf, 1990), argued that women as consumers are motivated by the price of a product rather than by its ostensible appeal deliberately created in advertisements, thus challenging the stereotypes notion. Therefore, in almost every epoch, traces of individual or collective women’s pronouncements in defence of

their rights or businesses can be found (Grow, 2002). Women asserted themselves under the influence of two factors: education and technological progress. The first factor aroused their ambitions, while the second allowed them the freedom of opportunity to earn a living independently from men and thus contributed to their material emancipation (Bator, 1998).

Though feminist ideas formed in different centuries and cultures, the organised feminist movement emerged comparatively recently. For the last 150 years in many countries, the development of feminist organisations contributing to essential changes in women's living conditions has been strongly visible (Dwojak, 2001). Slogans regarding the equality of the sexes and long-lasting campaigns conducted in the name of fighting for definite political and social rights became popular. However, many feminist studies showed that "women's status has not necessarily improved with time" (Kelly-Gadol in Andersen 1983:255; Golebiewska, 2003; Wolf, 1990). Although women's movements were characterised by unique features in almost every country, women everywhere fought for the improvement of their material position, the right to higher education and, ultimately, for their complete equality of rights with men, which included both passive and active electoral rights in relation to all legislative bodies (Dwojak, 2001). Internationally, the beginning of a conscious and organised feminist movement seems to have developed in relation to some great work of social or political reform.

2.2.1 The South African feminist movement

South African women come from a society marked by cultural diversity, which has impacted on the role of both white and black women in the society. Different cultural identities require different ways of being and ethnicity has often influenced the functioning of particular female roles (Lowe-Morna *et al.*, 2006). This was, and still is to an extent, evident in the types of roles fulfilled by women from African cultures, the hosts of European

immigrant cultures, the different cultures from Asia, and by the evolving mixture of such cultures. Earlier, the role of both black and white women was subordinate to that of men. Similarly to the fulfilment of roles by American and Polish women, South African women fulfilled the traditional role of housewives, with their primary task being to keep the home fires burning and to look after their family (Lowe-Morna *et al.*, 2006).

Since the turn of the 20th century, women have been involved in various organisations, ranging from church to liberation groups and trade union movements, in which they have risen to positions of importance in South Africa (Rissik, 1993). Under the apartheid system people were categorised as ‘Whites’, ‘Blacks’, ‘Coloureds’ and ‘Asians’, which consequently contributed to the separate development of each group and to the impoverishment of most women (Rissik, 1993).

2.2.1.1 A brief history of the South African women’s movement

During the 1920s, women began to form various organisations, mainly in the laundry, clothing or baking industries (Anon, 2004b). At the beginning of the 20th century, women actively began to campaign for the right to vote. In 1930, only white South African women were granted the right to vote, which strengthened their position in society.

In the following years, the invention of many different types of electrical appliances lightened women’s burden in the kitchen. In addition, the growing display of idealised female images portrayed using electrical appliances did not resemble the realities of all South African women’s social experiences, due to the fact that black women tended to perform housework for white women (Peiss, 1998). During January 1934, the *Magic of Modern Kitchens* was in fashion. “All the hard work of preparing food is now done by electricity, and only the

pleasure of cooking remains. It has brought freedom from aching backs, tired arms and *kitchen nerves*” (*Sunday Times*, 5 March 2006:53).

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, industrialisation increased the demand for labour and women became increasingly urbanised to fill this need. A number of white and coloured women worked in unskilled jobs in factories, while leaving the domestic work to black women. In the 1930s, the majority of white and coloured women went on strike against low wages and poor working conditions. In April 1936 the *Sunday Times* (5 March 2006:53) reported that, “employers of secretaries and typists want nothing to do with girls who paint their nails. This was a general opinion offered to a *Sunday Times* reporter who visited several Johannesburg offices.” During the following January, social change was evident in the *Sunday Times* (5 March 2006:53) advertisement entitled *Women learn to smoke pipes* (see Figure 2.19): “Feminine pipes and cigars have arrived in Johannesburg. The *Sunday Times* was told that about 35 percent of smokers in Johannesburg are women”. In August 1939, *Home Laundry Made Easy* (*Sunday Times*, 5 March 2006:53) promoted the use of electric appliances: “Electricity has come to solve all the problems that arise from domestic laundry” (see Figure 2.20.), and 1945 saw the year of the dawning of *Under-Arm Charm* (*Sunday Times*, 5 March 2006:53) Advertisements for Mum deodorant promised to “*take the odour out of perspiration*” (see Figure 2.21).



Figure 2.19 Women learn to smoke pipes, 1937; advertisement in *Sunday Times*, 5th March 2006:53



Figure 2.20 Home Laundry Made Easy, 1939 ; advertisement in *Sunday Times*, 5th March 2006:53



Figure 2.21 Under-Arm Charm, 1945 advertisement in *Sunday Times*, 5th March 2006:53

As can be observed in the above-mentioned illustrations, South Africa advertising also announced and accompanied women's 'advances'.

The racial discrimination resulting from the imposition of apartheid laws worsened, leading to the politicisation of especially black women's roles. By means of the pass laws, the government sought to regulate the flow of black South Africans into the so-called 'white' areas. Black South Africans were not permitted into such areas without a pass (their identity document), unless they worked there continuously. Therefore, in the 1950s, both white and black women united to organise a massive anti-pass movement, which achieved its primary goal only after a further seven years, when the government lifted the ban.

Huisgenoot, a family magazine founded in 1916 in Cape Town within an educated Afrikaner culture focusing on women as its main consumers, became the "biggest magazine in the country" during the 1950s (Weideman in Van Eden & Du Preez, 2005:114). The magazine was marked by a rise in advertising and a mass culture, similar to that characterising the American version (Van Eden & Du Preez, 2005). Though *Huisgenoot* was connected to an Afrikaner cultural identity, it also reflected the influence of global trends in its visual portrayal of women (Van Eden & Du Preez, 2005). During the 1950s, white South African housewives acted as unpaid labourers and mothers, despite seeing themselves reflected in advertisements as skilled, beautiful experts living a modern life infused with technology (*Sunday Times*, 5 March 2006:53). In another South African publication of the 1950s, but this time focussing on a black relationship, the African *Drum* magazine's advertisements were dominated by beauty features and articles in which gender was depicted in Western terms. In addition, among essays on business, jazz, and beauty were commonplace advertisements for skin-lightening creams and hair-straightening treatments (Driver in Newell, 2002).

In 1954 the Federation of South African Women (FSAW) established a non-racial body to unite women and fight for their rights. Thereafter, on 9 August 1956, about 20 000 women of all races marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against the Urban Areas Act of 1950, even though demonstrations by black South Africans were then illegal. This act was meant to extend pass regulations by enforcing the carrying of a reference book, which would enable the authorities to “tighten up control of movement of African women into towns, registration of their service contracts, and a compulsory medical examination for all African women town-dwellers” (Walker in Anon, 2004c:129). The promulgation of such an act led to a situation in which “South African women, as a marginalised group, fought for their emancipation within the political and social areas” (Anon., 2004c).

In the 1960s, Lucy Mvubelo and Sarah Chitja started the African Union of Clothing Workers. By the late 1960s, women formed a major part of the textile and shoe industry, performing what was seen as “women’s work” (Rissik, 1993). According to Van Eden and Du Preez (2005), especially after the 1970s, gender was constructed in accordance with Western notions of femininity and masculinity in magazines such as the *Huisgenoot*, without specific reference to the Afrikaner culture. During that time, in 1971, the first military training college for white women, the Civil Defence Army Women’s College, was opened in George (Van Eden & Du Preez, 2005). The opening of the College increased the number of white women actively being recruited into the permanent force from 1974 onwards, which, according to Schmahmann (in Van Eden & Du Preez, 2005) “was a mechanism for releasing more males for combat duty”. In the 1970s and 1980s, the role of professional women became an important factor in the South African economy. The feminist movement, however, did not really take off in South Africa, with the majority of culturally diverse female activists striving

more towards the ending of the apartheid system, which occurred in 1990 (Cock, in Van Eden & Du Preez, 2005).

In 1994, after many years of active engagement in political struggle, the vast majority of the country's inhabitants gained their freedom through the first democratic election held in South Africa. Magazines are said to have played a role in consolidating the common South African identity welded into being at this time. According to Weideman (in Van Eden & Du Preez, 2005:108), "*Huisgenoot* contributed to the development of democracy in South Africa by breaking down cultural and racial prejudices and creating a South African identity". Since the current legal system remains based on a Western framework, however, many black South Africans feel that they are still being discriminated against both economically and racially. In largely black communities many women (and men) find it difficult to cope with Western cultural changes in women's roles, as many of the women in such communities are working class, mainly being employed in unskilled jobs on farms, in factories or as domestic workers for white people and middle-class black families. Today, however, through various charity organisations and others, many women have the opportunity to improve their situation (Van Eden & Du Preez, 2005).

2.2.2 Feminist movements in Poland

At the beginning of the 20th century, the lives of Polish women were limited by the social and political norms of the time. The role of women was restricted to that of housewife, who was responsible for fulfilling catechistic and charitable duties. However, professional working women outside the home were often paid relatively little (Platek, 2002).

In Poland the feminist movement developed under specific conditions, resulting from the loss of independence in 1831, at which time Russia abolished the Congress Kingdom of Poland

and revoked the Polish lands in order to form the Western Region of the Russian Empire (Anon, 2007). While, in the West, prominent individuals were fighting for women's rights, in Poland all efforts were directed towards maintaining a national identity (Dwojak, 2001). The extensive participation of Polish women in liberation fights and secret organisations, particularly after 1831, served to reinforce their prominent position in society. In 1838, the first women's periodical *Pierwiosnek* (Primrose) was published (Anon, 2003a). In 1870 the onset of a period marked by economic development encouraged women to earn a living outside the home, leading to many going into teaching and the manufacture of hand-made objects.

In the 1880s, Scientific Libraries for Women were formed as the first centres of self-education for women. From the last decade of the 19th century up until World War I, women fought for the right to gain admission to university, which they first received in 1894 (Anon, 2003a). Such admission led to the liberalisation of the law in 1907, which further contributed to an improvement in the legal status of women in terms of the formation of the Association of Equality, which confirmed the rights of Polish women. At the time, advertising fulfilled an informative role, stating only the name of the brand and its price. In 1907 in Krakow, the first Polish advertising textbook was published, while, in 1918, women won the right to vote (Dwojak, 2001). In 1921, the newly promulgated constitution assured women of their equal rights, by guaranteeing all women an active right to vote and equal access to public office (Anon, 2003a).

During the years 1939 to 1945 World War II played out. In 1945, the Women's League, which changed its name in 1981 to the Polish Women's League, was created as a mass organisation responsible for fighting for women's rights under communist control

(Dwojak, 2001). In 1947, 7 460 students, half of whom were women, began their studies at Warsaw University.

In the 1970s, due to the communist regime and internal economic difficulties, all retailers were poorly stocked. Advertisers could therefore not tempt people with their advertising and so they were reduced to making limited low-quality informative product announcements.

During the 1980s, an informal feminist group (which later became known as the Polish Feminist Association) came into being. At the end of the communist period in 1989, the Polish Feminist Association began working formally. In the same year, the pressure exerted on women by government policy was reflected in the passing of certain legislation, such as the anti-abortion law, which restricted the financing of hormonal contraceptives (Anon, 2003a).

In the 1990s, the first professional Western style advertisement appeared, together with the entry of international concerns and firms into the Polish consumer market. After forty years of communism, a return to the promotion of the traditional roles of women could be observed in advertising. Stereotypically, advertising served to define and revive the ideal of 'Mother Pole', who was cast in the role of a patient woman who was prepared to sacrifice herself to her home duties and family. Women appeared in professional positions in only 7% of all advertisements, while the rest focused on upholding the portrayal of the 'traditional woman', fulfilling the role of mother and wife (Porczek, 2004).

In 1992 Hanna Suchocka became the first woman Prime Minister in Polish history. In the same year, the Federation of Active Professional Women came into being.

In 2000, during a session of the UN in New York, which was dedicated to improving women's situation worldwide, Mr Jerzy Kropiwnicki, representing Poland, claimed that discrimination against women was nonexistent in his country. However, the UN reports of the time testified to the fact that women's rights were not at that stage equal to those of men in Poland. On 8 March, Women's Day, of the same year the first demonstration was organised by an informal group known as the Women's Agreement, which demonstrations have been held annually ever since, with the aim of focusing attention on existing practices, such as the anti-abortion law, that discriminate against women in Poland while asserting the rights of women to equal reward in the workplace (Anon, 2003a).

As discussed previously, women have always actively fought for their rights – the sociopolitical role of women in Polish and South African history has been significant, as they have not only been mothers and wives confined to the kitchen and household, but also the guardians of traditions and national identity. Poland and South Africa have both suffered from an uneasy past, making the transition to democracy difficult. Despite a move to democracy in both countries, historical inequalities in social conditions still exist. As Hall (1990:17) argues: “a recurring pattern in most societies is the continued subordination of women to male power and authority”. As a result, women are still strongly influenced by the traditional value systems of all societies, which serve to define their roles. In addition, Hall (1990:29) states that “social institutions such as the mass media, family, religion, and the economy reinforce the subordinate position of women and traditional values (that are based on the hierarchical ordering of authority and institutions in society)”. The range of women's experiences is varied and diverse. However, Lips (1999:19) asserts that “what women have in common is the barriers they face”.

Currently, half a century after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and despite all internationally approved standards, millions of women worldwide still suffer from the effects of discrimination (Gallagher, 2001). Over the years, women's rights have been neglected by both the international community as a whole and by separate national governments, with women's issues being perceived as part of a special interest agenda and therefore subject to marginalisation (Lowe-Morna, 2001). In addition, with their only being allowed limited participation in political decision making, women worldwide have not been treated as equal to men in legislation governing women's empowerment (Jandt, 1998). According to Hall (1990:2), "the main generalization and assumption is that historically and culturally women have been socialized to fill subordinate and restricted roles". As Lips (1999) indicates, in Saudi Arabia women are still not permitted to drive cars, while, in Japan, married women may not legally keep their birth names. In contrast, some North American studies argue that "women should not push themselves where they are not wanted" (Tougas *et al.* in Lips, 1999:17). In some of the above-mentioned cases, gender stereotyping is not the sole problem, as much revolves around the way in which women are treated and their roles restricted.

2.3 The contemporary representation of women in the mass media

Cross-culturally, women have had to fight against idealisation of their traditional roles. Worldwide, women are commonly stereotypically represented in the mass media, with their status differing substantially from that of men. According to Andersen (1983:125), studies have indicated that, in many societies, the social welfare systems and reproductive policies have mostly been controlled by men. Women's 'isolation' within their own households has increased their economic dependency on men (Tilly & Scott in Andersen, 1983; Marchand, 2001).

Such a state of affairs has also contributed to the limited participation in, and control of, the media by women, as the patriarchal structure existing in many societies has helped to ensure the continued subordination of women. Dwojak argues that the patriarchal attitudes upheld both by governments and the media are continuing to manifest in their continuance as *predominantly male institutions that tend to view women as an undifferentiated “mass of low status” in society (Dwojak, 2001)*. For example, in the *Cape Times* of 5 April 2006, an article entitled “Kiss your ass hello – donkeys are better than wives”, states that a school textbook used in the Indian state of Rajasthan compares housewives to donkeys, suggesting that the latter make better companions because they complain less. On the same day, Tim Modise on Cape Talk radio stated that such information had appeared in the Indian press on 1 April, and had probably been meant to be humorous. The adoption of such a response to the colloquial anecdote, (it was a joke) rather than the anecdote itself, illustrates the lack of status that women have to endure in many different societies. In addition, the literature reviewed for this thesis indicates that gender-based discrimination results in sexual harassment, stereotyped attitudes, and traditional gender hierarchies that limit women’s opportunities in society (Gallagher, 2001; Lips, 1999).

2.3.1 The impact of stereotypes in advertising on the determination of women’s role in society

Policies aimed at eradicating sexist and stereotypical representation of women in the media remain problematic (Golebiewska, 2003). Both in South Africa and Poland, current policies are framed around issues of morality rather than around recognising the sexual harassment of women to be a violation of human rights. Governments in general take little responsibility for the regulation of media industries with regard to gender stereotyping (Lowe-Morna, 2001), as was discussed on page three with Ms Sroda’s complaint to the National Council of Radiophone and Television. Van Zoonen (in Strinati, 1995:181) argues that the

media represent women in various stereotypical ways, because male media producers, who are influenced by such stereotyping, are also responsible for such depiction, as was discussed on page three with Jane Talcott's response to what constitutes healthy representation.

In contrast, Janus (in Beahr & Gray, 1996), in her research into sex-roles in the mass media, accuses certain studies that have been conducted in the past into women's representation, of conforming to a liberal feminist perspective which holds that the most important social division is that which exists between men and women, and which plays out in male versus female categories. The feminist scholar Dorothy Smith (in Vagnoni, 2005) argues that gender inequality conveyed via the media might result from the fact that males have different experiences and perceptions to those of women, and, even more markedly, that women may hold particular stereotypical beliefs about male perceptions of them. Such thinking indicates that a susceptibility to media influence might be determined by gender differences.

2.3.2 The role of stereotypes in advertising

Advertising specialists maintain that the easiest way to gain customers is to refer to the social stereotypes that determine hierarchy and order and which are reflected in everyday behaviours, such as the division of household chores and the various rituals of social life (Michel & Taylor, 1989). Therefore, women in advertisements are represented in two-thirds of cases as doing household duties, while the remaining third portrays them as sexual objects. Twardowska and Olczyk claim that women are featured in advertisements three times more than are men and the former are almost always shown as fulfilling stereotyped roles (Twardowska & Olczyk, 2001). In practice, however, it is understandable why advertisers do not seek to convey complex and realistic detail rather than stereotypes, since the latter is easily recognisable and comprehensible to the recipients of such messages. Stereotypes serve

to trigger simple emotional and cognitive associations in their recipients, so that advertisements typically portray housewives promoting everyday products and models promoting cosmetics. As a result, “advertising does not necessarily create these stereotypes, but is only inspired by them to sell products successfully” (Mizelińska in Twardowska & Olczyk, 2001:3). It seems, then, that advertising not only reinforces the pre-existing, culturally imprinted stereotypes but, in some cases, serves to create new ones.

According to Mayne (2000), advertising uses a “mirror of stereotypes” to reflect wives, mothers or housewives, happily adhering to expert advice and successfully testing products, or female neighbourhood friends sharing a method of achieving success by means of attaining a whiter wash or a cleaner floor. The mundane women portrayed in this way are never shown to comment on world affairs or to influence their children’s intellectual development. Their role has, therefore, been reduced to that of feeding and supplying the family with clean clothes. In contrast, they are also represented as aesthetic and sexualised objects, capable of stimulating sexual desire by their beauty, which is shown as frequently having been achieved by means of using the advertised product. Bator (1998:43) argues that the only alternative solution for traditional women (cast in the roles of wife, lover and mother) is the emancipated and liberated woman who exclusively lives a life of “unembarrassed consumption”. For example, Polish women participating in the *Demoskop* advertising survey, when asked which advertisements they found most annoying, indicated commercials advertising laundry detergents, margarine, and sanitary napkins, namely those that featured women in their traditional roles (Twardowska & Olczyk, 2001).

Despite such annoyance, another study conducted by *Demoskop* (Twardowska & Olczyk, 2001) showed that both women *and* men believed that women were the most suitable to use in advertisements for laundry detergents, shampoos, and soups, while men were

considered fit for advertising beer, computers, and cars. It seems that the results of such surveys are culturally conditioned, and that they stem from cultural and social stereotypes of both women and men, pointing to the “historical and contemporary subordination of women as a result of women’s and men’s acceptance of the values of male supremacy and male authority” (Hall, 1990:31). Mizielinska argues that “advertising initiates stereotypes of men and women at a very young age” (Mizielinska in Twardowska & Olczyk, 2001:3). In addition, Hall argues that most women are unaware of the extent of their participation in generational repetition. For example, “traditional values are passed from generation to generation as women transmit restrictive values to their daughters” (Hall, 1990:29). In contrast, Jaggar and Struhl argue that psychological differences constitute gender roles and are determined biologically; therefore, women’s roles and status in society is both natural and unchangeable (Jaggar & Struhl in Andersen, 1983; Creedon, 2002).

2.3.3 The consumer society

Controversies are not aroused only by the fact that the mass media and advertising present simplified reality, but also by the fact that advertising and the mass media reduce one’s life to one of consumption. At present, the consumerist culture is marked by the existence of two basic contradictions regarding the discourse of food. The contradiction “eat – do not eat” has become entrenched in many individuals who suffer from bulimia. Such a condition simultaneously expresses a thirst for unrestricted consumption through the uncontrolled absorption of food and a thirst for control over the body and action through the use of vomiting and other purgative means (Bordo, 1993). The same contradiction is evident in women’s magazines which, on the one hand, advise how to get and keep the perfect figure, while, on the other, promote restaurants, bars and culinary recipes, which represent food as one of the leading and more lasting pleasures in life.

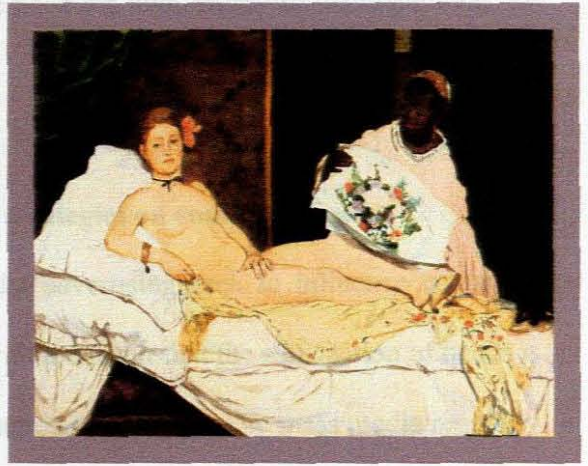
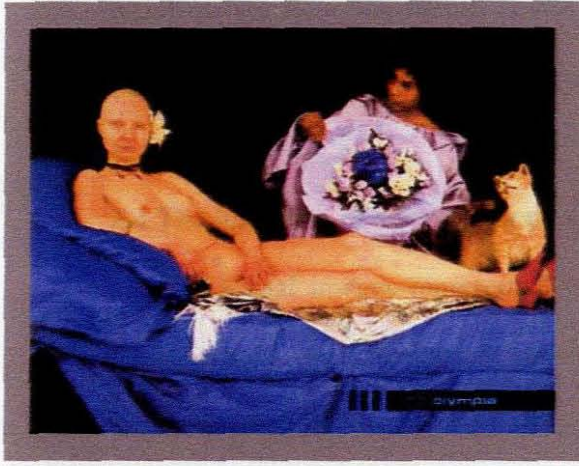


Figure 2.22 Picture of K. Kozyra –
“Olympia” Source: Anon, 2004d

Figure 2.22a Edouard Manet’s painting
“Olympia” Source: Anon, 2004d

Ironically, it can be said that in the world of advertising people do not seem to live beyond the age of thirty, and even cosmetics for mature women are advertised by young girls. For example, the Polish artist Katarzyna Kozyra, in her artwork entitled “I am Olympia”, presents the exclusion of ill and old bodies from visible discourse. In her reference to Edouard Manet’s painting “Olympia” (see Figure 2.22), she features three photos, one of which was taken in a hospital ward of the artist with a shaven head reclining in the pose of Manet’s prostitute (see Figure 2.22a). Kozyra seeks to arouse anxiety in the viewer of her work by associating her disturbing, unconventional montage with the aforementioned painting. Through her artworks, Kozyra contravenes the cultural taboos surrounding the physical nature of humans, highlighting existing stereotypes and social behaviour.

Conventional advertising aims to convince the reader that without much effort one can both eat a great deal and yet remain thin, young and healthy. In reality, however, the high rate of extreme bulimia and anorexia in society bear testimony to the fact that issues relating to thinness, health and food are, indeed, problematic for many women. The model of reality that is largely represented in advertising in women’s periodicals reflects the material world,

which strives to satisfy human needs, such as the need for love, safety or understanding, by means of the use of such products.

2.4 The influence of advertising and marketing strategies on consumer needs

Visual images represented in mass media advertising seek to influence consumer lifestyle, behaviour and needs (Dolinski, 2003), with the result that the satisfaction of needs is particularly fruitful ground from which to reap marketable content. The mass media regularly seek to satisfy new artificially-produced needs by means of ready-made and easily accessible desires, such as the need for acceptance.

In a consumer society marked by the availability of a vast array of goods, advertising in women's magazines creates even more needs. Creating a specific need among the members of a specific target group becomes the method whereby a company can reach its objective, that of selling more consumer products. Thus, the commercial and mass media stimulate not only the need to possess certain things, but also the desire to maintain a particular lifestyle.

*In a patriarchal society, women face a two-fold attack. Firstly, advertisements target women's feelings; secondly, they appeal to women's traditional roles, indicating that only a clean kitchen floor and an ever-constant smile will enable them to fulfil their socially accepted roles as mother and housewife (Bator, 1998). As a result, feminine magazine advertising seldom fulfils a mainly informative function that merely reflects the attributes of a product. Instead, advertising magnates realise that announcements are able to arouse one's interest only when they appeal to the way in which their audience wish to lead their lives. In this regard, advertising *and* the content of women's magazines appeal to recipients' experiences, needs or expectations.*

With needs being artificially created by advertising (Falkowski & Tyszka, 2003), not only does the consumer come to buy unnecessary products, but also comes to be 'taught' to seek to satisfy both mental and social needs by means of the acquisition of concrete goods and services, such as satisfying the need to be beautiful by acquiring the latest cosmetics. Such *conceptualisation of need can strengthen the awareness of the need for self-realisation or of the need to increase one's own self-value, as it stimulates the need to create a specific image* (Falkowski & Tyszka, 2003). Therefore, it can be argued that consuming advertised products and services is a means of satisfying various needs.

It is not surprising then that marketing and advertising takes into account various needs theories, including the ERG theory developed by Aldelfer in 1972, which is based on three levels of need, namely existence, relatedness and growth. However, Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of human needs is more frequently used to classify consumer needs (Aamodt, 2004; Falkowski & Tyszka, 2003), ranging from the most determined and basic ones, to the higher-order needs that amount to the realisation of values (Aamodt, 2004). Maslow's hierarchy of needs distinguishes the following five needs:

- 1) The basic physiological needs for water, food, and oxygen. Product marketing strategies promote such a need by stimulating the desire to consume healthy food, for example.
- 2) The need for safety, amounting to the avoidance of life- or health-threatening stimuli. This need is exploited in diet, medicine or insurance advertising.
- 3) The need for socialisation, including membership of a group and acceptance by it. For example, in advertising scripts this need is exploited by encouraging purchase of the advertised product in order to promote interest or to encourage identification with other members of a group who use the particular product.
- 4) The need for respect and acknowledgement, which is expressed through striving for positive self-esteem. Marketing and advertising often refer to the group of mentioned needs,

particularly in the case of products which imbue the consumer with special validity. For example, the cosmetics firm *L'Oreal* uses the advertising slogan “because you’re worth it – *L'Oreal*”. Such an insignia seeks to convey the idea that the possession of a given product brings the acknowledgement and sense of distinction that women deserve (Falkowski & Tyszka, 2003).

5) The need for self-realisation or high self-esteem. In advertising such a need is often exploited by the promotion of cars or chocolates by means of the possibility of winning or taking part in thrilling sport contests, adventures or exciting safaris.

The consumer market consists of many different kinds of consumers and products. For example, not every consumer reacts to marketing in the same way and seeks the same products or services, leading to the magazine industry and advertising agencies heavily depending on syndicated research for much of their valuable statistical data. For this reason, in order to seek to satisfy various consumers’ needs, the market is divided into relatively homogeneous parts or segments (Falkowski & Tyszka, 2003).

2.5 Segmentation: the reference group of a consumerist market

As Falkowski and Tyszka (2003) explain, market segmentation seeks to classify consumers into groups characterised by certain defined needs, values, lifestyles and different behaviours. For example, the Target Group Index (TGI), by using a variety of research techniques such as personal interviews and self-completed questionnaires, “provides information to marketers about consumption attitudes and purchasing decisions in relation to a diverse range of media forms” (McDonald & King, in Gough-Yates, 2003:63). Segmentation is thus carried out on the basis of place of residence, age, gender, culture, or demographic and psychographics factors. A particular market segment is composed of

consumers who react in more or less the same way to a given collection of marketing stimuli, but differently from consumers belonging to another segment (Falkowski & Tyszka, 2003).

Many different divisions of consumers exist; however, most often the following distinctions are made:

1) A distinction made on the basis of the personal profiles of consumers, the basis of which distinction is a classification based on certain demographic and psychographic factors. Consumers are classified, in terms of this distinction, with regard to their gender, age, civil state, profession and place of residence.

2) A distinction made on the basis of profit-seeking by consumers. Different advertisements create various ways of perceiving the same product. Therefore, such classification is based on the appearance of settled profits from a given product aimed at a variety of users. Falkowski and Tyszka (2003) indicate that as a marketing strategy, this classification is based on three distinct assumptions:

- Consumers prefer various profits to be contained in a certain product.
- Such preferences are the result of a consumer's personal features.
- Consumers react to products according to their own preferences.

3) A distinction made on the basis of consumer behaviour. In marketing strategy, this type of classification is directed at targeting the habits and behaviours of consumers of a particular segment group (Falkowski & Tyszka, 2003).

Market research indicates that psychographics segmentation has an important function: that of market division based on the personal features of consumers, resulting from the fact that the preference for a particular brand depends on such features as are closely

related to the individuality of a defined group of consumers. In this case, the principle of similarity is seen as desirable, based on the desire to relate the source of the message with its receiver (Marks, in Falkowski & Tyszka, 2003:98). In this sense, it can be said, as Falkowski and Tyszka (2003) indicate, that the image of a brand reflects its personality, which, in turn, relates to a definite group of recipients. For instance, an investigation conducted by McEnally and Chernatow (in Falkowski & Tyszka, 2003:100) distinguished five principal dimensions of brand personality, according to which each dimension relates to one or two personality features of consumers, such as honesty to openness and naivety, excitement to bravery, youthfulness and modernity, competence to talent and influence, sophistication to pretentiousness and affluence, and brusqueness to athleticism and uncontrollability.

Rather than relating to personal features of consumers, the above-mentioned dimensions relate to the personality of a given brand, defining, in prescribed terms, how consumers perceive a brand. The phenomenon of personification occurs when inanimate objects are attributed human characteristics (Falkowski & Tyszka, 2003:100). Similarly, another popular method of market segmentation is a comparison between the image of a brand and that of consumers. Such a method is applied on the basis of a so-called ACL (Adjective Check List) test, which numerically defines how closely brand and consumer image are linked (Falkowski & Tyszka, 2003).

Such personal characteristics of brands can help to determine which marketing strategies should be employed, based on psychographic segmentation, as well as how to strengthen the sense of 'personality' attached to a specific brand in magazine or advertising content. Consumers with similar personality traits will then tend to be drawn to the specifically targeted advertisements. The next section of this chapter shows how (according to the above-mentioned features of segmentation), *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* define their target

group. The magazines' profiles of their target group have been obtained from the publishing corporation Associated Magazines in South Africa and from Marquard Media in Poland. The profiles of both corporations are briefly outlined in the next section.

2.5.1 Segmentation of *Elle* consumers in South Africa and Poland

Elle magazine defines its consumers as young, sophisticated women who know what they want. Across the world, 21 million women read *Elle* magazine every month. Results profiling Polish and South African magazine readers suggest that the *Elle* reader is an active and independent woman who values her own development and professionalism. She tends to be optimistic and confident in handling challenges. Her personal image is an integral part of her identity. Moreover, she is satisfied with, and proud of, her femininity, and receptive to her environs. The *New York Times* described *Elle's* entry to the market "as a challenge to *Vogue's* domination (...), through its stylish European sensibility and its clear appeal to young women who had come to think of *Vogue* as a magazine for their mothers" (Lueck & Endres, 1995:76). *Elle* readers are often likened to those of the most popular and sophisticated fashion magazines, namely *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*.

2.5.2 Segmentation of *Cosmopolitan* consumers in South Africa and Poland

Results profiling *Cosmopolitan* readers suggest that 79% of *Cosmopolitan* readers do not read *Elle*. As represented in Figure 2.23, 60% of Cosmo readers want to be on the cutting edge of fashion; 47% spend a great deal on cosmetics; 49% enjoy being provocative and

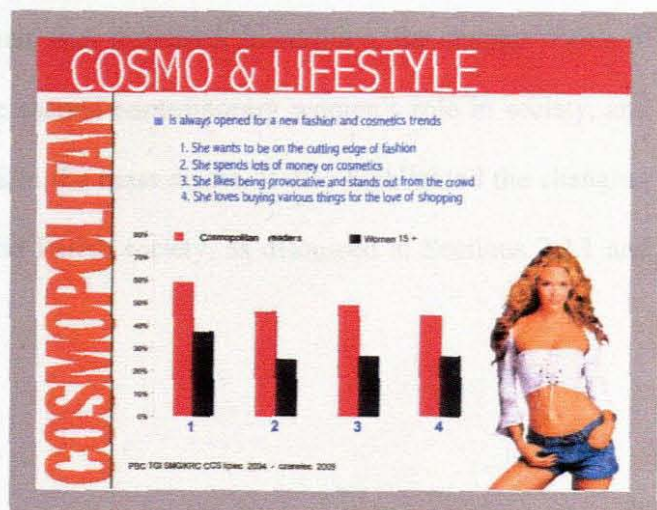


Figure 2.23 Picture from the *Cosmopolitan's* profile; Source: Marquard Media Poland, 2006

standing out from the crowd; and 45% love buying things out of the sheer love of shopping (Anon, 2006). The *Cosmopolitan* reader tends to exhibit a keen interest in fashion and beauty, and knows how to enjoy her life. She draws on life's positive experiences and is not afraid of the future. Moreover, she enjoys experiencing new things with her partner, while competently handling the challenges of everyday life. She is a young woman who values independence and equality. A total of 80% of *Cosmopolitan* readers are financially independent and younger than 34, purchasing goods cosmetics, clothing and shoes, periodicals and books for themselves, and paying their own way in clubs and pubs (Anon. 2006).

The profiles of Polish and South African *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazine readers do not vary in terms of the respective countries' consumer preferences, due to the fact that ideals of beauty, fashion, youth and motherhood are perceived as universal characteristics of the female consumer (Moriarty & Duncan, in Dallmann, 2001). In reality, such profiling means that advertising and marketing strategies underline these products' features in such a way as to relate to the values of a given consumer group. Therefore, in all consumer segments, consumer interests, including their preferred values and cultural differences, are taken into account, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

2.6 Summary

In Chapter 2, the historical development of advertising in the print media, more specifically in magazines aimed at women, was discussed. In addition, the chapter reviewed the particular historical factors that have shaped contemporary women's role in society, and the various representations of these roles in the mass media. It also highlighted the changing role of women in both South African and Polish society, as discussed in Sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2.

Historical data was analysed in order to increase the objective understanding of the repeated patterns of women's subordinated representation in the mass media. The data showed that, although women have historically led busy and pressured lives, much of their activity has been channelled into fulfilling traditional stereotyped domestic roles (as seen in Section 2.3). The literature indicated that this was partly the result of the patriarchal structure of societies, according to which men continue to see women as subordinate beings. This was also the result of biologically and psychologically differences determined *and* social differences that exist between gender roles, rendering women's status in society, both natural and unchangeable (Jaggar & Struhl, in Andersen, 1983). The chapter concluded with a discussion of the stereotypical way in which women are portrayed in the contemporary mass media, in terms of the marketing strategy of segmentation, which is used to classify consumer needs. Chapter 3 examines the influence of cultural context on consumer behaviour.

CHAPTER 3: THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL AND GLOBAL FACTORS ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

The mass media and advertising surround us everywhere we go. For example, the busiest trading center in Poland – Gallery: A pretty blonde with a small handbag pops only two calories into her mouth – “Tick Tack”. Canal Walk- Cape Town: A pretty African girl smiles while shopping – “Without a sweat, Colgate”. Stellenbosch- Fitness Gym: A tanned woman in a Nike T-shirt struggles to lift heavy weights “just do it, Nike”. Bellville Mall: A woman in a cosmetics shop can’t make up her mind about which face-cream brand to choose. She approaches the L’Oreal brand, “because you are worth it” – says L’Oreal. Poland, Gallery Mokotow: I see a sophisticated woman with a Louis Vuitton bag and red and glossy lips “maybe she is born with it, maybe it’s Maybelline” – says Maybelline. What does this, clone attack mean? Then I realise that I know this clones from somewhere...

This chapter discusses the influence of cultural and global factors on consumer behaviour and advertising. It presents components in the structure of culture that are significant in view of regulating purchasing behaviour. The chapter further examines the relations between beliefs, symbolism, values, attitudes, perception, and consumer behaviour.

3.1 The impact of culture on consumer behaviour

Of the many factors influencing consumer behaviour, such as the target group, personality, occupation, social roles, convictions and attitudes, culture exerts the largest influence (De Fleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1982; Dolinski, 2003; Patrzalek, 2004; Woodward, 2003). The extent of such influence results from the fact that culture determines one’s attitude, values and motivations, which are shaped in the processes of globalisation and socialisation by means of reference groups and subcultures (Hall, 1990). Therefore, “culture influences every aspect of our lives, including the consumption of products and services” (De Mooij, 2001:54). According to De Mooij (2001:54), “what we consume, how, when, where, and even why we consume are all influenced by culture”.

The influence of cultural factors may seem obvious, as culture constitutes a sphere of values that motivate people to act and live their lives in certain ways (Patrzalek, 2004). Culture is such an inseparable part of every social system that an appreciation of cultural

context permits one to understand and define the surrounding reality (Andersen, 1983). Culture, which is a result of social interactions assimilated during socialisation, is also the result of the functioning of symbols, signs and values resulting from the development of society as a whole. While Patrzalek (2004:13) argues that “culture plays an important role in stimulating consumer behaviour”, similarly, consumer behaviour is formed on the basis of possessed values and norms according to definite patterns shaped in the process of social adaptation. Therefore, any cultural system is a collection of individual and collective identities, according to which, consumers create definite patterns of behaviour. “Although the culture of each country is distinctive in many ways, all cultures share some common characteristics” (De Mooij, 2001:46).

3.2 The structure of culture

Culture is structured according to both *cognitive* elements and *convictions*. While the former create and capture empirical knowledge about the social and physical world in terms of systems of science, technique, practical knowledge and social structures, convictions, such as religious belief or magic, do not lend themselves to empirical verification.

Together with *cognitive* elements, *convictions* create a system of knowledge comprising the following:

- *Signs*, consisting of symbols and signals of which the content fulfils a communicative role in different cultural systems. Such signs can be used in either a verbal or non-verbal context that is received by way of sensorial perception. For example, symbols and signals are used in creating advertisements, as they communicate in terms of their own ‘language’ of expression, which is core to visual images (Bonnici, 1999).

- *Values and norms: the basis of individual identity and collectivity.*

Values and norms are the most essential parts of culture, as they determine one's aims and define individual behaviour.

- *Behaviour: the result of an individual's reactions to his/her surroundings.* Personality features, including values and customs, determine our behaviour (Foxal & Goldsmith, 1998). Consumer behaviour partly conveys cultural content in various societies. For example, advertising which promotes certain goods creates meanings that are the result of a cultural system of reference. Not only does advertising design draw on a cultural system of reference, but it also forms beliefs and attitudes that impact on the behaviour of members of society in such a way as to encourage their adoption of new ways of behaviour (De Fleur & Dennis, 1994).

3.3 The influence of signs and symbols on consumer behaviour

Each cultural category constitutes a symbol – an artificial sign “purposely structured at great cost to advertisers and clients to elicit common meanings or associations among consumers” (De Fleur & Dennis, 1994:209). In advertising, applied symbols usually represent certain ideas, words, gestures, pictures, or logos. For example, the content associated with a given symbol may arouse distinct emotional reactions in consumers. In advertising, cultural symbols are often used when the producer wants to highlight the relationship between particular cultural features and the promoted product or service, as can be seen in the advertisements used in *Vodacom* campaigns in South Africa that employs cultural characteristics diverse society.

3.4 The influence of values on consumer behaviour

Consumerism has both a social and psychological character. According to Kluckhohn (in Patrzalek, 2004:17), “values are a part of culture and they are recognized by many

participants; therefore they can function as a component of culture". Society comprises a certain structure and a set of values that emphasise individualism, competition and hierarchy. Values, which are conveyed as the result of socialisation, are shaped into reference groups, such as those of family values, subcultural values and gender values (Patzalek, 2004). As far as gender values are concerned, Creedon (1993:364) argues that "the system of gender – of two distinct and hierarchically ordered groups of people is inseparably entwined". According to Hall (1990:6), "many people's values fall somewhere between the extremes of female and male ideal types. For example, whether women accept and internalize traditional female values or traditional male values, they are vulnerable to the indoctrination of patriarchal values, and are frequently being victimized as a consequence of this dominance". In fact, international studies into gender role portrayal support this notion, as women are associated with appeals to different value (Gilly & Lysnoski, in Dallmann, 2001:117). For instance, "women have a higher probability of being associated with youth and sex appeal, while men have a higher probability of being associated with independence appeal" (Dallmann, 2001:117).

Values, such as those of personal value, equality, justice, personal development, self-respect, social acknowledgement and self-realisation, help to determine every culture, while simultaneously defining human behaviour and helping to explain social trends (Hall, 1990). For example, the free market mechanism not only stimulates the need to possess consumer goods, but also continually intensifies it through promoting the so-called values of possession and success. As Reykowski (1997:22) states, "the market addresses egoistic motives of individuals", meaning that the market economy liberates mechanisms of possession and consumption, such as *hedonistic needs and greed*.

Contemporary marketing consists of an exchange of values. For example, advertising by means of the mass media has the capacity seemingly to transform values from the sphere of dream and desire into the sphere of reality. This happens when values become a commodity that can be purchased, just like any other material object (Szczesna, 2003). In a consumerist sense, advertisements deliver desirable values via the purchase and consumption of commodities (Mulvey, 1989). For example, in Adler's opinion, objects that are able to satisfy one's needs are regarded as values (Adler in Patrzalek, 2004). Lunberg however, argues that "objects are values which have a meaning for individuals" (Lunberg in Patrzalek, 2004:22). In this regard, values exert a major influence on personal behaviour and individual choice, consisting of "broad patterns of beliefs concerning what is generally desirable or undesirable" (De Fleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1982:139). Similarly, the mass media and advertising, in creating a system of values, have the capacity, by way of indirectly proposing certain lifestyle patterns, to modify behaviour and to define both desirable and undesirable cultural lifestyle patterns (De Fleur & Dennis, 1994). In consequence, through participation in symbolic and social interaction, individual behaviour is shaped by mass media institutions (De Fleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1982).

In consumer behaviour, reactions to marketing stimuli are varied. However, for every person, needs and values motivate action. In market behaviour, consumer choice usually becomes the function of values. Therefore, "marketing researchers have used values as a means of understanding consumer motivation" (De Mooij, 2001:136). In order to define consumer needs or values, Sheth, Newman and Gros (in Patrzalek, 2004) created a value-based model that is often used in marketing. In conformity with this model, consumers make choices based on a small range of values, including the following:

- *Functional value*, which is perceived in terms of the attributes of choice, such as durability, reliability and price and which value relates to the theory of rational choice.
- *Social value*, which is perceived as the result of consumer relationships emerging from membership of a particular social group, whether demographic, socio-economic, ethnic or reference.
- *Emotional value*, which is related to consumer feelings and emotional states. Such values help to determine the repetition or avoidance of analogous choices to those encountered in the above-mentioned states.
- *Cognitive values*, which allow for the arousal of states of curiosity, interest and new practical knowledge related to consumer choice.
- *Conditional value* is the result of the definite situation or circumstance in which the consumer is located (Sheth, Newman & Gross in Patrzalek, 2004).

Behaviours connected with consumer choice result from the influence of some or all of the values shown in Figure 3.1. The predominance of certain behaviours depends on the situation within which the consumer makes relevant choices, which results from the fact that a shaped system of values influences individual behaviour.

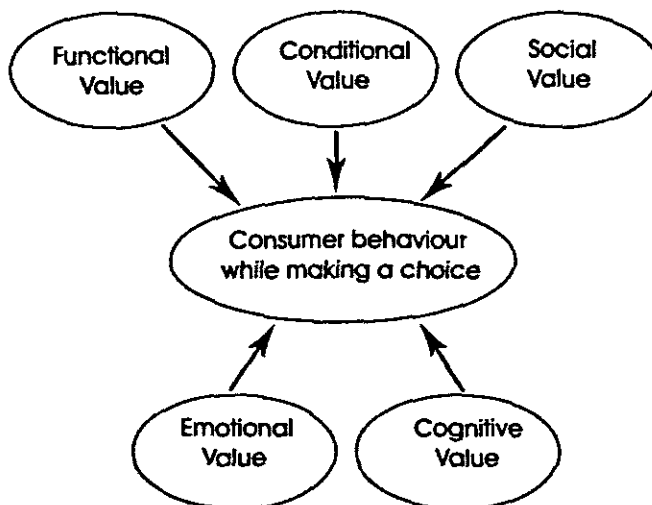


Figure 3.1 Five values influencing consumer choice
 Source: *Consumers' market behaviors*, Kiezel, in Patrzalek, 2004:20

3.5 The influence of attitudes on consumer behaviour

Research studies show that consumer behaviour is the result of the attitude adopted towards a defined object (Patzalek, 2004). According to Thurstone *et al.*, “the attitude is a definite emotional relation or a disposition of appearance which is expressed in positive, negative or neutral categories” (Thurstone, *et al.*, in Patrzalek, 2004:21). In other words, the act of purchasing is determined by the consumer’s attitude. The following five consumer types are distinguishable:

- *Innovators* are the consumers who act as leaders in possibly making risky purchase decisions
- *Early imitators* behave in much the same way as do innovators.
- The *early majority of imitators* are professionals who are socially active, and prone to comply with strong authoritative figures.
- The *late majority of imitators* are older people and those who are relatively uneducated.
- Another group of *late imitators* constitutes elderly people with a low social status and little property, who are extremely cautious in undertaking purchasing decisions (Patzalek, 2004).

3.6 The influence of subcultures on consumer behaviour

All cultures consist of many social subcultures, which unite to make up the culture (Hall, 1990). The *subcultures* are the patterns and norms that function in social groups, which form part of a broader community (Patzalek, 2004). Subculture is defined according to specific criteria, such as those relating to ethnicity, a specific profession or religion, or a certain demography.

Many subcultures go to make up the major market segments. Industries, in turn, adapt both products and marketing strategy to feed the needs of such subcultures. In more

developed economies, a higher percentage of subcultures become the market target group. Mechanisms and processes of socialisation, dominating within a given culture, determine the kind of behaviour that is connected with consumption which an individual realises in his or her life. National customs, such as those relating to region, profession or family, also impact on consumption patterns (Croizer, 1993).

Subcultures influence consumption and product choice (Croizer, 1993). The possession of certain product characteristics may, for a particular subculture, become a measure of identification of a particular lifestyle with which the individual wishes to identify himself or herself and to which he or she aspires. Therefore, the marketing system has to take into account the specifics of particular subcultures in order to create an effective advertising strategy. For example, *Cosmopolitan* and *Elle* features relate to the characteristics of the target group discussed in Sections 2.5.1 and 2.5.2. Thus, knowledge about a subculture's needs and preferences is important to the design of a sound marketing strategy (Patzalek, 2004).

3.7 The influence of identity on consumer behaviour

The mass media provide a wide-ranging source of cultural opinions and standards, as well as various models with which to identify (De Fleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1982; Besley in Steinberg *et al.*, 2005). The consumption patterns gleaned from the mass media can be reshaped and refashioned to suit individual needs and identity (Golebiewska, 2003). Woodward (2003:14) suggests that such reshaping is the result of "the process of identifying with others, either through lack of awareness of difference or separation, or as a result of perceived similarities". As Gordin and Lindlof (in Hamley, 2001:3) indicate, "with a simple turn of the newspaper or magazine page, we already have an enormous array of possible identity models at our disposal". For example, magazines and advertising campaigns, through using thin models, indirectly encourage women to be as thin as the models are. Overexposure

to persuasive and symbolic representation may simultaneously indoctrinate the consumer in different beliefs and attitudes about the self and to purchase through the products advertised that manifest desirable values.

Popular media and advertising campaigns tend to permeate language use, patterns of thinking, world views and everyday relationships with others (Messaris, 1996).

With the advent of new media, different types of consumer behaviour started to emerge, such as online purchasing patterns and participating in creating new goods adapted to individual expectations, often leading to the creation of one's own consumerist identity. Thus, in order to target consumers, identities are created both technically and culturally, allowing identity to be constructed both symbolically and socially. Consumption and the possession of goods, in this way, become key to creating one's own identity (Szczesna, 2003). Woodward (2003) indicates a link between the identity of a person and the things that a person uses. Identity enables one to ascertain who one is and how one relates to others and to the world (Woodward, 2003). "Identities are produced, consumed and regulated within culture – creating meaning through symbolic systems of representations about the identity positions which we might adopt" (Du Gay *et al.*, in Woodward, 2003:2). In other words, "the powerful actualization of unconscious wishes can occur in relation to people and images, whereby we attribute qualities to ourselves and transfer associations, making it possible to see ourselves in the image presented" (Woodward, 2003:15). Woodward (2003:14) furthermore states, "advertisements only *work* in selling us things if they appeal to consumers, and provide images with which they can identify themselves".

3.8 The influence of globalisation on identity and consumerism

The influence of the electronic media and the phenomenon of social globalisation can exert the pressure induced by a material culture on social life (Patzalek, 2004). Such pressure, in turn, may create uniform patterns of consumption and the anonymity of social relations that serves to alienate individuals, who may become reluctant to engage in direct social contact. Similarly, Robins argues that “the old structures of national states and communities have been broken up, and there is an increasing *transnationalization* of economic and cultural life” (Robin in Woodward, 2003:16). Thus, contemporary society is characterised by global consumerist trends.

The globalisation of consumerism is characterised by the *cultural convergence* of cultures and lifestyles around the world in those societies exposed to its impact (Robins in Woodward, 2003). Such societies suffer from “cultural homogeneity, promoted by global marketing, [which] could lead to the detachment of identity from the community and place” (Woodward, 2003:16). For example, on the one hand, new media, such as the internet and cellular telephony, create evolving possibilities of *individualising* consumerism through ready access to information, while, on the other hand, they contribute to the standardisation of tastes and preferences. Therefore, it is often thought that the effects of mass communication cause the loss of national identity and culture (De Mooij, 2001). As a result, diverse Westernised societies have become mass media societies, and marked by a “culture that relies on products” (Golebiewska, 2003:12). The inhabitants of Westernised countries access globally distributed cars, shoes, sunglasses, bags, and clothes that enable them to identify with a particular subculture or a personal brand constituted from foreign branded items, such as a Japanese car, French bags, American sunglasses, Italian shoes or clothes of Chinese origin. Thus, the popular mass media, in their exploitation of mass communication (which implies large and

diverse audiences), influence the entire social system, impacting on those who 'consume' media products (Meyer *et al.*, 1984).

As the literature indicates, the popular media, as a means of mass communication, have the capacity to form beliefs and attitudes that serve as behavioural guides for members of society (De Fleur & Dennis, 1994; Meyer *et al.*, 1984; Szczesna, 2003). For example, over time individuals may modify their beliefs and interpretations regarding issues advertised in the popular media. As Meyer *et al.* (1984) explain, people tend gradually to adopt the same outlook as that of the groups with which they identify. Therefore, as Hall (1990, in De Fleur & Dennis, 1994) argues, individual identity is influenced by collective identity. Such influence means that the popular media, in this case feminine magazines, are a powerful means of mass communication, which can easily suggest to women what to 'want'. Magazines have the capacity to create new wants and desires through proposing new patterns of lifestyle, preferences and behaviour. For instance, if someone identifies with a proposed pattern or portrayed behaviour, he or she chooses to imitate it, which is copied by others in turn (Meyer *et al.*, 1984). Such imitation might result from a sense of solidarity and reintegration with the target market of the magazine or advertisement (Szczesna, 2003).

Presently, we are dealing with both cultural systems separately, as they are determined by their distinct national and regional traditions. These systems influence consumer taste and preferences and in the light of universal patterns of consumerism, are in turn shaped by globalisation. Thus, in recent years, it can be noticed that the role of traditions and customs have become significantly blurred, to which the following factors have largely contributed:

- the increased pace of demographic and social change, due to, for example, the development of tourism and various forms of migration;
- the development of extra means of mass communication;

- the production and popularisation of standardised consumer goods.

The influence of cultural differences on consumer behaviour and attitude towards foreign products has become so strong that it posed a dilemma for marketing as regards global or intercultural marketing. The development of a global market is based on the assumption that consumer needs are similar in different parts of the world. Consumers in South Africa, for example, in order to feel part of a greater global community, may want to wear the same lines of clothing that they see advertised in European magazines. Such a phenomenon favours the globalisation of lifestyles and the development of global consumer features that are indistinguishable from one another (Woodward, 2003). In these sorts of situations, advertising companies often face the dilemma of whether to standardise or individualise (localise) advertising campaigns.

To understand similarities and differences in communication across cultures, it is necessary to examine the ways in which cultures differ. Despite the fact that cultures tend to differ across many dimensions, the dimension of individualism and collectivism influences whether advertising campaigns should be standardised or individualised. As the literature indicates, the differences between a collectivist (high-context) culture and an individualist (low-context) culture in respect of communication systems are very important in influencing which advertising and marketing strategies are adopted (De Mooij, 2001; Dolinski, 2003; Samovar & Porter, 2003). Therefore, these two cultural dimensions that impact on consumer behaviour, as well as on the resultant reception of advertising content, are discussed in the following section.

3.9 The impact of individualist and collectivist cultures on marketing strategies

The most frequent mistake made in international advertising campaigns is the lack of *sensibility regarding specific cultural values that predominate in particular societies* (Dolinski, 2003). In a previous study of global advertising campaigns, Bryce and Pollay (in Dolinski, 2003:96) found that, in order to make advertising work internationally, “it should appeal to the values of the recipients’ culture”. However, as Dolinski (2003:96) points out, “this assumption is so general that it says very little about the cultural determinants of efficiency and of advertising messages”. In reality, the investigation into the concrete aspects of the cultural aspects of advertising only began in the last decade of the previous century.

One of the characteristic factors which unambiguously differentiates particular cultures from one another is the so-called dimension of collectivism and individualism (Dolinski, 2003), which define the relations between an individual and his or her social group. Despite the fact that “all humans have both collectivist and individualist cognitions, they sample them with different probabilities depending on the situation. This indicates that some cultures are more individualist or collectivist than others (Samovar & Porter, 2003).

Collectivism is found in societies that constitute one relatively homogeneous non-cosmopolitan culture, with one normative system (Hofstede in Samovar & Porter, 2003). Strong collectivism is also found among the lower social classes of any society and among those who have not travelled widely (Gerganov *et al.*, in Samovar & Porter, 2003). In collectivist cultures, which are otherwise known as high-context cultures (HCCs), the individual may feel subordinated to the goals of his or her own group, whether a family or religious community. Members of these societies mutually depend on one another and often participate in activities within the safety of their own group. Collectivist cultures are highly integrated and tend to be hierarchically structured. They require from their members

adherence to established norms, roles and values, which have been passed on from generation to generation. In the majority of collectivist cultures, the most essential group is the family, which holds the most esteemed values to be safety, conformity, emotional dependence, group solidarity, and sharing (Hofstede in Callow & Schiffman, 2004). However, the degree of collectivism and individualism varies among cultures. For instance, France is both collectivist and individualist; Poland is more collectivist; whereas Russia, Mexico, North and South Korea, and the majority of Eastern European countries are examples of collectivist cultures. Collectivist cultures are characterised by close communities, “with extended rather than nuclear families, where responsibility is shared among everyone” (Crafford *et al.*, 2006:51). In the case of Poland, culture and society are more homogeneous, and therefore collectivist (Dolinski, 2003), which results from the fact that the Polish culture consists of an integrated and hierarchically ordered society with strong traditions and values passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, in the case of Poland, advertising messages regarding Polish traditions, cultural character, humour and morals are most likely to be effective (Dolinski, 2003). In contrast, South Africa consists of many culturally diverse groups and therefore is perceived to be a more individualistic society.

In individualistic societies, which are otherwise known as low-context cultures (LCCs), interpersonal relations are based on mutual independence. Individualistic people prefer to follow their own interests, rather than those of a group (Crafford *et al.*, 2006). In such societies, personal goals are of greater importance than are the goals of the group. Individualists value autonomy, variety, emotional independence, the search for personal pleasures, as well as the right to realise their own needs and to develop individual values (Reykowski in Dolinski, 2003; Triandis, 1994). Typical examples of individualistic cultures are the United States, South Africa and the majority of Western European societies. Triandis (in Samovar & Porter, 2003) indicates that individualism appears in societies which are both

complex and loosely organised, such as South Africa, whereas collectivism emerges in societies that are both simple and tightly organised, such as Poland. In addition, within each culture, different ethnic communities can display distinctive individualist and collectivist tendencies. South African culture consists of ethnic enclaves and communities that are relatively tightly organised. For example, African tribal cultures are based on collectivism, which is built on extended family relationships and is important to all individual family members. Lomax (in Samovar & Porter, 2003:245) found that “cultures’ song and dance styles are also related to its level of social cohesion and collectivism”. As a result, black South Africans generally show more cohesiveness in singing and the synchrony of their dance style than do Westerners, whose individualist dance style, such as rock, emphasises separateness, having evolved in individualistic countries, such as England and the USA.

Furthermore, in South Africa, both Afrikaans and English speakers perceive themselves both as individuals and as members of a larger community (Samovar & Porter, 2003). Thus, in Western cultures individuality is a primary value, whereas in African, Eastern and Muslim cultures it is of lesser importance (Sitaram & Cambel in Samovar & Porter, 2003). The emphasis on individualism and self-motivation is especially noticeable in the history of Western religion and industrialisation. By means of the spreading of Christian ideology and colonialism, Western individualism and capitalism have impacted on South African indigenous and collectivist roots. As a result, the society has become rigidly structured, with a person’s place being defined by gender, social class or race (Jandt, 1998), which have further influenced the relationships between diverse cultures. However, in many modern African societies, the global economic and information technologies “make it possible to become self-sufficient without depending on the family and larger community” (Samovar & Porter, 2003:83).

Although the dimension of collectivism and individualism differentiate cultures, in terms of the construction of femininity, no noticeable difference seems to exist across Polish and South African cultures. Indeed, across a number of different cultures (as seen in Sections 2.1.1 and 2.2.2), “women and their concerns were rarely treated with any seriousness, given that their portrayals were non-existent” (Creedon, 1993:63). As Andersen indicates, black South African women, who had to face inequities of both race and gender, were rarely able to keep to their own homes as mere housewives (Andersen, 1983). “Although they have carried the double burden of wage labour and housework, they did not have the privilege of *feminine weaknesses and wifely submissiveness* that is associated with white, middle-class housewives” (Davis in Andersen, 1983:83). However, the idealised domestic role of women fell in line with the transformation experienced in women’s labour cross-culturally. For example, South African *Drum* magazine (1951-59) reproduced both European and American constructions of gender as part of an ideology of domesticity (Driver, 1996 in Newell, 2002). As industrialism shaped the structure of a political system in terms of which white males strongly occupied a public sphere of business, “white women, and women and men of colour were excluded from the public sphere, with white women subordinated to men in their private sphere” (Creedon, 1993:67).

3.9.1 The influence of high- and low-context communication systems on the type of elements used in advertising strategies

Both high-context and low-context communication refers to the degree according to which cultural communication is either explicit or implicit (Hall in Samovar & Porter, 2003:304). Previous studies suggest that the differences between high- and low-context communication systems are very important to both advertising and marketing communication (Callow & Schiffman, 2004; De Mooij, 2001; Dolinski, 2003; Gudykunst & Tommey, 1988; Jandt, 1998). According to De Mooij (2001:132), “such differences may explain differences

in message content and execution in the advertisements of different cultures and helps one comprehend why certain advertising messages work in some cultures and not in others”.

In order to understand the meaning behind the visual images, “the audience must develop implicatures – defined as information that is implicitly communicated to the audience” (Callow & Schiffman, 2004). In this way, audiences use contextual information to create meaning from visual images (Hall, in Callow & Schiffman, 2004).

According to Hall’s contextual framework, an audience derives meaning from:

- explicit information that is embedded within advertisements (such as the text or the direct interpretation of the image);
- implicit information that is derived from situational factors (such as the product category, the brand, the type of magazine, the endorser-celebrity); and
- implicit information that is internalised within the person (such as in cultural and personal factors).

Hall’s model suggests that, by using internalised information, audiences from certain cultures are better equipped than those from others to create meaning from visual images (Hall, in Callow & Schiffman, 2004). Furthermore, Hall (in Callow & Schiffman, 2004:2) argues that “culture influences the type of communication style that is predominant within a society, since context relies on collective programming of the mind”. Therefore, “the contextual communication style, in turn, has an effect on the type of advertising elements that are used in advertising” (Hall, in Callow & Schiffman, 2004:2).

For instance, “in a high-context form of communication or message, most of the information is either part of the physical context or internalised into the person; very little is

made explicit as part of the message. In contrast, the information of a low-context message is carried in the explicit code of the message” (Hall in De Mooij, 2001:131). For example, advertisements of personal care products, which emphasise individuality, characterise individualistic (low-context) communication. In the case of Poland and South Africa, such an approach means that those from collective countries (in which HCCs prevail) do not need to explain to each other why they behave in a certain way, while people from individualistic countries (marked by the presence of LCCs) use the wording and rhetoric of their coded language to explain their behaviour. This is because differences in language, religion, values, social structures and standards of living create different patterns of sampling information among culturally diverse groups.

Gregory and Munch (in Dolinski, 2003), from the University of Texas in Arlington, conducted a comparative investigation related to the influence of collective and individual dimensions on the effectiveness of advertising. Their investigation concentrated on such practices in Mexico – a country with a strong collectivist orientation characterised by strong cultural traditions passed down from generation to generation, as well as by mutual emotional dependence between the members of a family. They found that, within collectivist countries, an effective advertising message should take into account the recipient’s cultural specifics, such as his or her approach to humour and morals.

In this regard, HCCs “attach value to group identity, have implicit communication codes, and maintain homogeneous pattern of standards with high requirements and restrictions” (De Mooij, 2001:132). Therefore, in such systems the non-verbal factor is often more important than the verbal factor.

In contrast, LCCs characterise clear communication codes, which “attach value to individual orientation, have heterogeneous patterns of standards and low cultural requirements and limits” (De Mooij, 2001:132). In LCCs, the message is conveyed in words, which represent truth and power. As a result, in LCC systems, rhetorical use of wording is employed in arguments and persuasion. Therefore, people from LCCs derive meaning from what is said rather than from *where* and *how* it is said (Jandt, 1998). Chapter 6 describes the research methodology adopted towards the visual appeals made in collectivist (high-context) and individualist (low-context) communication, with the findings being presented in Section 7.1.

3.10 The dilemma of standardised or individualised marketing in the print media

According to De Mooij (2001:54), “Understanding the culture of the target market before developing and implementing the marketing-mix is an important step towards successful global marketing.” Therefore, both cultural variations and similarities demand special attention from marketers and advertisers. When advertising internationally, enterprises always face the problem of whether to standardise or individualise their marketing strategies. In international marketing strategies, changes made in relation in order to conform to either standardisation or individualisation are operational decisions made in either one or both dimensions simultaneously as regards product, price, distribution or promotion. In terms of the international market, theoretical foundations of standardised marketing strategies, treated as homogeneous, are based on the sale of an often approximately priced uniform product, employing the same distribution channels. In contrast, individualised marketing strategies are based on a total adaptation of the elements of marketing strategies to the conditions prevailing in particular countries (Pietrasinski, 2005).

Internationally, the aim to reduce costs and homogenise demand (in terms of which the differences in demand preferences grew even less) serves as the major motive inducing

enterprises to standardise marketing strategies (Pietrasienski, 2005). By such standardisation, enterprises can increase the standardisation of consumers' tastes and preferences, resulting in the broadening of the size of the target market through differentiating between various segments worldwide. Such differentiation serves to increase the influence of promotional transmissions, as well as to extend the effectiveness of the entire marketing strategy (De Mooij, 2001). Moreover, the standardisation of marketing strategies can contribute to the growth in the popularity of products made available globally. As a result, the consumer awareness of the existence of a product is strengthened (Pietrasienski, 2005). Except for cost and competition-related, as well as political, factors, factors conducive to the standardisation of marketing strategies include:

- cultural factors, including the development of *universal cultural values*, as well as the decrease of *cultural distance* among the nations and a decline in the impact of both religious and historical factors on the forming of buyer behaviour in particular countries; and
- market factors, including the *standardisation of consumer needs and preferences* in particular countries in relation to the same category of products and an increase in the importance of *global customers* and *distributors* (Pietrasienski, 2005).

In contrast, the individualisation of marketing implies larger costs. The main motive inducing enterprises to individualise their international marketing strategies is the profits resulting from the satisfying of specific consumer needs in particular countries. As a result, increased adaptation to national buyer needs could encourage their loyalty towards specific products, and, in the case of multiple purchases of products (such as magazines), further extend market demands. In those countries in which consumers embody strong ethnocentrism that manifests in a preference for national products, the individualisation of marketing strategies facilitates adaptation to such requirements (Pietrasienski, 2005). In other words, the individualisation of international marketing strategies enables enterprises to maximise their

share of markets in particular countries. Except for expensive, competitive, cultural, and political factors, favourable factors of individualisation of marketing strategies include:

Market factors, that embrace:

- the different consumer needs and lifestyles catered to by local markets;
- the diverse relations of local communities in regard to marketing elements;
- differences internal to an organisation and access to different channels of distribution in particular countries;
- international differentiation in terms of the economic development of countries; and differences in the amount of earnings per individual.

3.10.1 The susceptibility of marketing elements to standardisation or individualisation

The susceptibility of marketing elements to standardisation or individualisation depends on the kind of product, the technological factors, the information features, and the time and place of their influence. For example, on the Union market,

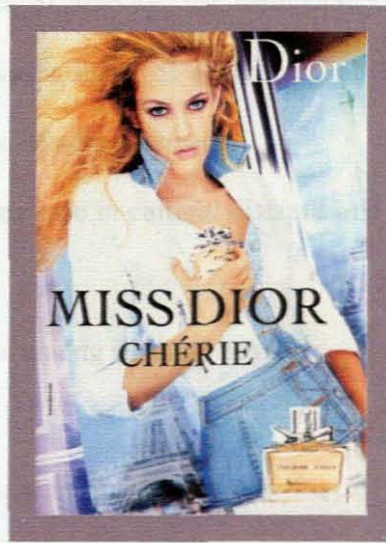


Figure 3.2 Advertisement in SA *Cosmopolitan*, May 2006

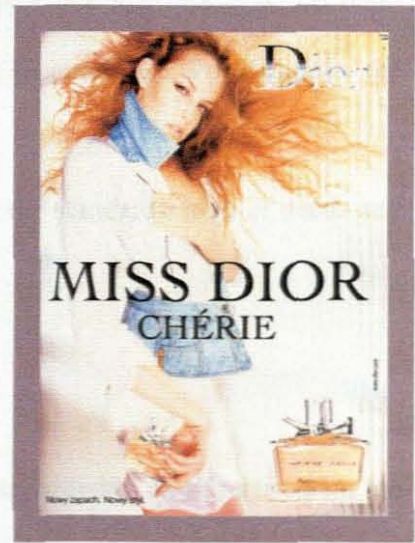


Figure 3.3 Advertisement in the Polish *Cosmopolitan*, June 2005

American industrial products are more often fully or partly standardised (0%–49% of adaptation), rather than individualised (51%–100% of adaptation) (Pietrasienski, 2005). In the case of world-famous perfume or fashion brands, the whole world serves as a single target area, allowing the visual promotion of standardised products in terms of the same advertising

campaign to be manifested in similar advertisements, also allowing for similar methods of distribution, as represented in Figures 3.2 and 3.3.

The analysis of the susceptibility of products to standardisation or individualisation distinguishes product base and additional elements. In the case of promotional advertising, the following elements are distinguishable: content and subject; slogan; language; sound; background; colouring; and choice of media. To a different degree, each of these elements is susceptible to standardisation or individualisation. Therefore, the advertisement is an instrument relatively easily susceptible to both standardisation and individualisation. From the point of view of this susceptibility, the advertisement is the most elastic instrument of sale activation (Pietrasiencki, 2005).

Throughout the whole area of activity, the maintenance of a uniform image is the main inducement towards the standardising of advertisements by an enterprise. For example, the international standardisation of advertisements:

- contributes to the decrease in cultural distance and to the standardisation of needs and tastes; and
- minimises confusion among itinerant buyers.

However, on the international market, the possibilities of standardising an advertisement are subject to specific limitations, such as:

- linguistic barriers;
 - cultural barriers, religious differences, and the differences in local communities in relation to advertising;
 - differences in the development, quality and freedom of access to media infrastructure;
- and

- differences in legal controls relating to the advertising policy of particular countries (Pietrasinski, 2005).

For instance, for enterprises planning international advertising campaigns, linguistic barriers tend to be most problematic (Samovar & Porter, 2003). As represented in Figures 3.4 and 3.5, the compositional structure of advertisements, the advertising slogan, the use of typeface and the models employed appear identical, only rendered distinct by the language of the wording that appears underneath the advertising slogan that, in the case of the Polish

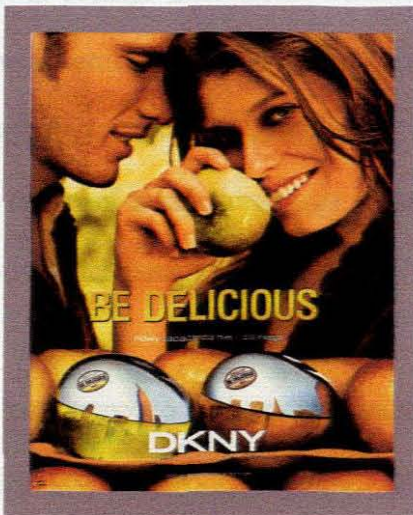


Figure 3.4 Advertisement in PL
Cosmopolitan, May 2006

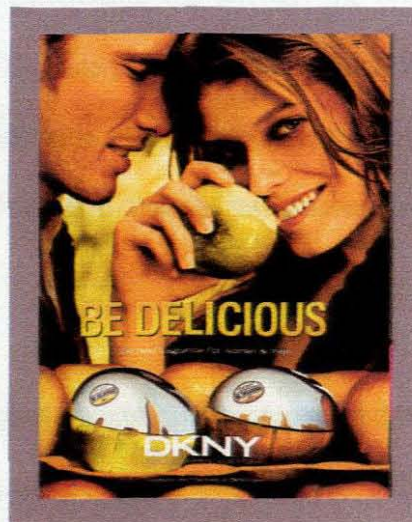
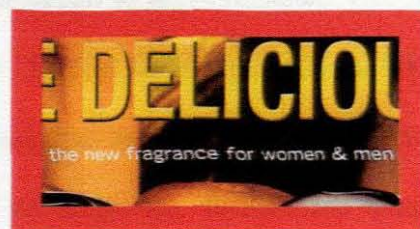


Figure 3.5 Advertisement in SA
Cosmopolitan, October 2005



advertisements, has clearly been translated into the national language. Furthermore, many enterprises experience defeat in the market, as a result of advertising messages being incorrectly translated. For example, the name of one of the products of the *Coca-Cola* company in Chinese means 'bite a tadpole', and the name of the leather upholstery used by American airways in Spanish means 'to sit in the nude' (Schultz & Schultz, in Dolinski,

2003). In order to avoid such mistakes, enterprises often co-operate with local advertising agencies as far as the linguistic aspects of their advertising goes. On the other hand, the standardisation of the whole advertising transmission, without the translating of the advertising slogans for foreign markets, could serve as another solution. For example, French wording may symbolically increase the effectiveness of the messages contained in the advertising of luxurious cosmetics, and the use of a Japanese name can create the impression that the product advertised is reliable (Pietrasienski, 2005).

More importantly, barriers to the standardisation of international advertising strategies manifest in cultural differences. The larger the differences, the stronger the pressure is to adapt the advertising message to the specifics of the enterprise market in particular countries. As all social systems and hierarchies of value undergo continuous change, enterprises should remain aware of such changes in order not to become trapped by preconceived cultural stereotypes (Pietrasienski, 2005).

In reference to the branding and packaging of a product, entrepreneurial decisions tend to be taken centrally, with product design tending to be more standardised than individualised, as, internationally, profiles of consumer segments appear as approximations. According to the research undertaken by Baker Spielvogel Bates (BSB in Dallmann, 2001:1), "the women's market, in particular, is increasingly being recognized as such a global market segment". Therefore, products directed at women, such as magazines, fashion and cosmetics, and advertising messages, are similar in content, due to the fact that women's preferences as consumers are only approximated. Such products are so-called 'global products', which means that they are designed in accordance to the *universal needs* and approximate preferences of consumers in many countries. As a result, "advertisers consider beauty, fashion, youth and motherhood to be universal characteristics of the female consumer,

resulting in an increasing desire among multinational marketers to utilise global advertising campaigns to target women” (Moriarty & Duncan, in Dallmann, 2001:1). Therefore, the strategy behind the adoption of a visual approach is to provide uniform messaging, since those global and multinational companies with global communication networks have created a global culture of symbols and images with worldwide relevance (De Mooij, 2001).

Therefore, every element of an enterprise’s marketing strategy could be either fully or partly standardised or individualised. In order to define which parts of a particular design appear on foreign markets in standardised form, the degree of standardisation of particular elements is most often measured in terms of a percentage calculation (Pietrasinski, 2005). Therefore, the magazine advertising content targeted at women in terms of the Polish and South African cultures was analysed in terms of a statistical (quantitative) methodology. Such an approach was used in order to identify the degree of individualised and standardised advertising strategies employed in both the Polish and South African editions of *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines as well as in a third set of culturally relevant magazines, consisting of *Fairlady* and *Twoj Styl* magazine. My findings are presented in the light of the literature review in Chapter 7, Section 7.2.

3.11 Summary

The first part of this chapter, which discussed the influence of cultural factors on consumer behaviour, revealed that, to some degree, culture affects consumer behaviour. Culture is ubiquitous, multidimensional and complex, resulting in the cultural context, which is composed of habits, systems of values, customs, local and national traditions, education and patterns of consumption, having the capacity to influence perception, social behaviour and preferences, which, in turn, determine consumer attitudes and actions.

In the following part, the way in which these elements modify communication was discussed. In the light of the cultural context and the processes of globalisation, social and consumer behaviour were considered within the definitions of culture and the dimensions of collectivism and individualism, which determine the ways in which people live together. For example, in contrast to how they operate within individual cultures, people in collectivist cultures are more interdependent within their groups. In this section, these dimensions were used as a starting point for understanding some of the basic differences and similarities employed in intercultural communication systems, such as promotional advertising in the print media. The analyses revealed that both Polish and South African women's magazines contained primarily personalised low-context advertisements, resulting in most advertising of products of personal care in these magazines being associated with individual subjective desires and personal values, since such products are perceived as part of the universal values that make up the female marketing segment.

In contrast, crossing culturally diverse boundaries can be problematic, because of the differences that define each culture. For example, meanings are often culturally specific, so that which is acceptable in one country is not so in another. Therefore, in regarding the global growth of international marketing, the next chapter will examine appropriate and effective strategies employed in the print media and advertising design.

CHAPTER 4: FACTORS CONDITIONING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF VERBAL AND VISUAL COMMUNICATION CONVEYED BY MEANS OF WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

Everywhere we turn, advertisements tell us what it means to be a desirable woman. The messages all share a common theme: She must be "beautiful". There are a thousand ways to look good, but only a few of those have what it takes to claim a share of this cut-throat market. Magazine 'packaging' design is about more than just looking good. Therefore, if you want be a player, you have to stay ahead of the game...

Advertising and content mutually complement each other in magazine publications, encouraging readers to consume certain goods and to purchase certain products. Therefore, in this chapter, these two aspects of persuasive communication are discussed together. In the first part of this chapter, I highlight the similarities and differences between South African and Polish magazine structures in order to allow for analysis of content design. Furthermore, a range of structural patterns of linguistic devices employed in persuasive communication in magazine cover lines and advertising slogans will be examined. As regards the relationship between language and culture, this chapter provides a contextual view of culture, specifying the role of language in culture. By examining a range of commonly used linguistic devices, such as rhyme, alliteration, assonance, superlatives, puns, intertextuality, idioms, contractions and nominalisation, I will highlight the manipulative relationship between the text producers and the *subject positions* constructed for readers.

4.1 Similarities and differences within the ideology of content that is structured into persuasive communication in the Polish and South African *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*

The entire structure of a magazine is designed to stimulate certain defined reactions, with its content being symbolically structured in order to convey set meanings. During the 1940s, in England, the designer Farleigh (in Owen, 1991:47) stated that "a magazine is consciously designed to appear as different on every opening as it can be; that is part of the

structure of a magazine; you can have a very formal page immediately followed by a drawing that is spreading, a different arrangement of type, paper of a different colour ... the more variety there is, the more exciting is the magazine”.

Although the features change from issue to issue of a magazine, the contents page usually has a set agenda that remains constant (McLoughlin, 2000). The purpose of such a page is to direct the reader to the magazine contents. For example, Caldas-Coulthard found that the structure of women’s magazines consists of the following eight major features:

- reportage, consisting of articles inspired by women’s daily lives;
- profiles, focusing on celebrity interviews;
- emotionals, for which a writer is commissioned to interview people about a specific emotion-inducing situation;
- social columns, which reflect some aspect of social life;
- first-person reportage, which presents a raw first-hand account of something that has happened to someone;
- designer profiles, consisting of fashion stories;
- life stories, namely mini-biographies of famous people; and
- reviews of films, books and music (Caldas-Coulthard in McLoughlin, 2000).

Usually, in every general interest magazine, the above-mentioned features are applied in the form of cover features, features, beauty and health or body and soul, fashion, and regulars. For example, in spite of the language difference, the structure of the South African and the Polish *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines is similar. In the Polish versions of both magazines, the difference in the contents page is that some features are deployed in more specific categories that vary from issue to issue, depending on the season or subject involved. For instance, *Elle*’s ‘home and away’ or ‘living’ topics are deployed in its ‘travel’, ‘Valentine’s

Day' or 'Christmas' features, while *Cosmopolitan's* 'features' and 'regulars' are deployed in 'Cosmo report', 'Cosmo knows everything', or 'Love and sex'. The findings regarding the similarities and differences existing in the cultural approaches between the South African and Polish *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines are represented in Sections 7.30 and 7.31.

4.2 Verbal means of persuasive communication employed in the print media

Women's magazines are defined as those magazines whose content and advertising is aimed at issues of feminine concern (Tuchman *et al.*, 1978). On the news stands, hundreds of magazines front covers, through wordplay, graphology, the pose of the cover model and the subjects dealt with in the cover lines compete for viewers' attention by each being more distinguished than the next. The print media is therefore, as a highly specialised form of mass communication, characterised by an ongoing process involving symbolic interaction between the structured elements of content and audience demands (Meyer *et al.*, 1984). Therefore, with the use of linguistic devices and common visual symbols, such as colours, typefaces, or everyday objects, to which are assigned meaning in everyday life, such media have the capacity to produce desired outcomes and 'manufactured' pleasures that relate to the audience expectations and desires (De Fleur & Dennis, 1994).

4.2.1 The cover as a verbal means of persuasive communication

The cover is the most important advertising displayed by a magazine, constituting the vehicle for distinguishing one magazine from another. In the process of cover creation, the combination of specific wording, colours, typefaces, and sizes in relation to the chosen picture define the character of the magazine. As a result, the cover must synthesise many elements on the page, such as colour, type, form, and illustration, into a single unit with one coherent meaning. Each cover must advertise both the visual and verbal character of the magazine's

content (Owen, 1991); therefore, such an area is the most carefully controlled part of magazine design, as will be explored in the second part of this chapter.

4.2.2 The title as a verbal means of persuasive communication

In promoting a product, the most important aspect is the *logo*, which is an iconographic sign, or symbol, facilitating quick identification with a brand and product (Dolinski, 2003). Therefore, the title of the magazine plays a crucial role in shaping viewers' expectations. As such, it informs viewers of what the magazine is about, while also signifying its particular character (McLoughlin, 2000). For example, the title of *Cosmopolitan* is a compound noun (meaning that it combines two words into a single unit), which is derived from the Greek words *Kosmos* (the universe) and *polites* (citizen). As the title indicates, the magazine is deliberately targeted at the young and adventurous (cosmopolitan) individuals. As a magazine directed at middle-aged readers, *Fairlady* has a reputable name, referring, as it does, to both the independent and traditional aspects of women involved with the performance of domestic chores. The title of *Elle* magazine, which was launched in France, implies a sense of both glamour and sophistication. In the title of *Twoj Style* (Your Style) magazine, the use of the Polish translation of the pronoun 'your' fulfils a persuasive role, which directly intensifies the concept that it is the style of the reader of the magazine. The use of such linguistic devices facilitates identification with the contents of the magazine.

4.2.3 The syntactic features of slogans employed in persuasive communication

Investigations show that only every sixth or tenth consumer reads a text (Bralczyk, 2004). As the aim of magazine and advertising texts is to be read, from the start their aim should be to provide contrast, paradox or suggestive detail that attracts the viewer's attention. In this way, texts can be reduced to a mere name or slogan. A short text, such as a slogan, headline or cover line, can serve to introduce a strong pictorial or verbal message. Cover lines

present the first text that the reader sees; therefore, the magazine cover acts as an advertisement (McLoughlin, 2000). Therefore, the cover line (which can be compared with the headline of an article or a slogan) should consist of a sentence, message, intriguing question or statement that relates the context to the body-text or an idea (Owen, 1991).

In the analysis of advertising language, the factor most frequently taken into account is the syntax of the advertising slogan, due to the essential role that it plays in the formation of the text. The persuasiveness of a slogan comes about as a result of its form. The typical syntactic structure of slogans consists of relevant and purposeful syntactic operations, which often depend on the creation of connotative and exceptional constructions (Bralczyk, 2004). Usually, both advertising and ideological slogans serve to arouse emotion in the reader, so that such slogans are not as structurally ordered as are conventional sentences. Advertising texts frequently appeal to some kind of general value or advertised product, such as “Euphoria – live the dream” (*Calvin Klein’s* slogan for perfumes). Sometimes, slogans are associated with modern-day magic spells or ritual formulas, such as “Sexy tricks – show him the magic of desire” (PL² *Cosmo*, March 2006), “Dance the kilos away” (SA *Cosmo*, May 2006), or “The things we love – shoes, lingerie, pink lipstick and picnics” (SA *Elle*, February 2006).

4.2.3.1 Lexical cohesion

In order to transmit a significant amount of meaningful information within a limited space and to attract the reader’s attention, the magazine producers and advertising creators cleverly use various linguistic devices, such as *stylistic* and *grammatical features* (the employment of various conversational styles), *phonological means* (the use of sound effects that aids in memorising slogans) and *lexical cohesion* (the creation of a meaningful relationship between words) that create distinct patterns, helping the reader to make sense of a text (Szczesna, 2003).

The following linguistic devices are most commonly employed in magazine cover lines and advertising slogans:

Direct repetition (entailing the repetition of the same words)	- "Sex with the ex – A bad idea or a very bad idea?" (SA Cosmo, July 2005) - "Spend, spend, spend! How shops seduce us into buying" (<i>Fairlady</i> , March 2006)
Alliteration (entailing the repetition of consonant sounds)	- "Sexy Summer Style (SA <i>Elle</i> , October 2005) - "Swietuj Swieta" (<i>Twoj Styl</i> , April 2006)
Assonance (entailing the repetition of the same vowel sounds)	- "Slynne koki – krok po kroku" (<i>Twoj Styl</i> , January 2006) - "Special sealed sex section" (SA Cosmo, March 2006)
Puns (entailing a reference to something else)	- "Run rabbit, run! – A close encounter with the world's favourite sex toy" (SA Cosmo, November 2005) - "Beauty-licious! – 6 ways to sexify your hair" (SA <i>Cosmo</i> , May 2006)
Rhyme (entailing repetition as an effective feature)	- "Man magnet, the get-a-guy guide" (SA Cosmo, November 2005) - "Love the skin you're in" (<i>Olay</i> advertisement in <i>Fairlady</i> , May 2006)

Table 4.1 Most commonly employed in magazine cover lines and advertising slogans in women's magazines

4.2.3.2 Sentence types used in persuasive texts of mass communication

The types of sentences used often provide valuable insight into the meanings created in texts. By using aesthetically satisfying formulas comprising lexical and syntactic cohesions or poetical features, slogans function as rhythmic and rhymed paraphrases composed from different verbal connotations rooted in mass culture (De Fleur & Dennis, 1994). For example, the conciseness of a slogan can radicalise its statement. The shorter and more concise such a slogan, the more suggestive and categorical is the impact that it tends to have (McLoughlin, 2000). The fewer elements that a slogan contains, the faster and more directly a message will reach its recipient. For example, a slogan such as: "XX women's fragrance" would tend to be

² PL (shortcut) – stands for Poland

more suggestive than the longer “XX fragrance for women”. Therefore, a statement without a finite verb makes a most suggestive classic persuasive statement (Bralczyk, 2004), forming a dynamic and emotional appeal. Due to the fact that slogans must serve to trigger impulsive thinking by means of association, the use of simple sentences is more direct, condensed and suggestive than would be the use of complete sentences (McLoughlin, 2000). Therefore, in order to secure the viewer’s attention, often such sentences appear on front covers and in headers of magazines, such as “4 short cuts to **find** your way” (SA *Cosmo*, September 2005) or “12 ways to **update** your look” (SA *Elle*, August 2005).

4.2.3.3 The use of modes in expressing spoken conversation

Often, in persuasive communication the message form is indirect, meaning that it does not necessarily promote the purchase or use of a product, but rather appeals to the desire to be or do something. Therefore, advertising announcements or cover lines appear in the form of advice, encouragement or proposals. They can also initially take the form of a wish, encouraging the performance of simple, effortless actions, such as the rather tentative “think about...”, or the more imperative injunction: “win!”. No softeners such as ‘please’ reduce the force of the command. Grammatical clauses express the spoken relation between the content, sentence, and reality (McLoughlin, 2000). For example, the following four types of sentences function according to their context and purpose:

Table 4.2 Four types of sentences functioning according to the context and purpose of women’s magazines.

Imperatives	Are used to give orders or make requests, such as often sharp and snappy headers, cover lines or slogans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Get sexy hair” (SA <i>Elle</i>, August 2005) - “Navigate his man map! – Discover his dominant sex sense (SA <i>Cosmo</i>, April 2006) - “5 steps to confidence – Beat your body insecurities, now! (SA <i>Cosmo</i>, April 2006) - Make him want you! (PL <i>Cosmo</i>, February 2006)
Interrogatives	Are used to ask questions and to simulate a conversational style, often appearing on covers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “How do the rich get thin?” or “Are you okay with polygamy?” (SA <i>Elle</i>, July 2006); - “Who needs boyfriends? What happy single women know” (SA <i>Cosmo</i>, July 2005).

Exclamatives	Are used to express surprise, alarm or strong opinions, being accompanied by an exclamation mark.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "You've gotta have balls! – Cosmetic surgery below the belt" (SA <i>Cosmo</i>, September 2005) - "Found at last! The man of your dreams" (SA <i>Elle</i>, March 2006).
Declaratives	Are used to create a statement or assertion, taking the form of allegorical purveyors of information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Colours you can't forget" - "Glamour and curves – your must-have new look" - "21 questions you've always wanted to ask" (SA <i>Elle</i>, February 2006) - "The good sex diet – Eat right for your libido" (SA <i>Elle</i>, August 2005) "Year-end bonus – It's been a hard day's night (make that 12 months) and your hair's been working like a dog. It's time to treat it" (SA <i>Cosmo</i>, December 2005)

Each of these different types of sentences can be found on any cover of the specified magazines, due to the fact that covers, as condensed forms of communication, indirectly urge the reader to purchase a particular product by means of the use of specific modes expressing the contents of spoken conversation. For example, both South African and Polish *Elle* cover lines seek attention usually in the form of declaratives or imperatives emphasising material life and self-improvement. The tone of the *Cosmopolitan's* cover lines is conveyed by means of a question-and-answer format (expressed in the form of interrogatives), the use of imperatives and the overuse of underlining of exclamatives, in which sex is more directly emphasised. Yet, *Cosmopolitan's* cover also targets the businesslike, 'quality' reader, whose spending power is exceptionally attractive to advertisers. Unlike the *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines, *Twoj Styl's* cover lines are more concerned with the portrayal of national celebrities, as well as with issues of self-improvement. Usually, cover lines are pitched in the form of declaratives and interrogatives. For example, in *Fairlady*, cover lines referring to subjects concerning middle-aged women's problems and self-improvement issues usually appear in the form of declaratives and interrogatives.

4.3 The character of communicational approach between magazine producers and readers

Communication consists of the transfer of information or ideas from the source to a receiver (Knobler, 1980). During the process of communication, the variables (meaning the components of communication) interrelate and influence each other, as is shown in Figure 4.1. The components of communication include: the source; the encoding, message; the channel; noise; the receiver; decoding; receiver response; feedback; and context (Jandt, 1998).

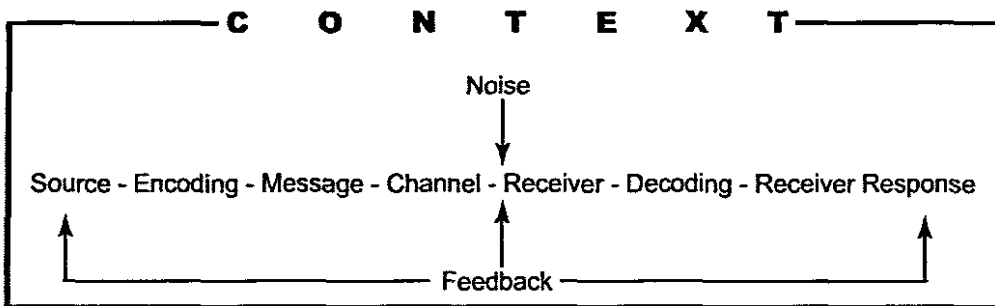


Figure 4.1 The components of communication (Jandt, 1998:26)

In the case of print media, the relationship between the magazines' producers (the senders) and the readers (the receivers) is asymmetrical, since the text producer is empowered to manipulatively command readers to act in a certain way: "Cover up – don't blame it on the sunshine! Check out our must-buy suncare selection" (SA *Elle*, November 2005) and "Make the most of the end-of-year bash – and keep your dignity and your job!" (SA *Cosmo*, December 2005). The text producer is also in a position to supply information which the reader needs, as in the following promotional introduction to a fashion supplement: "I'm sure you want more, and that's why *Elle* is delighted to present you with our first ever extra-large 2005 Winter Style Guide, free with this issue of your fashion bible. We hope you agree that it's gorgeous and tells you everything you need to know to plan your winter wardrobe. Please let us know what you think, because by Spring, our guide's going to be even bigger and better. Happy shopping!" (SA *Elle* May 2005).

4.3.1 The construction of the persuasive subject position of the reader by the text producer

Though magazine producers cannot possibly know the identity of all their readers, they often seem familiar with their readers' thoughts, needs, attitudes, likes and dislikes. The creation of such an impression is known as *synthetic personalisation* (Fairclough, in McLoughlin, 2000). By means of various linguistic devices, voices and other characters, they are able to construct persuasive subject positions for their readers. In order to achieve such positioning, one of the techniques employed is the simulation of two-way conversations. For example, "We hope you'll find our special Get-a-guy Master-class section useful. Study it well! After all, you wouldn't choose a car without doing research, would you? And a guy ... well, you're supposed to love him *almost* as much as your car, aren't you?" (SA *Cosmopolitan*, November 2005:6).

As the reader is absent from the above example, the text producers assume that the subject position of the reader is someone who responded to the above questioning, "Yes, I would not choose a car or a guy without doing research ...". Such techniques create the effect of drawing the readers into the 'dialogue', by causing them to interact with the text by participating in the question-and-answer setup.

4.3.2 The use of conversational and informal styles in creating a relationship between the reader and the editorial content of a magazine

Usually, magazines contain a letter or editorial column addressed by the editor to the intended readers. In such letters or columns, editors seek to convince their readers of the value of their publication. For example, often the tone of such a communication seems to be self-congratulatory as regards the success of the magazine. Often, by referring to audiences' *experiences and imploring the reader to "enjoy the issue!" or imagining seeing the reader they*

try to arouse excitement in the readers regarding the magazine. For example, “That’s Cosmo: both inspirational and helpful, in a package. Enjoy!” (SA *Cosmo*, September 2005); “Until next month, happy shopping!” (SA *Elle*, October 2005). Accompanying such instructions are photographs, featuring the editors looking directly into the camera in order to convey their personal involvement in such pronouncements. In this way, the editorial provides the opportunity to introduce the magazine content and for the editors to address their readers directly.

In order to minimise social distance and to create a friendly and informal relationship between the text producers and the reader, often informal styles and real-life grammar are employed, such as in the expressions ‘Cosmo girl’, ‘freak out’, ‘funk it up’ or ‘wanna’ (instead of ‘want to’). Text producers often thus seek to employ the speech patterns of the implied reader in order to establish a common ground between them (Fowler, 1993).

4.3.3 The use of presuppositions in creating a relationship between the reader and the magazine

The editorial content often employs *the problem/solution* feature. After a topic is introduced, the readers are reassured by the provision of a solution, such as is conveyed in an instruction to relax. In this way, the text producer claims to know the reader by the use of *presuppositions*, which are taken-for-granted assumptions (McLoughlin, 2000). In such presuppositions, the producers assume that the reader is in need of some advice. By providing such advice, the producers of the magazine come to be seen in the role of friends, who are capable of providing sound, trustworthy advice. For example, “Like you, I also need to go shopping for some new summer clothes ... you’ll see from the *Summer Style Guide* that, after the skirt, the most important item for your summer wardrobe is a basic vest” (SA *Elle*, October 2005) or “There are some great French treats in this issue, including your pocket

sized guide to the best selling *French Women Don't Get Fat ... Believe me, you'll thank us for that one!*" (SA *Elle*, July 2005). Through the provision of such advice, magazine editors make the assumption that their readers really do cry out when their favourite pair of jeans does not button up, and constantly require dietary advice. In such situations, the text producers refer to something as if it already exists, with which the reader can identify. By using such operational devices, the reader is encouraged to identify with a community of women with the same problem. Certain information may also be introduced more directly, such as in: "Plastic surgery – Everything that you have to know before" (PL *Elle*, October 2005). In such articles, magazine producers assume that they have intimate knowledge of the needs of their readership.

4.3.4 Similarities and differences in the communicational approach of Polish and South African magazines

When different and diverse backgrounds come into play in communication, it is often difficult to communicate in implicit terms (as can be seen in Section 3.8.1). Such difficulty arises from the fact that the way in which one employs and responds to symbols is culturally determined (Samovar & Porter, 2003:192). The result is that the communication patterns reflected in dialogue strengthen the sense of unity experienced within groups, providing a particular context for uniting with the reader as a friend. In both Poland and South Africa, such communication patterns serve to balance relationships existing between unequal groups, while simultaneously uniting them under the banner of such calls as, for instance, 'the love of fashion'. For example, Polish subcultures differ in terms of regional dialect and certain aspects of language use – most notably phonological features – that vary, depending on the particular class or regional origin concerned. However, Polish society is less complex in culture than is that of South Africa, with its various beliefs, languages and attitudes.

Therefore, there is a strong possibility that communicative misunderstandings may occur in South Africa, with the resultant “conflict based on different language systems, which emerge from different cultural systems and their accompanying discourses” (Samovar & Porter, 2003:192). In South Africa, although different cultures reflect varying levels of complexity through a number of systems of abstractions, artefacts and languages, their political relations all appear to involve certain patterns of subordination, meaning that, in multicultural societies, there is often one dominant culture, whose ideology (set of cultural codes of meaning) shapes public life (Samovar & Porter, 2003). In addition, the ideology of dominant cultural groups produces patterns of cultural language practice that may influence and marginalise other cultures. For example, South African society is composed of different co-cultures comprising varying beliefs, attitudes, values, concepts, and expectations. As a result, more extensive differences in meanings and usage can be found as regards cultural diversity, by means of decoding words. Therefore, in a multicultural society characterised by a varying degree of intercultural communication, English is the language of Western culture that dominates the mass media, bridging the gaps found between different communication systems explicitly employed by such diverse groups (as can be seen in Section 3.8.1).

In contrast to usage in South African magazines, the use of the Polish equivalent of the personal pronoun ‘we’ is a characteristic feature of texts in Polish feminine magazines. According to Jandt (1998:20), “individualists are positive about ‘me’ or ‘we’, whereas collectivists might be ambivalent about ‘me’ but positive about ‘we’”. Such use might be explained by the fact that the languages of more collectivist cultures, in contrast to those of individualistic cultures, require neither the use of ‘I’, nor that of ‘you’ (Kashima & Kashima, in Jandt, 1998:19). For instance, the English language is an example of a language in which it would be difficult to write a letter without the use of such pronouns. The encountering of such difficulties supports Sapir-Whorf’s (in Jandt, 1998:140) assumption that cultural elements

appear most noticeably in the vocabulary and grammar of a language. A comparative analysis of the similarities and differences in the communicational approach of Polish and South African magazines is presented in Section 7.4.

4.3.5 The use of *modifiers* and *determiners* in specifying the meanings of nouns

In an advertisement, key *modifiers* (adjectives describing the qualities of nouns) typically include wording such as ‘new’, ‘comfortable’, ‘healthy’ and ‘durable’ (Bralczyk, 2004). The use of nouns referring to bodily conditions, such as sweat, wrinkles, cellulite, dandruff or constipation, through the arousal of discomfort and other unpleasant feelings, strengthen the power of the message conveyed. In such advertisements, in order to arouse the feeling of discomfort, and the consequent relief to be obtained from use of the product, resort is often made to the ‘before and after’ effect, as represented in Figure 4.2.



Figure 4.2 Garnier advertisement Source: SA Elle March 2006:25

4.3.6 The role of subordinating conjunctions in persuasive advertising texts

Subordinating conjunctions, such as ‘as’, ‘after’, ‘although’, ‘until’, ‘when’, ‘because’, ‘before’ and ‘whether’ are often used to join subordinate clauses into one sentence, as in: “So we wish you many moments of delight **as** you enjoy this May issue of *Elle*” (SA Elle, May 2006).

Experimental investigations have shown that wording indicating reasoning, such as use of the word ‘because’, through its direct appeal to the principles of argumentation, is recognised as introducing a rational element to an argument (Cialdini, in Bralczyk, 2004). For

instance, in the advertising slogan of the cosmetic brand *L'Oreal*, use of the word 'because' in "Because you are worth it" simultaneously provides the justification of both reason and cause, by introducing a sense of argumentation and positive reflection, as is represented in Figure 4.3.



Figure 4.3 *L'Oreal* advertisement. Source: SA *Cosmopolitan* July 2005:51

4.3.7 The use of modal verbs as testifiers to the truthfulness of advertising texts

In slogans, the modal verbs 'can' and 'may' often appear (Fowler, 1993), dismissing the ruthlessness of limitation. For example, the slogan of the cosmetic brand *Maybelline*, "Maybe she was born with it, maybe it is *Maybelline*", triggers a humorous response, as well as emotional reflection, which strengthens the effectiveness of the message conveyed, as seen in Figure 4.4. Thus, in advertising announcements, using wording that evades the possibility of being accused of lying facilitates the introduction of the subjective opinions of real people, such as those of experts in the field, as well as those of scholars, well-known stars, beauticians and models.



Figure 4.4 *Maybelline* ad. Source: PL *Cosmopolitan* April 2006:21

Moreover, the truthfulness of the text can be testified to not only by making use of authorities, but also by referring to the statistics gleaned from relevant investigations, such as in “89% of our participants have confirmed positive results” (cosmetic brand *Clinique* PL *Elle*, April 2006). In advertising texts, scientific elements can be used to manipulate character (Dolinski, 2003). For example, when

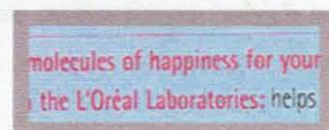
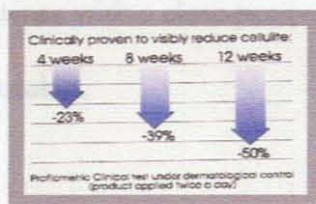
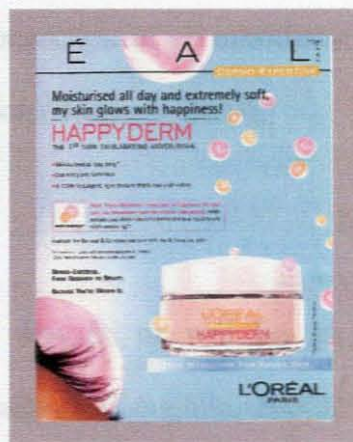


Figure 4.5 *Neutrogena* advertisement in SA *Cosmopolitan* Dec 2005:113

Figure 4.6 *L'Oréal* advertisement in SA *Elle*, May 2006

introducing the following formula into a text: “clinical investigations have proven...”, the advertising is made more credible, as can be seen in Figure 4.5 (*Neutrogena*, SA *Elle*, May 2006). Therefore, the introduction of scientific terms (of which the precise meaning is often unknown to the readers) often arouses a conviction of both the sender’s competence and the value of the advertised products. For example, when such expressions as ‘the intelligent cream formula’, or ‘the XX cream reactivates skin’s natural acid reaction’ are used, the word ‘acid’ does not detract from the attractiveness of the XX cream itself (Bralczyk, 2004). Allusions to the benefits of “specially designed molecules of happiness” (*L'Oréal's* advertisement in SA *Elle*, May 2006, see Figure 4.6) are suggestive, but insufficiently informative. Often, therefore, interspersed among otherwise relatively unconvincing statements is rhetorical information (whose truthfulness cannot be subjected to valid testing), such as “the XX product does not cause skin dehydration and irritation”. However, as Bralczyk (2004) argues, such texts usually are informatively empty, consisting of analytical statements that are based on the multiple processing of the same information. As a result, an

expression, such as the XX product works because of a special connection of all nutritious components, only makes a pretence of conveying valuable information (Bralczyk, 2004).

4.3.8 The role of tenses in advertising texts

Time is a way of perceiving reality: Everything either was, is, or will be. In promotional texts, the passing of time is often referred to rhetorically (McLoughlin, 2000). Generally, in advertisements the present tense with a close perspective on the future (which is often used in the command mode) is noticeable.

Use of the present tense conveys a sense of satisfaction, speed, or non-expectation, such as in ‘today’, ‘now’, ‘already’ and ‘at last’. In order to persuade the recipient of a message, signals of limitation are used, such as ‘yet only to ...’ Therefore, in some languages, the future tense serves to express uncertainty (Bralczyk, 2004). Often, indications of arousal and hesitation are employed, such as ‘quickly’, ‘immediately’, ‘now’, ‘in just’ and ‘instantly’. Such usage emanates from the fact that thinking about the future not only relates to change and ‘new beginnings’, but also introduces the idea of favourable possibilities for the future, for which the use of an advertised product is held responsible. The advertisement shown in Figure 4.7 focuses on the present, while holding out promises for the future in its use of the slogan: “Want Younger Looking Skin in 14 days? **Now** you can reduce lines by up to 50% **in just 2 weeks**” (Revlon’s advertisement in SA *Cosmopolitan*, February 2006:10).



Figure 4.7 Revlon advertisement in SA *Cosmopolitan*, February 2006:10

Though a slogan may be timeless, it may also serve to represent a specific object and contain a judgment on some element of present reality (Bralczyk, 2004). In some languages, forms in the future tense refer to the description of a situation to be obtained by the use of the advertised product. In other words, such advertising appeals to desired results (“you will have, you will win, and you will receive”) by making use of pleasant sounding verbs that contain an air of expectation.

Moreover, the use of the past tense characterises some cover lines, such as “21 questions you’ve always wanted to ask” (SA *Elle*, February 2006), though such use most often occurs in the claims made by financial and insurance companies in order to give an assurance of continuity (Bralczyk, 2004). The past tense may be used to recall sentimental, positive or negative associations, such as “I remember when I was”. Such usage illustrates current possibilities of realising former dreams and also occurs in situations underlining one’s individuality as regards being able to make clever decisions, such as in the text accompanying certain advertisements of an insurance company bearing the slogan “I chose already ...” (“Ja już wybrałam ...”) (*Twoj Styl*, October 2005).

4.3.9 The influence of cultural context on the interrelationship of languages and words in mass media communication

Speech codes are concerned with the psychological qualities of a culture. Therefore, in print media communication, the linguistic devices of language codes relate to the ways in which people perceive themselves. Such a relationship is a result of people often reflecting on the code and, as a result, altering its typical patterns (Samovar & Porter, 2003), which comes about due to the inseparability of language, culture, and communication (Samovar & Porter, 2003). The *shared* cultural ‘space’ in which the representation of meaning takes place is the property of neither the sender nor the receiver of the meaning (Hall, in Woodward, 2003).

With the use of contextual metaphor, language transmits culture. As culture defines the system of communication by directly influencing its form and content, it is “a set of symbols (vocabulary) that evoke more or less uniform meanings among a particular population and a set of rules (grammar and syntax) for using the symbols” (Samovar & Porter, 2003:178). Symbolically, it represents people, their cultural backgrounds, their approach to life and their way of living and thinking.

As was discussed in the previous chapter, international magazines such as *Elle* (which is distributed in 37 countries) and *Cosmopolitan* (which is distributed in 52 countries), depend on abstract cultural meanings, and therefore partly need to customise their context in relation to specific national identities. In mass communication, the choice of linguistic devices often depends on the referenced country’s graphic and phonetic form, the character and style of advertisement, and its syntactic constructions. Thus, in respect of a given category, the choice of words often depends on the persuasive intentions of the sender. Such linguistic choice is largely noticeable in translations of texts that differ in grammatical order from each other. For example, the English language ‘I am sorry’ requires translation into Polish as one word: ‘przepraszam’. Such differences come about as a result of people who speak different languages *segmenting their world differently* (Samovar & Porter, 2003). Also, popular sayings that reflect basic cultural values and idioms, such as ‘read between the lines’ or ‘break a leg’ cannot be translated word for word because the words that make up the idiom do not make sense at a literal level (Jandt, 1998). Western influences manifest in various languages of different cultures (Samovar & Porter, 2003). Especially the 1990s have seen an increasing trend to accept many Western words in their original form, with examples of such advertising terms including ‘Coca-Cola’, ‘sofa’, ‘coffee’, ‘chocolate’, ‘motor’, ‘radar’, ‘club’, ‘shock’, ‘copy’, ‘the fresh-maker, perfectly you’, ‘wash & go’, ‘because you are worth it’, and so forth. Although some of such wording can be translated into Polish, it is seen as more

fashionable, and therefore preferable, to use the original form. Such usage is also due to the fact that words translated into different languages carry additional cultural meanings that are lost in translation (Samovar & Porter, 2003).

4.4 Summary

This section sought to examine factors of verbal communication employed in the print media. In the first part, in order to give an overview of the organisation of the contents of the magazines under review, I highlighted the ways in which the ideology of such magazines is structured. The analysis of both the differences and similarities between Polish and South African *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines showed that these internationally distributed magazines possess a standardised content structure that has to be followed by those countries in which they are distributed. The order of features and any additional aspects regarding cultural context that may change from issue to issue were seen to distinguish the identity of one magazine from another. Culturally relevant magazines, such as *Twoj Styl* and *Fairlady*, apart from their visual aspect, also are structured in the same way as are other general interest magazines. They are distinguished from internationally distributed magazines in that they feature more national advertisements and a coherent mix of related articles depicted in a more appropriate cultural context in terms of everyday life, family and social agenda issues.

The next part of this chapter examined the ways in which the text producers manipulate certain aspects of language in order to construct a magazine's persuasive ideology. I highlighted lexical and grammatical cohesion and analysed the most commonly used persuasive communication factors, such as pronouns, presuppositions, modality and conversational features.

My analysis revealed that the advertising text is a colourful language permeated with various persuasive words and sentences. Communication is indirectly manipulated by means of the use of pictures, words, meanings in relation to their associations, their grammatical forms and syntactic structures. Advertising uses different styles and linguistic devices to introduce new words and meanings for well-known words and sayings. The style of words is defined through rhyme, the influence of foreign languages, or rhythm. The order of words may depend on different meanings and styles, such as persuasive, stylistic or aesthetic. Advertising texts possess no concrete syntax, but rather use elements that already function in other texts, conversations or speeches.

In short, this chapter covered the ways in which the semantic structure of the language codes may influence consumers. The following section introduces the process of perception and its cognitive and emotional aspects that are employed in the psychological organisation of contextual meaning in pictorial communication.

CHAPTER 5: VISUAL MEANS THAT STRENGTHEN THE PERSUASIVE IMPACT OF PRINT MEDIA COMMUNICATION

Graphic design, illustration, animation, photography, commercial art – whatever it is that designers do, it's based upon visual communication. One can be the hottest designer in town, creating the coolest work, but without a little insider knowledge on how to keep those pesky clients and consumers smiling, it can all go pear-shaped...

Communication systems are designed differently, as different people select different kinds of information from media or advertised messages, and interpret them in many different ways. Kramsch (in Samovar & Porter, 2003) suggests that achieving understanding across languages depends on the existence of common conceptual systems, which do not differ in terms of the meaning and value of concepts. Therefore, in order to influence consumer perception of products, some of the advertised messages might be designed specifically so as to transmit approximate contextual meanings among broader groups of audiences, as is discussed in the following section. However, before I introduce the pictorial factors that influence mass communication, it is necessary to discuss the process of perception, in order to show how the organisation of a mental image and its reception occurs. Thus, in this chapter the ways in which advertising is visually composed will be explored. The role of visual components will be examined explicitly in order to determine the visual structure of advertisements. The examination of this form is carried out in order to explain in what possible ways magazine producers may manipulate susceptible readers.

5.1 Perception as a visual means of persuasive communication

Perception “is the process by which an individual organizes, evaluates and selects stimuli from the external world” (Jandt, 1998:185). The process of perception is divided into three categories, namely selection, interpretation and organisation, each of which categories is influenced by culture (Jandt, 1998). The following three socio-cultural elements

have a direct impact on perception and communication; cultural values; religion; and social organisation of the family and state. Such impact means that, although everyone senses the world in the same ways, culture influences the way in which people process and comprehend information ascertained by way of our senses (Jandt, 1998).

Although, information reaches people selectively from the external world, being received via the visual, aural, and tactile senses, readers approach changes because of the manipulation of visual stimuli. The cognitive processes allow for the receiving and remembering of information, the development of an understanding of the world and decision making. Perception forms part

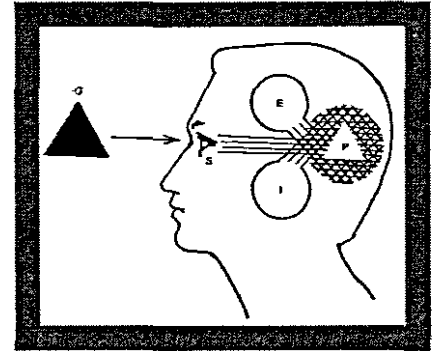


Figure 5.1 The process of perception (Knobler, 1980)

of the cognitive processes, which also include transmission of information, sensations, attention, and memory (Dolinski, 2003), which all result from cognitive (mental) processes. The process of transmission from vision into perception is represented in Figure 5.1. Knobler explains:

“*O* represents an object or experience existing in the world outside the observer. Information about this object is gathered by the sensory organs, *S*. (In the case of the visual arts the organ would most often be the eye. The sensory input, *S*, travels to the brain, where it is interpreted. The interpretation depends upon the past experience of the observer, labeled *E*. Past experience is not a static quantity or quality. It changes with time as the observer lives, reads, observes and is taught. *E* is different for every person. Interpretation of the sensory input also involves factors other than past experience, including intelligence (*I*), as well as the emotional attitude of the moment and the intensity of concentration. Thus, a combination of sensory input, past experience, intelligence, and attitude operate to produce the perception (*P*) that was initially stimulated by the object” (Knobler, 1980:11).

The relevance of perception depends on the way in which the transmission becomes integrated with existing knowledge and experiences, all of which have enormous significance for understanding the principles of perception in advertising.

In the visually organised world of today, people do not always focus their attention on the surrounding media, such as the signboards, inscriptions or posters, which promote products. Additionally, not everyone pays full attention to the content of advertisements. For example, while reading newspapers or magazines, one usually neglects the contents of advertisements when scanning through such publications for interesting articles. However, to the world of advertising, it is essential that the reader notices advertising content and remembers the logo of a particular brand. To create effective advertising, an in-depth knowledge of the relevant cognitive processes is necessary. Psychological research into how perception works has discovered certain principles that underlie how a person perceives a visual picture. The use of such principles in advertising helps to establish a general rule as to the organisation of the meaning of pictorial elements, as well as the way in which advertising influences recipients at a subconscious level (Croizer, 1993).

5.2 The ways in which visual information is constructed within the layout of a magazine

The placement of particular information on a page may suffice to convey a particular meaning, due to the careful design of each layout. For example, “the page layout is a matter of arranging in a harmonious balance the various components of the page such as the headline, text, and images” (Owen, 1991:158). The use of conventional typographic structures determines the style of the elements of any page, including that of the headline that introduces the specific story and the main text, signaled by dropped or small capitals, or by columns or vertical rules (Owen, 1991). Often the headline is larger than the body text, with the body text being sized according to the column width. Usually the use of traditional formats and grids facilitates the production, consistency and clarity of form (Owen, 1991). Besides the text and headlines, magazine layouts employ other elements, such as graphics, illustrations, colour and photography to create distinct images that set one magazine apart from another (Grow, 2002).

5.3 The organisation of page layout and graphology

According to Owen (1991:161), “The organization of the elements of the page as a single coherent object, within which flows an ordered sequences of information is a creative act in which the designer must make his or her own value judgements, while creating the set of priorities and links for the eye to follow the associative elements for the mind to capture”. Advertising studies indicate that a magazine’s content facilitates communication by way of symbolically ordered visual and verbal elements, since such factors generate specific meanings. Clearly, the placement of advertisements is not accidental. Kress and Van Leeuwen (in McLoughlin, 2000), in their examination of double-page spreads in Australian women’s magazines, found that the left-hand pages often comprised written text, while well-illustrated photographs featuring women with whom the viewer could identify dominated the right-hand pages. They found that people tend to shift their vision continuously from left to right, with the page right being more suitable for featuring important new information, while the left is the appropriate site for ‘already given’ information. Such a finding serves to confirm the fact that in magazines most advertisements, especially new ones, are featured on the right-hand page. In addition, according to the *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* profiles, advertising space on the right-hand page is more expensive than that on the left hand (*Elle* and *Cosmopolitan’s* profiles, 2006, Marquard Media Poland, and Association Magazines South Africa).

Moreover, in print advertisements, research findings have demonstrated that the specific location of verbal and pictorial elements can strengthen the persuasive impact of that advertisement (Coulter, 2002; Dolinski, 2003). Advertising images seen in the print media consist of two parts, the centre and margin, and the top and bottom, which are usually distinguishable by the colour of the background, the compositional scheme or some kind of textual intervention, as is discussed in the next section.

5.4.2 The role of the cover photograph in establishing an exchange of meaning between a magazine and its readership

Traditionally, on magazine covers, models have been pictured as posed in the middle of an empty space, leaving an area open for the cover lines. “By the 1980s, their bodies were often carefully posed so that cover lines could be placed on top of the model herself” (Grow, 2002:18). However, models portrayed on magazine layouts from the 1980s and 1990s appear as though boxed in by the weight of the words that intrude upon their space (Grow, 2002). Current magazine covers tend to show fashion models and celebrities “practically rent space on their own bodies on which the magazine advertises its content” (Grow, 2002:17).

The magazine cover plays an important role in the exchange of meaning between the magazine producer and the audience. In creating a particular cover image, magazine producers select an image in relation to the characteristics of their demographic market. Usually, a cover is in line with the magazine’s distinctive tradition of portraying sexuality as attractive. According to Owen (1991:186), “the cover should have a full face, preferably life-size, the eyes staring full at the camera (pupils exactly 6 cm/2 ½ in apart, above on attractive smile. The face should have personality (therefore there is frequent use of celebrities) matching the readers physical and social aspirations, surrounded by lots of cover lines.”

However, cover photographs vary between reflecting a full-length pose and a full face. Despite little direct eye contact and suggestive mouth appeal, it can be observed that the dominant visual image is composed of three-quarter and full-length poses, while the so-called ‘big head’ (consisting of a close-up portrait) is used according to the compositional design applied to a particular issue. In addition, models always appear to stare in the direction of the viewer in order to draw his or her attention. For example, similar to their portrayal in Polish magazines, South African *Cosmopolitan* and *Elle* magazines tend to show a preference for

Furthermore, it has also been found that one easily notices objects which contradict, or differ from, others (Maruszewski, 2001). For example, Figure 5.11 portrays an advertisement for a 'Swatch' watch, which features a 'diving' couple in bed, effectively conveying a sense both of contradiction and simplicity. For example, the large empty space portrayed gives an impression of well-balanced information and 'clean' design. Such balance also forces the viewer to look for any elements that might appear on the top, bottom or margin of the page in a flow that produces meaningful and coherent delivery of information. The use of simple associations permits faster transmission of information to the brain (Bloomer, 1990). Such principles reflect the principles of recent international design. As can be observed in Appendix 10, pictorial elements tend to be well balanced and designed with simplicity in mind. In addition, the logo of a particular brand is often placed on the right-hand side of a page so as to be easily noticeable when the viewer pages through the magazine.

5.6 The impact of purposely located stimuli on the reception of a pictorial element by the cerebral hemisphere

In the print media, most advertisements are composed both of pictures and words. In some, words predominate, while, in others, pictures do. In this case, the question arises: On which side of the page should the verbal and pictorial information be placed in order to be more effective? Another matter of concern is whether visuals in advertisements should be placed to the left or right of an article.

Cerebral hemispheres have different functions, with the left hemisphere processing verbal stimuli, while the right hemisphere analyses pictorial stimuli (Mahnke, 1996). Due to the fact that the optic nerves cross on their way to the brain, the information placed on the left-hand side of a page (in the visual field) penetrates the right hemisphere of the brain, while the

Moreover, it has been calculated that reading or 'receiving' advertised information needs requires registering for about 35 to 40 seconds (Dolinski, 2003). Meanwhile, research has shown that potential viewers dedicate only two seconds to advertisements that they recognise (Dolinski, 2003). Research studies indicate that remembering the content or reminding oneself of certain situations needs conscious or automatic commitment of attention. Before already coded information can be recalled, it must be strengthened, depending on one's personality and circumstances. Therefore, advertisements should be constructed in such a way that the recipient will 'invent' the conclusions himself or herself. Such invention of conclusions can result in the content being better remembered and more easily retrieved from memory (Dolinski, 2003).

Knowledge of the psychological effects, such as the perception of colour, light, texture, shape, composition and association of symbols in visual communication, shows that *designers and artists are able to influence our subconscious mind*. As Knobler (1980:32) explains, "untrained observers are usually unaware of the separate elements which make up the symbolism of the objects or images they recognize, nor are they conscious of the way in which these elements have been combined". Thus, artists and designers use separate elements to create a pictorial symbol resulting in visual advertisements. In the next part of this thesis, the visual processes of communication and the influences of mass communication will be analysed in terms of a discussion of the metaphorical aspects that define the meaning of *purposely-structured visual images*.

5.8 The influence of pictorial factors employed in visual communication

Pictures constitute a non-verbal part of communication which greatly affects the way in which a receiver interprets messages. According to Hanson (in Walgren & Mohr, 1998), 75% of the information filtered through our senses is visual. In advertising, indirect persuasive

communication is thus accomplished by means of the use of visual syntax, comprising a number of key components, such as content, colour, light and spatial organisation. These symbolic means of visual communication employ their own 'language' of expression and are central to visual images, contextualising meaning in terms of how they are perceived. As Barthes (in Mirzoeff, 1998) indicates, the advertised image can be split up into three different categories: linguistic message (language); coded iconic message; and non-coded iconic message (reception). In combination, the categories produce the intended contextual meaning of transmission. In ordinary reading, such distinction is not made spontaneously. Therefore, as the research in Gestalt psychology indicates, in order to capture the intended meaning of the content, it is necessary to discuss the content separately by means of breaking up the image into its component parts: namely those of spatial organisation, colour, light and content (Bloomer, 1990). For this reason, in the following sections of this thesis, the content is examined explicitly in order to determine the visual structure of advertisements.

5.8.1 The spatial organisation of visual elements employed in advertising design

According to Bonnici (1999:164), "Composition usually consists of several focal points or a single focal point towards which other elements give visual support". Williamson (in Rose, 2002) suggests that the spatial composition of advertisements is an important structural component in terms of how certain elements are framed. Compositional interpretation thus provides a way in which to describe the rhetoric of an image structure, whether in terms of spatial organisation, colour, light or content. Goldman (in Rose, 2002:84) concurs that "most advertisements have the same basic visual structure, namely: photographic image; a mortise which is an image of the product framed in some way; caption and copy, text in the form of headlines; and graphic framing devices that make certain visual links between those components".

Furthermore, Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) categorised the three principles of composition in terms of:

- information value, referring to the placement of elements: left and right, top and bottom, centre and margin, which can endow such elements with additional specific informational value;
- salience, referring to the placing of the elements in such a way as to attract the reader's attention to different degrees, foreground or background, relative size, contrast in colour, or sharpness of image; and
- framing, referring to the absence or presence of framing devices, which serve either to connect or disconnect elements by means of signification (Kress & Van Leeuwen, in McLoughlin, 2000:29).

Moreover, two major categories can be distinguished in any composition, namely balanced, rational and harmonious composition, as opposed to exaggerated, distorted and emotional composition, the latter of which is aroused by complexity, instability and irregularity. The same elements also serve to increase visual stress and, consequently, to attract the eye (Dondis,

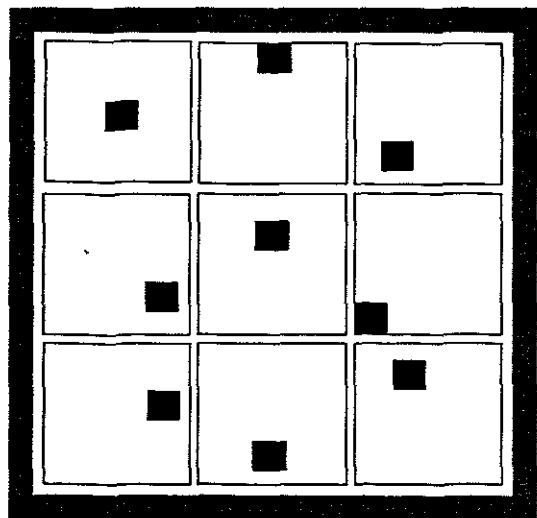


Figure 5.15 Model of the visual weights placed in the areas of stress. Source: Andersen, 2000:114

1981). Such an increase in stress and attraction is the result of visual elements that are placed in stressed areas having more weight, as can be seen in Figure 5.15. In addition, the symbolic meaning of the element depends on its size, position, colour, shape, and surface variation. In any composition, as the elements are moved from the bottom to the top or from side to side, their meanings and relative weight also change.

More specifically, as can be observed in the structure of some advertisements, each of the visual directions is a valuable tool in the construction of visual messages due to their strong associative meanings. For example, in all visual structures, horizontal-vertical stability creates ease in balance (Figure 5.26); diagonal direction, which is the most unstable directional force, provokes a sense of movement and dynamism (Figure 5.27). In contrast, curved directional forces constitute meanings associated with *encompassment, repetition and warmth* (Figure 5.28). A closed composition that is usually static and condensed may trigger the feeling of power, concentration and calmness. Furthermore, complicated and exaggerated compositions may evoke feelings of confusion and negative receipt, whereas compositional clarity achieved through the harmonious arrangement of well-balanced elements, as well as the simplicity of transmission, tends to arouse positively experienced aesthetic feelings (Kilmer & Kilmer 1992). In sum, all directional forces contribute significantly to the final effect of compositional meaning, since they may lead to the reinterpretation of a visual message by those who view it.

5.8.2 The impact of colour in persuasive communication

Colour lithography was first introduced in magazines for which Jules Cheret was responsible and which emanated from Paris and London in the 1860s. The introduction of such lithography provided “an artistic freedom on which many of the modern movement innovations of graphic design were found” (Owen, 1991:17). Gravure (the high quality reproduction of type and photography printed from a single plate) was “the primary method of producing colour magazines and its dominance was not broken by four-colour offset lithography until the 1960s” (Owen, 1991:19). Currently, in preparing the material for a magazine to be printed in the offset process, high-resolution copy is needed. As can be observed, a characteristic feature of magazine covers is their use of fluorescent colours, which are reproduced by means of the use of excellent colour photogravure on high-quality coated

certain products. The use of colour has been found to affect cortical activation and the functioning of the nervous system (Mahnke, 1996). Therefore, colour preferences vary from person to person, due to colour responses differing accordingly to the context in which they are experienced. The majority of colour associations have a universal character, which can be considered from the following angles:

Psychological factors, according to which warm and saturated colours subconsciously improve mood and arouse excitement. For instance, the colour red tends to attract attention and to stimulate the senses, but may also irritate the senses, whereas yellow, orange or fluorescent colours tend to activate and elicit positive feelings. Cold colours, such as blue, serve to calm the viewer and to encourage concentration, while green motivates and relaxes (Szczesna, 2003).

Optical influences, according to which warm colours create space, while cold colours decrease space. For example, light and warm colours tend to condense the distance experienced between the viewer and the advertisement. Also, in the bottom part of advertisement, the location of bright elements connotes lightness and may add to the power of the semantic content of a slogan (Szczesna, 2003).

Emotional values, the perception of which tends to vary between different cultures. Colours are associated with symbolic meaning, such as is black in Western societies with death and funerals. The most basic connotations of colours in Western societies are cleanliness and freshness with white; success and sophistication with black; revolution and passion with red; life and nature with green; reflection and logic with blue; and mysticism and fantasy with violet.

In design, the choice of colour is affected by contextual factors, the objectives of the design and the kind of response that is required of the viewer (Knobler, 1980). Furthermore, colours can be described in terms of three dimensions, including *hue*, which refers to the basic

from the meaning of the content (Wimmer & Dominick, 1987). Times new Roman has therefore come to be associated with qualities of reliability and moderation (Szczesna, 2003). In contrast, the use of an 'italic' style deprives the letterform of its objective character, as the 'italic' style approximates handwriting, which conveys a sense of subjectivism, femininity and privacy. For example, such a style is often used in advertisements for cosmetics, suggesting undertones of privacy, intimacy and individualism, as seen in Figure 5.34. Also, in advertising, decorative letterforms are seldom used, as otherwise the viewer may have to concentrate on **the** shape of the *letters* used (Wardrip-Fruin & Montfort, 2003). Overly complex visual descriptions serve to direct the viewer's attention to the *appearance* of the written words rather than to their meaning.

In a text, cover line or slogan, the use of bold large typefaces has both a semantic and persuasive character, because such use conveys a sense of the hierarchy of importance and fulfils an analogical function in relation to the sentence (Bralczyk, 2004). Headlines and cover lines are used to outline certain ideas, to convey information or to condense the message. As described in the presentation of the findings in Section 7.5, the employment of the above-mentioned devices serves to prioritise information, while, at the same time, directing the viewer's attention to relevant parts of the information. Such practice is commonly adhered to on magazine covers. In addition, there are usually two columns of cover lines, with another two lines across the bottom or the middle of a page (Grow, 2002), which are carefully arranged to create an illusion of different layers of depth.

According to Croizer (1993), the study of eye movement has found that in any single fixation of the eye, only a few letters are available for recall. Therefore, cover lines need to be both noticeable and meaningfully condensed. Rudnický and Kolers (in Croizer, 1993) found

5.9.1 The cognitive sphere

In the cognitive sphere advertising appeals are aimed at attracting the recipients' attention. In this regard, the advertising announcements use both the form of the announcement, such as empty space, an intensive colour or interesting the arrangement of the typeface, for distinguishing among different announcements and content (referring to the recipient's needs, expectations or experiences).

5.9.2 The emotional sphere

In the emotional sphere, advertising appeals aim to create a strong relationship between the recipient and a product. In the emotional and cognitive sphere, the influence of an advertisement is mutually conditioned, meaning that an advertisement cannot affect one's emotions if it does not appeal to definite cognitive elements.

5.9.3 The behavioural sphere

In the behavioural sphere both the positive and negative effects of the influence on cognitive and emotional spheres are accumulated. In this regard, the recipient's emotions, connected with the product, may influence his or her attitude and behaviour regarding whether or not to purchase the product (Dolinski, 2003).

5.10 The influence of artificially created emotions on recipient attitudes

As previously explained, in advertisements emotions are expressed by the use of visual means, such as colour, light, composition, gestures and models, convincing the reader of the benefits of presented goods or services. In contrast to rational appeals, emotional appeals rely on feelings. By creating a likable or friendly brand image, positive feelings are aroused in the consumer towards the product. According to Kotler and Armstrong (in Alberts-Miller & Stafford, 1999:44), "emotional appeals attempt to stir up either negative or positive emotions that

can motivate purchase. These include fear, guilt and shame appeals or love, humour, pride and joy appeals that get people to do things they should do, or stop doing things they shouldn't".

International studies on human values indicate that rational and emotional decision-making is influenced by culture (Zinkhan *et al.*, in Alberts-Miller & Stafford, 1999; Triandis, 1981). Therefore, an understanding of cultural values and product categories is crucial for the development of cross-national advertising. Across cultures, cognition changes little, while emotions change considerably (Plummer, in Alberts-Miller & Stafford, 1999). In this case, a significant variable is the extent to which a culture is oriented towards 'collectivism' and 'individualism'. For example, as discussed previously in Section 3.8, people from more countries characterised by a more collective culture tend to value conformity and emotional attachment to group membership over achievement and individualism. In fact, many emotional appeals relate to a sense of belonging and affiliation. In contrast, rationally orientated appeals relate to effectiveness, productivity, technology, modernity, and durability. As such, one of the techniques of advertising goods is the juxtaposition of the appeals to emotion and reason (Alberts-Miller & Stafford, 1999).

Advertising context makes positive, negative or dynamic emotional appeals, the latter of which includes negative and positive emotions with different intensity (Alberts-Miller & Stafford, 1999). The emotional cohesion between the advertisement and the product relates to the degree to which the emotions are created through visual elements, such as colour, composition, light or gestures. Usually, a high degree of emotional cohesion is assumed to serve as the basis for linking the possession of a given product to its benefits in the consciousness of the viewer. Therefore, in advertisements with high emotional cohesion, a product is depicted as the cause of emotions in advertisements. Thus, an effective emotional advertisement is simultaneously dynamic and coherent (Dolinski, 2003:128). In the following

On the other hand, as represented in Figure 5.34, 5.34a and 5.34b, the intelligent use of stimuli that appeals to one's insecurity may arouse certain emotions that consequently may be transferred to the product and trigger the purchase.

5.11 Summary

In this chapter, the analysis of separate visual components showed how visual messages are conveyed. Contemporary lifestyle has been influenced by purposely structured visual communication, with visual data being conveyed in one form or another so as to influence the receiver. Such influence results from all conceivable visual forms having the ability to inform the observer either about himself or herself, or of his or her world, or of unfamiliar things.

The first part of this chapter showed that the results of compositional decisions carry strong implications for what the viewer perceives. Therefore, from a designer's point of view, understanding the complex ways in which human perception and learning works to influence response through visual means is key to the making of the right choice of a medium that will serve to strengthen expression in order to achieve the maximum control of response. Moreover, it could be observed that in some of the modern and professional designs, the syntax (the orderly arrangement of parts) or the structure of visual statements results from investigating the process of human perception. In short, it can be noticed that the fundamentals in print media communication revolve around verbal and pictorial communication.

In the second part of this chapter, the ways in which the pictorial components and advertising content have been found to be visually composed in the selected magazines were explored. The literature showed that distinguishing one cover magazine from another is made

possible by way of the controlled arrangement of various elements. The designer has the capacity to manipulate the advertised message through the use of various typefaces, the colours of letters and the background, the size and degree of condensation of the cover lines or inscriptions, the choice of picture, and, finally, the composition, which should balance all the combined elements. Each magazine was seen to possess its own ideology of advertising, editorial content and way of attracting viewer attention. As could be observed, each magazine has its own distinguishable character. For example, in contrast to the *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* editions, *Fairlady* and *Twoj Styl* tend to experiment more with the depiction of the model, as well as with the colourful photographs and backgrounds that change from cover to cover. In the case of the *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* covers, in both countries, the character and arrangement of various elements remain similar in tone.

In summary, this section sought to examine the organisation of material inside magazines. It highlighted that the visual and verbal factors of mass media communication employed in layouts and advertisements are purposely structured in order to produce a definite meaning, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 6. Research design and methodology

6.1 Description of research methods

The research methods employed in the current research included an investigation of individual and collective views and perceptions of the research problem tackled in this thesis. Therefore, I used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in order to identify different approaches for collecting and analysing data to answer my research questions. Gathered data, however, is discussed in a qualitative way in order to discover the underlying meanings, patterns and conclusions, as represented in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 A model of data collection

Tools and methods used for data collection	Data analysed by these methods	Relevance or use of data analysis methods	Organisation of data analysis	Informants
1. Literature review	Conceptualised/ Theoretical <i>discourse</i>	Familiarisation with advertising <i>influence and</i> cultural diversity	Into chapters of thesis, the mainstay <i>of research</i>	Books, journals
	Qualitative analysis conceptualising <i>framework to</i> support research argument		Into chapters of thesis, the mainstay <i>of research</i>	Books, journals, magazines, internet
1.1 Contextual analysis	Conceptualised discourse – qualitative analysis	To the conceptualisation of women's diversity	Mainly in third and fourth chapter	Books, journals, magazines, internet
2. Fieldwork research				
2.1 Questionnaires in Poland and South Africa	- Content analysis – both qualitative and quantitative - Comparative analysis	Grouping and categorising of data to establish trends and patterns	In categories of relevance, in relation to needs	With 60 women in Poland and 60 women South Africa
2.2 Questionnaires in Poland and South Africa	- Content analysis - Comparative analysis	Categorising data and establishing trends and patterns	In categories of relevance and/or needs	15 men in Poland and 15 men in South Africa
2.3 Two focus groups in Poland	Conversation analysis – taped and transcribed Comparative analysis	Categorising data and establishing trends, patterns, influence of magazine advertising and women's diversity	In chapter on advertising influences – discussion	<u>First group of 5 women aged 20 to 35 years</u> <u>Second group of 5 women aged 36 to 48 years</u>
2.4 Two focus	Conversation	Categorising data	In chapter on	First group of 5

groups in South Africa	analysis – taped and transcribed Comparative analysis	and establishing trends, patterns, influence of magazine advertising and women’s diversity	advertising influences – discussion	women aged 20 to 35 years <i>Cosmopolitan’s</i> target group <u>Second group of 5 women aged 36 to 48 years; <i>Elle’s</i> target group</u>
2.5 Interviews in Poland and South Africa	Conversation – analysis	Identify trends and patterns	In relevant chapters and recommendations	Magazine industry: graphic designers

6.2 Qualitative research and data collection methods

The use of qualitative techniques helped me to analyse data and draw conclusions. Data collection methods included focus group surveys, questionnaire surveys and individual interviews. With the use of a qualitative approach, I concentrated on understanding the ways in which respondents perceived problems relating to media influence, including observing their attitudes and values systems, which cannot be assessed in terms of quantitative research, and which respondents usually do not reveal in everyday life. According to Nikodemska-Wolowik’s categories (1999), the reasons for conducting individual interviews and collective interviews (focus groups), are reflected in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 The reasons for conducting individual and collective interviews

	Individual interviews	Collective interviews
The role of the interviewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Major role, influence on the progress of the interview, greater possibility of observing non-verbal forms of behaviour - Concentrating respondent’s attention on the moderator - Closer relation with participant in discussing the problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minor role, average influence on the progress of the interview - Less control over a group for moderator - More unstructured relation with participants in discussing the problem
Interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only between two individuals: researcher and respondent - High degree of concentration on investigated problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group dynamics stimulate participant behaviour - Mutual and strong influence on statements and reactions of respondents - The fulfilment of roles by those acting collectively - The possibility of deviating from the main theme of discussion
Ways of conducting an interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easier initiation of questions included in an interview script - Engaged attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More difficult initiation of questions included in an interview script

		- neutral and passive researcher outside the group
Respondents' feelings	- Despite initial discomfort on the part of the respondent, overall greater confidence in answering questions - An atmosphere conducive to the establishment of confidence	- Initially, greater comfort in the presence of the researcher than in the presence of other participants

In comparison to in-depth interviews, I (as a moderator) had only a small influence on the participants' behaviour. Respondents' spontaneous reactions were discreetly directed to the subject of discussion. As a researcher, I could directly observe the authentic behaviour of respondents placed in a social situation.

The aim of individual interviews was, furthermore, to gain detailed data from a participant who was, essentially, uninfluenced by other participants (Leedy, 1997). During the individual interviews, I directly confronted the respondents in my role as researcher. Due to the lack of collective safety, participants were more subjected to continuous observation, which considerably reduced the level of the respondents' spontaneity. At the beginning of each interview, I noticed that participants were not as spontaneous as participants tend to be in focus groups; they felt somewhat pressurised, due to the fact that they were being interviewed. Thus, in order to make them feel comfortable, I tried to create a friendly atmosphere, since respondents' interactions can also be influenced by the place that they occupy. As investigations show, greater respondent polarisation has been noticed in smaller settings, since larger ones can be distracting (Krueger, 1998). According to Nikodemska-Wolowik (1999), there are two styles of conducting interviews, known as the American and British styles. The British style tends to consist of a more formal and structured form, while the American style tends to consist of a more informal and unstructured form. In conformity with the British style, I created a natural and friendly atmosphere for participants. In both South Africa and Poland, focus groups were conducted in my own home, while individual

interviews were conducted in cafeterias or in the participant's own home. According to some researchers, such surroundings facilitate the creation of a more relaxed atmosphere (Nikodemska-Wolowik, 1999).

6.2.1 Focus groups and individual interviews

The structure of focus groups and individual interviews depends on many factors, of which the basic and primary ones constitute the following:

- a clearly defined aim of investigation;
- the competence of the moderator/researcher;
- the preparation and moderator's attitude;
- the ways of recruiting respondents;
- the atmosphere created during a meeting;
- the objective analysis of data gathered during fieldwork; and
- ethical procedures. (Note the informed consent form and the explanatory statement provided in Appendices 1 and 2.)

6.2.2 The interview script

Often, in the course of observation, the questions arose naturally "rather than as part of a more explicit researcher's role" (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996:94). However, the interview script constituted an integral element of the project, helping me to direct the session to the research problem (see Appendices 3 and 4). The basic guidelines of the script included:

- the aim of the interview;
- subject areas within which the researcher explored and asked questions; and
- a semi-structured schedule of questions to be asked during the meeting.

6.3 Conducting of focus groups

Conducting focus groups largely relies on group dynamics being understood as either a direct or indirect interaction between members of a given group (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). The group dynamics determine the direction of the discussion and the ways in which participants respond to the group leader and one another. Thus, the interaction between participants was one of the basic advantages of conducting my focus groups, due to the mutual influence of participants' opinions and behaviour, which encouraged the formulation of new ideas regarding the research problem.

Hess (in Nikodemaska-Wolowik, 1999) defines the advantages of conducting focus groups in terms of the '5S' theory:

- *synergy*, which manifests in collective co-operation and the provision of effective data;
- *snowballing*, which manifests as the mutual motivation and influence of respondent's reactions;
- *stimulation*, which manifests as the mutual stimulation of participants' opinions and behaviour;
- *security*, which manifests as a feeling of anonymity and safety assured by other participants; and
- *spontaneity*, which manifests as the free choice of behaviour consequently directing the discussion onto relevant matters.

The primary advantage gained by using focus groups constituted the possibility of observing participant's interaction when concentrated on tackling set problems. The semi-structured free discussion allowed for the expression of spontaneous and sincere reactions that would have been harder to achieve by way of in-depth personal interviews. Participants in the

focus groups also communicated more spontaneously. Prior to the holding of the various focus groups, I had prepared a script (Appendix 1), the following of which was intended to initiate open-ended discussions. According to Nikodemska-Wolowik (1999), the moderator's role and participants' behaviour, as reflected in the different stages of focus group processes, are represented in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3 Stages of focus group processes

Stage 1: Opening Questions	
Moderator - Creation of a friendly atmosphere - General introduction of aim and subject matter - General discussion of the terms and conditions of the focus group	Respondents - Initial short introduction of every respondent by moderator - Becoming acquainted
Stage 2: Introductory Questions	
Moderator - Introduction of general, unspecified problems of discussion	Respondents - Disclosing of assertive behaviours - Reflection on connection with the overall topic
Stage 3: Transitional Questions	
Moderator - Identifying different types of respondents - Directing discussion to main problems - Setting the stage for productive key questions	Respondents - Mutual acceptance - Settlement of certain norms of behaviour within the group - Expression of readiness to participate in the set tasks; establishment of the connection between the participant and the topic of investigation
Stage 4: Key Questions	
Moderator - Provision of the main discussion concerning the research problem - Full discussion of the problem, in terms of the focus group guidance script	Respondents - Mutual co-operation of the group regarding the research problem
Stage 5: Ending Questions	
Moderator - Encouragement of a final statement - Final foci - The conclusion of the session	Respondents - Provision of final statements and conclusions

The respondents participating in the focus groups were stimulated by external stimuli, such as by the visual illustrations of advertisements and the verbal realisation of some tasks,

such as the analysis of advertisements. Such contentious stimuli allowed the respondents to interpret the problem individually, as well as to express their personalities indirectly. In Chapter 7, the opinions of individual participants in the group were treated collectively, since the result of any focus group comes about through working together.

6.4 Conducting of in-depth personal interviews

I used *semi-structured interviews*, during which certain elements of standardisation occurred, consisting of a pattern of thematic plots focused on the research problem. The order and ways in which the questions were formulated depended on the relation between the moderator and the participant, as facilitated by the creation of a suitable atmosphere for such interviewing. Most interviews lasted 30 minutes.

6.4.1 The types of questions used during in-depth interviews

The questions used during the in-depth interviews consisted of the following types:

- orientated questions, which were usually asked during the initial phase of interviews or questionnaires in order to familiarise participants with the subject under discussion;
- introductory questions, which closely related to the investigated problem in a focused way in order to ascertain the required details;
- transitional questions, the asking of which encouraged respondents to provide more details;
- key (direct) questions, directing respondents to the core of the research problem;
- indirect questions, concerned with the respondent's value system and attitudes that gave the respondents the opportunity to personify their own experiences and attitudes indirectly;
- ending questions, consisting of final statements and conclusions

6.5 Administering of questionnaires

The use of questionnaires is a valuable method of collecting a wide range of information from a large number of respondents (Antonius, 2003). In both South Africa and Poland, I conducted a survey questionnaire with 60 women (see questionnaire in Appendix 5a and 5b), as well as one with 30 males in South Africa and 30 in Poland (see questionnaire in Appendix 6a and 6b).

6.5.1 Questionnaire construction

I segregated and grouped questions into sets determined by objective and operational criteria. In order to avoid making any suggestions to the participants, my questions were open-ended. All questions were focused on covering the set research objectives (as presented in Appendices 5a, 5b, 6a and 6b).

6.5.2 Question types

The questionnaires employed the following types of question:

- Scaled questions, in terms of a five-fold Likert categorisation, allowing for responses to be graded on a continuum rated from 1 to 5, with 5 indicating 'Strongly yes'; 4 'Yes'; 3 'Unsure'; 2 'No' and 1 'Strongly no'. The categories employed accorded with the meaning of the questions asked.
- Closed-ended questions, consisting of dichotomous questions, the answers to which were limited to a fixed set of responses, such as 'Yes' or 'No'.
- Open-ended questions, consisting of questions to which the respondent supplied his or her own answer without being constrained by a fixed set of possible responses.

6.6 SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

6.6.1 The methodology used in sample selection

Polish and South African editions of *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines were selected from those issues appearing from May 2005 to May 2006. Furthermore, in order to identify the degree of difference in the cultural approach between globally and locally distributed magazines, a culturally relevant magazine was selected from issues of the same magazines appearing between December 2005 and May 2006. The Polish *Twoj Styl* ('Your Style') magazine and the South African *Fairlady* magazine were chosen on the basis of the questionnaire survey, as representative of culturally relevant women's magazines in those countries. Both magazines are top-selling women's magazines in their countries, which reach a broad-based female readership, aged 25 years and older. All selected magazines were matched by the editorial profile, format, and similarity in popularity in order to obtain comparable representative samples from both countries. In addition, the analysis of advertisements in those magazines selected included half-page and full-page advertisements.

The above-mentioned factors were taken into account in order to identify:

- differences in the approach of visual appeal of high- and low-context communication systems (as discussed in Sections 3.9 and 3.9.1); Poland being classified as a HCC and South Africa as an LCC (see the presentation of the research findings in Section 7.3.1);
- the degree of standardisation and individualisation in Polish and South African selected magazines (as discussed in Section 3.9, and as represented in Sections 7.3.2 and 7.3.1);

- similarities and differences between the South African and Polish *Elle* magazines in terms of cultural/local approach (as discussed in Chapter 4 and 5, and as represented in Section 7.3.2);
- similarities and differences between the South African and Polish *Cosmopolitan* magazines in terms of a cultural/local approach (as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, and as represented in Section 7.3.2.1);
- similarities and differences in the communicational approach of Polish and South African magazines (as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, and as represented in Section 7.3.3);
- factors manifesting in the quality of cover design and visual reception, as ascertained from a comparison of the Polish *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* with the South African *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* and of cultural magazines, such as *Twoj Styl* and *Fairlady* (as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, and as represented in Section 7.3.4);
- the role of the cover photograph in an exchange of meaning between the magazine and its audience (as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, as well as in Section 8.1.1);
- the manipulative role of magazine discourses manifesting in the construction of femininity (as discussed in Chapter 1, and as represented in Section 7.3.5);
- the depiction of feminine power over men in women's magazines (as represented in Section 7.3.6);
- the verbal layer of feminine representation in magazine content (as represented in Section 7.3.7); and
- the obliteration of woman, as represented in the visual component of women's magazines (as represented in Section 7.3.8).

6.6.2 Selection of the participants

The sample of 60 women and 30 men in each country was evaluated on the basis of a quota sample, meaning that each individual shared some characteristics, based on socio-demographic variables (Antonius, 2003). The developed samples were appropriate for the purpose of this research when analysing individual experiences and points of views in a qualitative way.

In each country, 30 males, aged between 23 and 48 years, selected on socio-demographic grounds participated in a survey questionnaire.

Women participating in the focus groups and the in-depth interviews were selected (after completing the initial questionnaire survey) on the basis of their willingness to participate further in the study, as well as on their fulfilment of set sociodemographic criteria (drawn from a middle-class financial background, aged between 20 and 35 years and between 36 and 48 years) and cultural variables, as illustrated in Table 6.4 on the following page 148.

Table 6.4 Selection of the participants in the study

	South Africa		Poland	
1. Questionnaire survey Regarding issues of women's representation in magazines	30 males, selected on the grounds of sharing a similar socio-economic basis		30 males, selected on the grounds of sharing a similar socio-economic basis	
2. Questionnaire survey (Initial) Conducted in order to allow for the selection of a culturally relevant magazine	30 women, selected on the grounds of sharing a similar socio-economic basis		30 women, selected on the grounds of sharing a similar socio-economic basis	
3. Questionnaire survey Regarding issues of women's self-perception and their representation in magazines	60 women, selected on the grounds of sharing a similar socio-economic basis		60 women, selected on the grounds of sharing a similar socio-economic basis	
	<p>3.1 Two focus groups First group: From Cape Town, consisting of 10 women, aged between 20 and 35 years (<i>Elle's</i> target market)</p> <p>Second group: From Cape Town, consisting of 10 women, aged between 36 and 48 years (<i>Cosmopolitan's</i> target market)</p>	<p>3.2 In-depth interviews With 5 women from Cape Town, selected on the grounds of their sharing a similar socio-economic basis and on their willingness to participate further in the study</p>	<p>3.1a Two focus groups First group: From Warsaw, consisting of 10 women, aged between 20 and 35 years (<i>Cosmopolitan's</i> target market) Second group: From Warsaw, consisting of 10 women, aged between 36 and 48 years (<i>Elle's</i> target group)</p>	<p>3.2b In-depth interviews With 5 women from Warsaw, selected on the grounds of their sharing a similar socio-economic basis and on their willingness to participate further in the study</p>
Total number of participants	120		120	

6.6.2.1 Selection of the participants for the focus groups

In both Cape Town and Warsaw, the two focus groups consisted of the participants selected on a socio-economic basis, as mentioned in Section 6.6.2. Such groups were chosen in line with the induction that South African society can be described as an 'individualistic, low-context culture', while Polish society is a 'collective, high-context culture'. In both countries, all women respondents were divided into two focus groups (one consisting of

younger respondents, one of older respondents), as shown in Figure 6.3. In addition, I categorised participants in terms of their cultural background as Polish or South African. In Poland, the two focus groups were composed of white women from the capital Warsaw. In South Africa, the two focus groups consisted of white, coloured and black women from the ‘mother’ city, Cape Town. The theoretical approach was adopted in order to sample a maximum variation in racial and ethnic backgrounds (Merriam, 2002).

6.7 Recording of data

In both countries, in-depth interviews and focus groups sessions were tape-recorded and transcribed word for word. Also, during in-depth interviews and focus groups, I took key-word notes that were converted into themes afterwards.

6.8 Coding procedures

In terms of grounded theory (the building of substantive theory – theory that emerges from or which is ‘grounded’ in data), the data analysis was developed through the stages of open, axial, and selective coding, Table 6.5 (Merriam, 2002:142).

Table 6.5 the stages of open, axial, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, in Merriam, 2002)

Open Coding	Axial Coding	Selective Coding
Identifying and categorising various concepts into a defined dimension.	“Making connections between a category and its subcategories to develop several main categories” (Strauss & Corbin, in Merriam, 2002:149).	Integrating the categories to form a substantive theory.

6.8.1 Coding methods used for the data gleaned during the in-depth interviews and focus group sessions

From each in-depth interview, a conceptualised category constituting a theme or variable was developed. In the light of the research problem, such a category was interpreted as an argument, together with thematically categorised questionnaire questions in Chapter 7. The focus groups' data was summarised, since the focus group is the result of mutual work and not the result of individual opinion (Nikodemska-Wolowik, 1999).

6.8.2 Coding methods used in the analysis of advertisements in selected magazines

Coding is useful when approaching large numbers of images in a consistent manner (Antonius, 2003). Therefore, the following categories have been developed in relation to theoretical concerns. The codes depend on a theorised connection between the image and the broader cultural context in which its meaning is made in reference to open coding (as represented in Section 6.8.4). Regarding a grounded theory, images were reduced to the number of component parts which could be labelled and have some analytical significance, referred to as axial coding (see Section 6.8.3) (Lutz & Collins, in Rose, 2002). The use of *diagrams explores in what ways the elements of images are conventionally structured in relation to each other*, which is referred to as selective coding (as represented in Section 7.3.8.

6.8.3 The measurement of the manipulative role of magazine discourses manifested in the construction of femininity

In order to measure the variables of advertisements (represented in Table 7.3) in reference to physical appearance, the advertisements were coded in terms of the following categories:

Categories of coded advertisements:	Coverage of categories
<i>Body/Face Care</i>	Advertisements concerned with body and face care products
<i>Make-up</i>	Advertisements concerned with make-up products
<i>Hair Care</i>	Advertisements concerned with hair products
<i>Perfumes</i>	Advertisements concerned with perfume products
<i>Fashion/Accessories</i>	Advertisements concerned with clothing and fashion accessories
<i>Weight-Loss Methods</i>	Advertisements concerned with weight-loss methods, such as medicines or sports equipment
<i>Beauty Advice</i>	Articles and advice columns (advertorials) about fashion (how to dress), diet (how to prepare a meal), health and beauty (exercises and ways of taking care of one's body), and home and away (discussing furnishing trends and travel destinations).
<i>Advertisements concerned with appearance</i>	A percentage of the other six categories

Table 6.6 Coding of advertisements

6.8.4 The measurement of women's portrayal in selected magazines as represented in research findings discussed in Section 7.6.3.1

I treated the interpretive elements of advertised images regarding women's portrayal in terms of Dallmann's (2001) categories. Stereotyped portrayals are evaluated as they fall within the following categories:

- appearance, in relation to which women are concerned with physical appearance (in terms of cosmetics, jewellery or fashion) in an attempt to appear more appealing, such as more youthful;
- youth, in relation to which there is an emphasis on youth and vital lifestyle related to product use;
- sex objects, in relation to which women are depicted erotically as sexual objects relating to the product;
- status, in relation to which the use of a product serves to evaluate the position of the user, imbuing the user with a feeling of prestige, as depicted in advertisements portraying people, such as high-class celebrities, enjoying themselves;
- individualism, in relation to which there is an emphasis on self-sufficiency and individual self-achievement;

- dependency, in relation to which an emphasis is laid on the protectiveness of males or on the need for reassurance;
- a neutral positioning, in relation to which women are depicted as equal to men;
- intimacy, in relation to which the emphasis is on the intimate and innocent nature of woman;
- sport, in relation to which the emphasis is on sporting activities;
- career orientation, in relation to which there is an emphasis on professional occupations;
- housewifery, in relation to which there is an emphasis on housekeeping tasks.

6.9 Analysis of magazine content

In both countries, in order to analyse differences in the approach of the visual appeal exerted by globally recognised magazines, such as *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*, and culturally relevant magazines, such as *Fairlady* and *Twoj Styl*, a content analysis was applied. Though the content analysis involved a quantitative method (“counting the frequency of certain visual elements in a clearly defined sample of images, and then analysing those frequencies”) (Rose, 2002:55), all data was discussed in a qualitative way

6.9.1 Measurements of individualism and collectivism in the print media

As can be seen in Sections 3.8 and 3.8.1, in the print media, the effectiveness of the interdependent-oriented appeals, which are collectivist HCCs, and independent-oriented appeals, which are individualist, which are made in visual advertisements depends on the audience’s disposition towards individualism and collectivism (Callow & Schiffman, 2004). Analysing the differences in visual appeal between high- and low-context cultures involves the following methodological process: examining magazines both from high- and low-context cultures; the use of pictorial stimuli that introduce either explicitly independent or interdependent appeals; and measuring the level of individualism and collectivism present in

each magazine's advertising content (Callow & Schiffman, 2004). The degree of independent or interdependent visual appeal was analysed in terms of the number of people who were present in the visual image (Aaker & Williams, in Callow & Schiffman, 2004). The unit of analysis was restricted to full-page and half-page advertisements, due to their being primarily used in magazines (Biswas *et al.*, in Dallmann, 2001), as in the case of the magazines analysed in this study, namely *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*.

6.9.2 Analysis of the individualist and collectivist context adopted in advertising approaches

The number of advertised visual images, based on the use of their social appeals, was counted. The analysis of the individualist-context communication advertisements included consideration of the following dimensions: an individual as distinct and unique; individual benefits, self-achievement and values, such as independence and the exceptionality of an individual; the representation of the individual as a single model.

The analysis of the collectivist-context communication advertisements included consideration of the emphasis on social interaction between an individual and his or her group (such as his or her family, subculture, or society), since the visual message of a group of people interacting in a specific social setting conveys the idea of membership and friendship.

6.9.3 The measurement of similarity and difference in the approach adopted in visual appeals

A qualitative analysis of magazine editorial content was undertaken (see Chapters 4, 5, 7 and 8). The complex impact of advertising design and magazine editorial content was broken down into its different dimensions.

When analysing elements of advertising content, categories were established and summarised with the use of descriptive statistical techniques involving clustered bar charts and pie charts to illustrate the relative importance of the various categories of variables. The final discussion of magazine content influences and the social modalities of the reception of advertising and magazine content were examined in relation to the data gathered from questionnaires, interviews and focus groups, as represented in Chapter 8.

6.10 Summary

In my research, I found that the different kinds of data demanded particular research approaches and methods. The research methods focused on an investigation into small sample groups, including into individual views and perceptions of magazine contents and advertisements. Therefore, the use of qualitative methodologies helped me to collect and analyse data, the results of which were used to answer my research questions. The data collection methods employed included the use of focus group surveys, questionnaire surveys and individual interviews. The data analysis methods embraced content analysis and measurement techniques (such as the Likert-scale), as well as the Miles and Hubermann (2002) data reduction, display and coding method of data analysis.

The ordinal and nominal level of measurement was used to measure and observe particular aspects presented in the magazine content within established categories (Miles & Hubermann, 2002). In terms of the survey questionnaires, these measurement techniques were also used to categorise and measure respondents' frequency of exposure to stereotypical images, and particular opinions about magazine content and the influence of advertising. The level of measurement of a variable indicated the kind of graphs that were used to illustrate the data obtained (Antonius, 2003). Descriptive statistical techniques (consisting of charts and graphs) were used to summarise and describe the numerical data.

CHAPTER 7: A PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The presentation of the findings in Chapter 7 is juxtaposed with the discussion of the findings in Chapter 8. As outlined below, in this chapter the research findings collected by means of various methods, such as grouping and the categorising of data, are explored in order to establish prevailing trends and patterns. I present the findings of the data collected in Poland and South Africa in terms of three distinct sets (namely 1, 2 and 3).

Firstly, I present the findings of the data collected from the Focus Groups [1] and the in-depth interviews with female participants [2], as well as the data collected from the questionnaire surveys conducted with both female and male participants [3]. For clarity, participants were coded in the following ways:

Table 7.1 Stages of participants coding

<p>[1] Focus group participants</p>	<p>Capitalised as a group, for example a participant in PL Focus Group 1 or 2 (for Poland) is only referred to in the group and a participant in SA Focus Group 1 or 2 (for South Africa) is only referred to in the group. The use of the number 1 stands for the younger group of participants (aged between 21 and 35 years), while the use of the number 2 stands for the older group of participants (aged between 36 to 55 years) in the focus groups</p>
<p>[2] In-depth interviews with female participants</p>	<p>Capitalised as, for example, PL Participant 1 (PL P1) (for Poland) and SA Participant 1 (SA P1) (for South Africa)</p>
<p>[3] Questionnaire surveys conducted with female and male participants</p>	<p>Coded as Questionnaire Participant 21 (QP21)</p>

Secondly, the findings of personal interviews in the magazine industry are presented, and thirdly, my content analysis of the selected magazines and advertisements is discussed.

7.1 The research findings of the fieldwork conducted with Polish and South African participants

In this chapter, I present my findings in sections, as I have thematically categorised data according to the methodology employed by Miles and Hubermann (2002) and Antonius (2003), since such methodology assisted me in teasing out the dense layers of data obtained from the various informants and also from the content analysis of the selected magazines. Research bias has been circumvented by the use of crosschecking questions, for example Section 7.1.2 contains a number of questions that cover similar issues. In the analysis, I categorised participants in terms of their cultural background, whether it be Polish or South African. Furthermore, I organised the South African respondents into ‘black’, ‘coloured’ and ‘white’ sub-groups, in order to allow for the analysis of possible differences in their responses. In line with the assumption that culturally diverse women would differ very little in their responses to the set questions, the data showed little variance in their responses. This is because some question categories were discerned as universal categories, involved with the fulfilling of certain basic needs (such as the need for safety, socialisation or self-realisation), as present in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, while other questions were driven by cultural context. Most of the descriptive questions relating to personal feminine needs were analysed without specific reference in terms of cultural background. The similarity of response is reflected in the graphs (see Figures 7.1 and 7.2). However, the last set of questions relating to women’s cultural backgrounds was analysed in depth as regards cultural and identity issues pertaining to self-image.

7.1.1 The respondents’ rationale for purchasing women’s magazines

In response to a question asking the participants to name their favourite magazine and to provide reasons for this choice, the most popular magazines in Poland and South Africa were found to be those featuring not only current fashion trends, but also the nurturing

of one's body. Advice about health and beauty, interior design, gardening and various advertisements informing readers about the latest beauty products were claimed to be essential reading. In addition, readers also preferred tabloids containing gossip about national and foreign celebrities. Among many current magazines on the market, the most popular are those featuring feminine matters.

This means that, in Poland, the most popular magazine is *Twoj Styl*, which is read by 30% of the respondents, followed by *Elle* magazine, which is read by 20% of the respondents, and *Cosmopolitan*, which is read by 15% of the respondents, after which the drop is slight to *Claudia*, which is read by 12% of the respondents, and *Success*, which is read by 8% of the respondents, with *Avanti* making up 5%, coming last of the popular choices. In South Africa, the most popular magazine seems to be the *Drum* magazine, which is read by 20% of the respondents, followed by *Cosmopolitan*, which is read by 16% of the respondents, and then *Huisgenoot*, which is read by 14% of the respondents, and *Glamour*, which is read by 13% of the respondents, after which there is a slight drop to *Elle*, which is read by 10% of the respondents, *Fairlady*, which is read by 8% of the respondents, and *You* magazine, which comes last with 5%. Please note, although the data collected by means of the questionnaire survey in South Africa indicates that 20% of the participants (the majority) read *Drum* magazine, the selection of the culturally relevant third magazine remained *Fairlady*. The reason for this is that, as a culturally diverse group response (not only that of the black and coloured respondents, who all chose *Drum*), the *Fairlady* was selected by the group as the magazine of choice. (Data indicated that 10% of black, 15% of coloured and 25% of white participants chose *Fairlady*).

The above-mentioned magazines are the most widely read by women, which some participants in Focus Groups 1 and 2 explained in the following ways:

“Cos you almost always get free stuff” (SA FG 1); “I gain the extra knowledge” (PL FG 1); “short reading materials” (SA FG 2); “it’s diverse and I love all the fashion” (SA FG 1); and “because it always has gossip about celebrities” (PL FG 2).

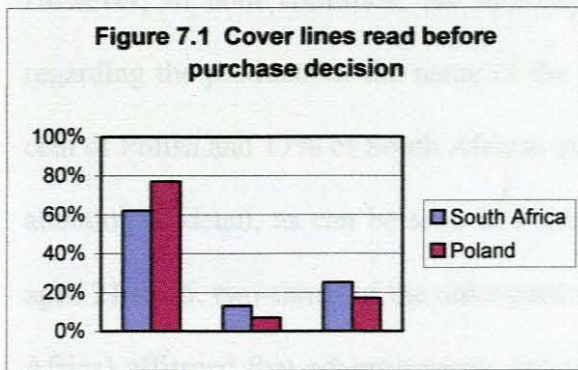
Some readers, usually older ones, are faithful to particular magazines, such as *Fairlady* or *Claudia*, because they value intelligent content that is written by their favourite journalists. The same women also expressed an interest in taking care of not only their body, but also their spirit and mind. Some responded as follows:

“I enjoy making complex things such as sewing, so it stimulates my mind and technical ability” (a participant in SA FG 2); “it has fashion tips, interesting ads and articles about famous people” (PL P7); “articles on what not to do or wear” (a participant in PL FG 2); “to read all about the women’s spiritual guidance and true stories” (a participant in SA FG 2); “to read the Hollywood gossip stories and mostly for recipes, short stories and fashion” (PL P4).

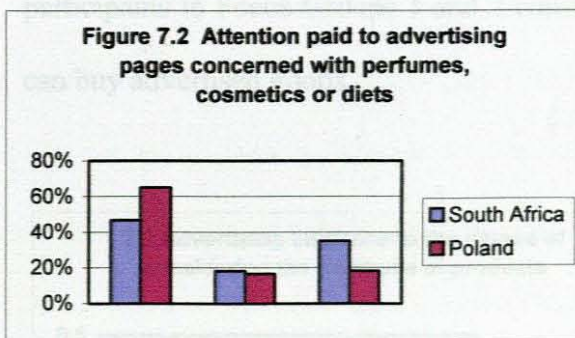
Evidently, women read women’s magazines in a variety of contexts. For example, in response to questioning of the reason behind the purchasing of magazines, of the 60 respondents in Poland, and 60 in South Africa, about 25% of Polish and 23% of South African questionnaire participants said that they were interested in articles, interviews and stories. Also, of the 60 respondents in Poland and 60 in South Africa, about 15% in Poland and 20% in South Africa admitted that colourful covers, advertisements, interesting pictures and free gifts encouraged them to purchase a particular magazine. In both countries, 25% of Polish and 30% of South African participants stated that they tend to seek the latest information about fashion, new cosmetics, beauty and culinary advice in colourful magazines. Clearly, for many respondents, articles relating to their personal interests were important. In other words, magazine content has to relate to some aspects of a reader’s identity and to serve the need for entertainment, amongst the other reasons stated above, in order to maintain its readership.

7.1.2 The respondents’ rationale for paying attention to advertising

In response to the question as to whether cover lines are read before a purchase decision is made, in both countries the majority of women (62% in South Africa and 77% in



Poland) admitted to reading the cover lines before they decide to purchase a magazine (see Figure 7.1). The other participants chose the following categories in South Africa: 13% responded 'no', while 25% answered 'sometimes', while, in Poland, 7% said 'no' and 17% 'sometimes'.



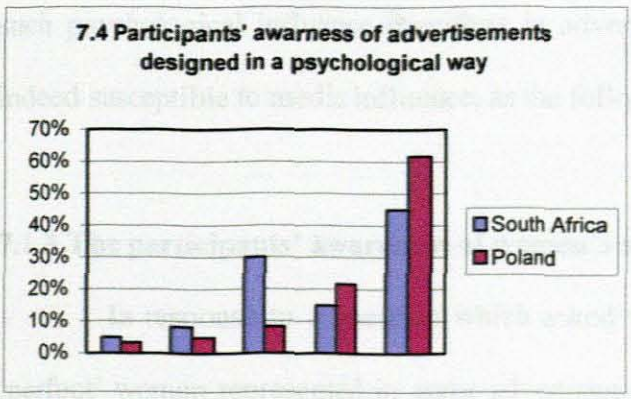
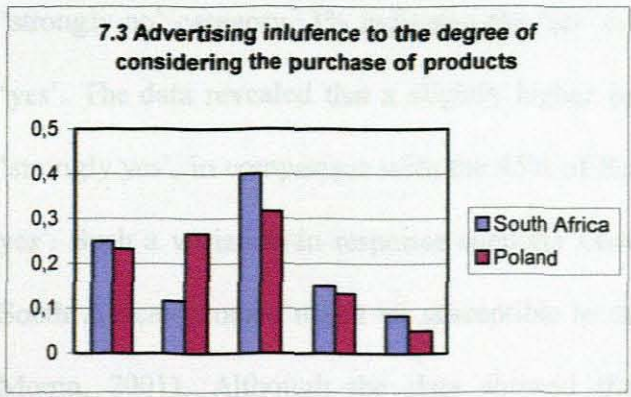
In response to the question as to whether participants pay attention to pages of advertisements concerned with perfumes, cosmetics or diets, the results indicate that in both South Africa and Poland respondents pay sufficient attention to the

advertising pages, as seen in Figure 7.2. Forty-seven percent of South African women chose to respond 'yes', 18% 'no' and 35% 'sometimes'; while, in Poland, a slightly higher proportion of women, 65% answered 'yes', 17% 'no' and 18% 'sometimes'. At this point, a question was asked regarding which elements caught the participants' attention while viewing advertisements.

In both countries, participants in Focus Group 1 and 2 explained that most often they pay attention to graphic elements, original ideas or the presentation of the product, which is recognised especially in terms of size and colour. They stated that advertising should attract one's attention by means of colour, with intriguing content and slogans, beautiful pictures, models and especially through attached samples. Both the visual effect and general aesthetic composition of balanced visual weights is important (as discussed in Section 5.7.1.1).

However, in both countries, the minority of participants omit to pay attention to detail regarding the products or the name of the brand when viewing advertisements. Eighteen per cent of Polish and 17% of South African questionnaire participants stated that they do not pay attention to detail, as can be seen in Figure 7.2. In contrast to a younger sample of women aged 21 to 35, two-thirds of the older participants aged 36 to 55 (30 in Poland and 30 in South Africa) affirmed that advertisements fail to attract their attention. The rest of the women in both countries stated that they had no opinion in this regard or stated that they seldom paid specific attention to advertisements. However, in both countries, essential information for the participants in Focus Groups 1 and 2 constituted store location, referring to where the reader can buy advertised goods.

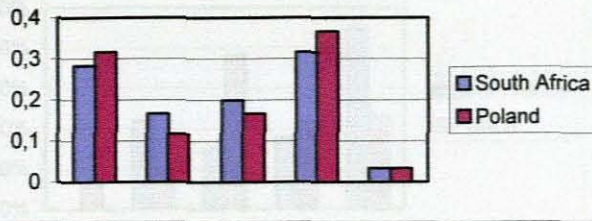
5% the no' category, 30% the 'strongly no' category.



In response to the question asking whether advertisements within the categories of advice, perfume, cosmetics, diets and fashion arouse interest to such a degree that the respondents would consider purchasing the products concerned, 32% of Polish and 40% of South African women stated that they were 'unsure' as to whether they were sufficiently influenced to buy the advertised products. For Poland, 23% answered 'strongly no', 27% 'no', 13% 'yes' and 5% 'strongly yes'. In

South Africa the 'strongly no' category constituted 25%, the 'no' category 12%, the 'yes'

7.5 Asking participants whether they would like to live like the "perfect" women represented in some advertisements



category 15% and the 'strongly yes' category 8%, as shown in Figure 7.3. Such a result may indicate an overwhelming awareness among the participants in the survey of advertising ploys,

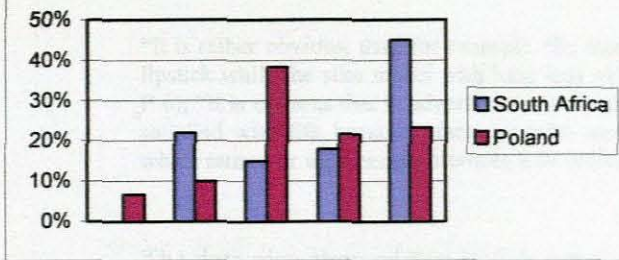
as can be seen in Figure 7.4. The hypothesis was tested by posing a question as to whether the participants were aware of the fact that advertisements might be psychologically designed in such a way as to trigger a product purchase. Participants indicated the following categories: in South Africa in response to this question: 5% of participants chose the 'strongly no' category, 8% the 'no' category, 30% were unsure and 15% indicated 'yes'; in Poland 3% chose the 'strongly no' category, 3% indicated the 'no' category, 8% were unsure and 22% indicated 'yes'. The data revealed that a slightly higher proportion of Polish women (62%) answered 'strongly yes', in comparison with the 45% of South African women who answered 'strongly yes'. Such a variation in response supports Lowe-Morna's argument that culturally diverse South African women might be susceptible to media influences to different degrees (Lowe-Morna, 2001). Although the data showed that participants were aware of advertising manipulation, women in both South Africa and Poland admitted that they did not know how such psychological influence manifests in advertising. The findings indicates that they are indeed susceptible to media influence, as the following data suggests.

However, the majority of women (62%) in Poland, and 45% in South Africa,

7.1.3 The participants' awareness of women's stereotypical representation

In response to a question which asked whether women would like to live like the 'perfect' women represented in some advertisements; in both countries two different groups of women made similar choices, as seen in the graph in Figure 7.5. In both Poland and South Africa one group of participants answered 'yes', with a score of 32% in South Africa and that

7.6 The awareness of women's stereotypical representation



were unsure and 3% chose to respond 'yes'; in Poland, 12% of participants indicated the 'no' category, 17% stated that they were unsure, and 3% chose the 'yes' category. The reason for such a difference of opinion amongst participants is partly explained in Figure 7.6, which illustrates that, although the participants agreed that women are represented in stereotypical ways, some of them would, nevertheless, like to live like the 'perfect' women represented in the advertised world.

In response to the question as to whether women are represented in advertisements in stereotypical ways, participants chose the following categories: in South Africa, only 10% of participants indicated the 'no' category, 15% were unsure and 18% indicated the 'yes' category; in Poland, 7% of the participants indicated the 'strongly no' category, 10% the 'strongly no' category, 38% stated that they were unsure and 22% indicated the 'yes' category.

However, the majority of South African women, 45%, in contrast to the number of Polish participants, affirmed that in advertisements women are represented in stereotypical ways, as can be seen in Figure 7.6. The South African female participants stated that women are represented as youthful and beautiful with perfect figures, legs, hairstyles and lifestyles which contradict the lifestyles of the majority of women living in the 'real' world. In contrast to South African women, only 23% of Polish participants answered that women are

of 37% in Poland, while another group answered 'strongly no', with a score of 28% in South Africa and 32% in Poland. The rest of the participants in South Africa indicated 17% for the 'no' category, while 20%

represented in stereotypical ways, while the rest were 'unsure', with a score of 38%. The following arguments of participants PL 6 and 7 illustrate why the majority of Polish participants were unsure as to whether women are represented in stereotypical ways:

"It is rather obvious, that, for example, the model with subtle and full lips will advertise lipstick while the slim model with long legs without cellulite will promote the balm" (PL P 6); "It is obvious that in advertisements the majority of people are young, beautiful and satisfied with life because otherwise who would pay attention to the advertisement in which retired or ugly people promote new perfumes?!" (PL P 16)

The data also showed that Polish women paid attention to the fact that those heroines in advertisements, apart from being elegant, are also desirable, graceful, and are generally perceived to have good taste. Their comments indicated that although, in a simplified way, advertising reinforces the lifestyles of women in the 'real' world, for a woman to be perceived as elegant or desirable, certain aspects of stereotypical representation have to be reflected by her. In addition, the survey conducted with 30 male participants in Poland and South Africa, in response to a question that asked whether a woman's role is influenced or determined by advertising content in the media, two-thirds of the males answered affirmatively:

"Yes, woman's role is influenced or determined by advertising content in the media – magazines give guys a different perception of women" (PL QP1); "Yes, magazines and the media represent the daily world and lifestyle and everybody wants to be normal" (PL, QP3); "Yes, mags portray women as strong and independent and influence them to be like that" (SA, QP6); "Yes, a great deal – the media has such a huge influence" (SA, QP22).

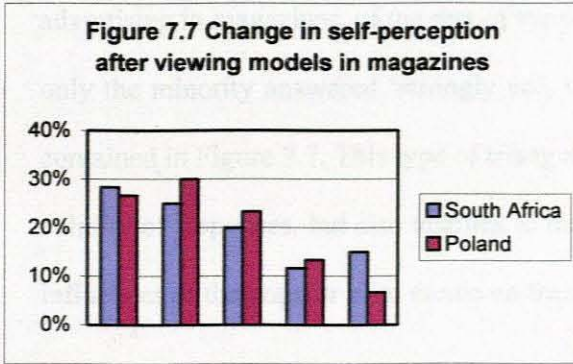
In response to the question which asked whether women are represented in stereotypical ways, the majority of male participants were of the opinion that women are, indeed, represented in such ways. According to some of the male participants:

"They are, because women around the world read these magazines and want to look, feel and dress like them" (SA, QP30); "Advertising generally gears readers towards stereotypes" (SA, QP15); "Women are represented as sexual objects and guys perceive them in this way" (PL, QP12); "Sex sells, so most ads place women in a sexually appealing manner" (PL, QP17).

It seems that, in male perception, women's role is determined by advertising content in the media.

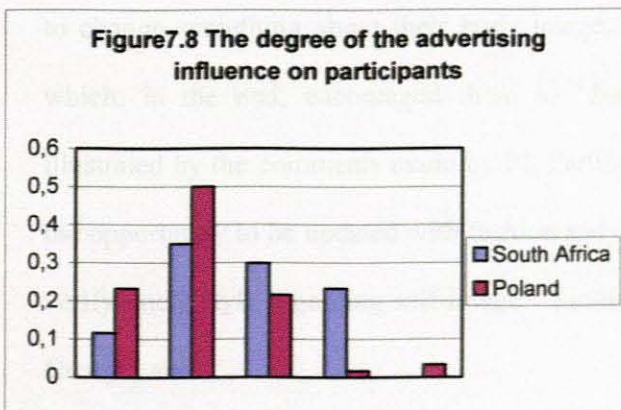
7.1.4 The degree of advertising influence exerted on participants' attitudes

The next triangulation of four questions reveals the ambiguous nature of participants' responses regarding the influence of advertising and the content of magazines.



In response to the question as to whether, after viewing models in magazines, the way in which a participant perceived herself changed, in both countries the majority of participants indicated 'no'. As seen in Figure 7.7, the answers of

South African participants predominated in the 'strongly no' category, with a score of 28% and Polish participants indicated 'no', with a score of 30%. The rest of the participants (25%) in South Africa indicated 'no', 20% were unsure, 12% chose 'yes', and 15% said strongly yes, indicating that after viewing models in magazines, the ways in which participants perceived themselves changed. In Poland, 30% participants indicated 'no', 23% were unsure, 13% chose 'yes', and 7% also admitted that after viewing models in magazines, their perception regarding their body-image changed.



With the use of cross-checking questions, the data reflected in Figure 7.8 supports the perception that the participants were neither influenced by the content nor by the advertising presented in magazines. The majority of Polish women (50%) answered

negatively. Although, as seen in Figure 7.7, at least 20% of Polish participants answered that

their self-perception was influenced by their viewing of models in magazines, in comparison to the data presented in Figure 7.8, ironically only 5% of participants indicated that they were influenced by the content and advertising in magazines. Similarly, in South Africa the data revealed, that although Figure 7.8 reflects that the majority of participants chose to answer 'no', with a score of 35% indicating that they are not influenced by the content and advertising in magazines, of the rest of the participants, 30% said that they were 'unsure', and only the minority answered 'strongly no', with a score of 12% in comparison with the data contained in Figure 7.7. This type of triangulation of data is not only useful in determining the validity of responses, but also testifies to the ambiguity that women experience regarding the influences of the popular print media on them.

Although in Figures 7.7 and 7.8, the data indicates that women felt that their self-perception was not changed after viewing models and that they were not influenced by the content and advertising in magazines, their responses were contradictory in relation to another question which enquired about the ways in which magazines influence attitudes towards body- or self-image amongst both younger and older female participants in both countries, and as to whether the magazines sought to inspire the participants to change something about themselves, to inform them or to encourage them to shop.

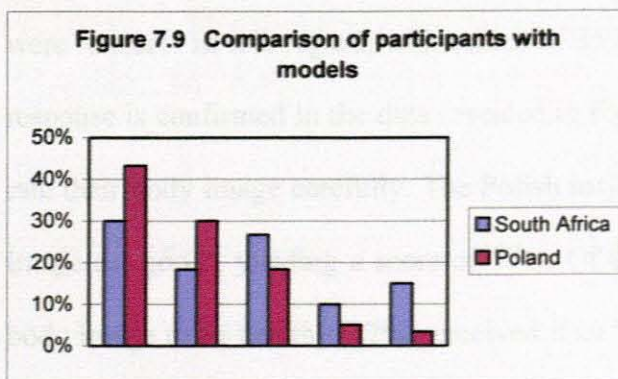
The majority of all participants (70%) responded that magazines often inspired them to change something about their body image, or informed them about advertised products which, in the end, encouraged them to 'discipline' their bodies. Such a perception is illustrated by the comments made by PL Participant 2, who stated that: "magazines give one the opportunity to be updated with fashion and cosmetic trends, which, in turn, permits one to verify one's style regarding self-image". Similarly, according to some participants in Focus Group 1 and 2:

“Advertising does make you wish you were slimmer and prettier, but at the same time I realise that, for most, it’s impossible to look that way and remain healthy anyway. I’m not going to starve myself to look like them” (PL FG 2); “It makes me feel happy, but sometimes it always gives me the opportunity to go and buy something that I saw in those magazines” (SA FG 1); “In no way do I feel jealous or sad about myself, but I realise it does somehow inspire me to look after myself” (SA FG 2).

In addition, in both countries the younger participants in Focus Group 1 acknowledged that advertisements encouraged them to shop in order to change some aspect of their appearance, such as their hairstyle or clothes, while older participants in Focus Group 2 claimed to feel more inspired to change something in their surroundings, whether in respect of interior decoration or garden design, and also that advertisements encouraged older respondents to participate in some kind of competition or preparation of new culinary recipes. According to an older participant (SA 3):

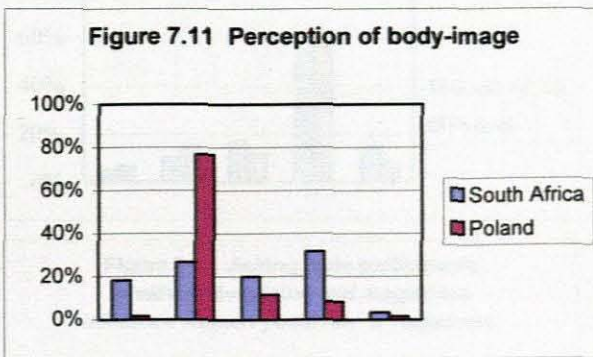
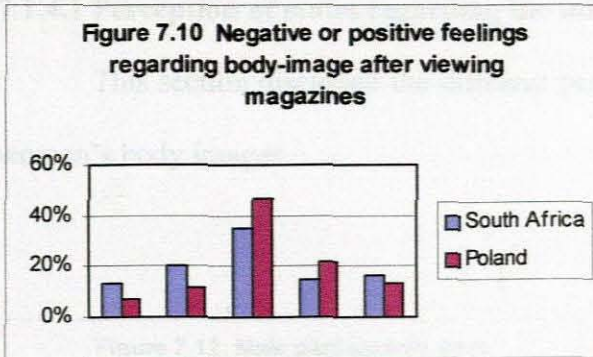
“I am not inspired by magazines regarding my body- or self-image. It might make me feel slightly happier that I am past the age of caring a lot about my physical appearance, and more about my surroundings. I know what I feel comfortable in.”

Furthermore, data indicated that only one third of participants was not interested in the advertised products due to their expense, but, according to an argument advanced by SA Participant 2: “I still love to buy magazines, be updated, and then put them aside on the shelf” (SA P2).



In response to the question which asked whether participants compare themselves to the women featured in advertisements, the majority of participants indicated that they did not compare themselves (see Figure 7.9). Thirty per cent of South African women answered ‘strongly no’ to this question in relation to the majority of Polish women (43%). The rest of the participants (18%) in South

Africa indicated 'no', while 27% were unsure, 10% chose to respond 'yes' and 15% indicated 'strongly yes'. In Poland, 30% of participants indicated 'no', 18% were unsure, 5% chose 'yes' and 3% indicated the 'strongly yes' category. Although the majority of women stated that they do not compare themselves to models, and are not influenced by advertisements in relation to the following questions, they again contradicted themselves.



As discussed in response to Figures 7.7 to 7.9, the data indicated that the participants felt that they were not influenced after viewing magazines, with the data obtained in response to the question as to whether participants have negative or positive feelings about their body image after viewing magazines revealing that participants had mixed feelings regarding their own body image. As can be seen in Figure 7.10, in both countries, the majority of participants chose to answer that they

were 'unsure' in this regard, with scores of 35% in South Africa and 47% in Poland. Such a response is confirmed in the data revealed in Figure 7.11, which shows that women tended to rate their body image carefully. The Polish majority of sampled women perceived their body image as 'good', yielding a score of 77%. Of the rest of the participants 2% perceived their body image to be healthy, 12% perceived it as 'excellent', while only 2% stated that they did not care about their body image. South African women had divided opinions in this regard, with scores varying between 18% declaring a 'healthy' body image, 27% a 'good' body

image, 20% an 'excellent' body image, 32% indicating that their body image could be better, and only 3% claiming that they did not care. Such varying data reveals that the perception of body image among culturally diverse South African women is linked with the effect that media influence has on them. Here, again, this type of triangulation of data is useful in determining the validity of responses.

7.1.4.1 Perception of males regarding the influence exerted by magazines on women

This section discussed the different perceptions of men regarding media influence on women's body images.

Figure 7.12 Male participants were asked to what degree a magazine's content influence women.

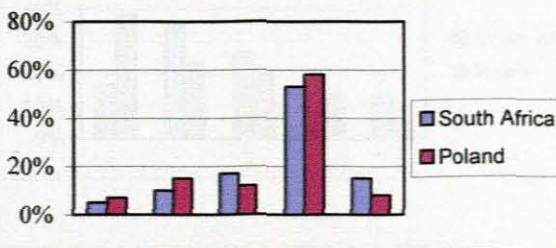
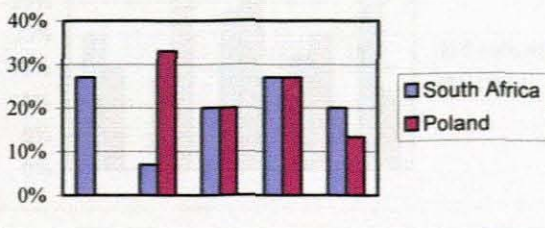


Figure 7.13 Asking male participants whether advertising and magazines influence women positively or negatively.

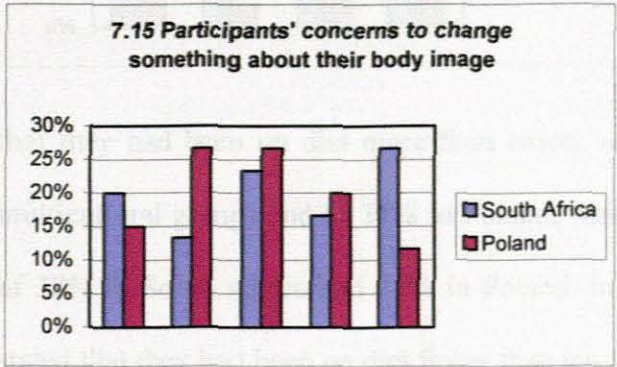
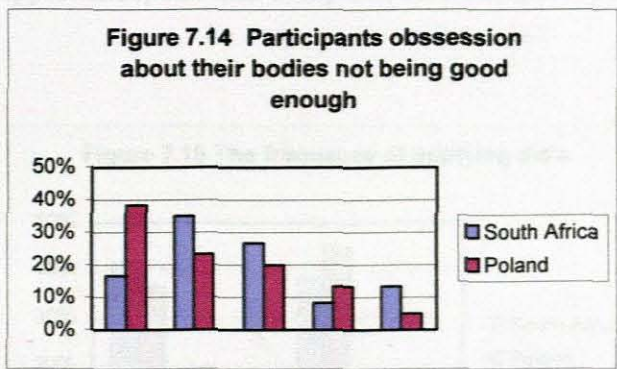


Thirty males in South Africa and 30 in Poland participated in the survey. In response to the question asking to what degree a magazine's content and advertising messages influence women, the majority of both countries' participants (58% in Poland and 53% in South Africa) indicated that women are largely influenced, as can be seen in the data shown in Figure 7.12. The rest of the participants (5%) in South Africa indicated 'strongly no', 10% indicated

'no', 17% claimed that they were unsure, while 15% agreed that they are influenced by women's magazines. In Poland, 7% of the participants indicated 'strongly no', 15% indicated 'no', 12% were unsure, while 8% agreed that they are influenced by women's magazines. However, as can be seen from the data provided in Figure 7.13, in both countries men had

divided opinions about whether advertising and magazines influence women positively or negatively. Similarly, in both countries, 20% of the participants claimed that they were 'unsure' and 27% responded 'yes', while in Poland the rest of participants replied 'no', with a score of 33%. In South Africa, 27% of participants chose the 'strongly no' category. These answers, in relation to those in Section 7.7.3, indicate that men have different perceptions of women and what constitutes the ideal woman, which means that, for some, women are influenced positively, as is further explored in relation to the answers to other questions.

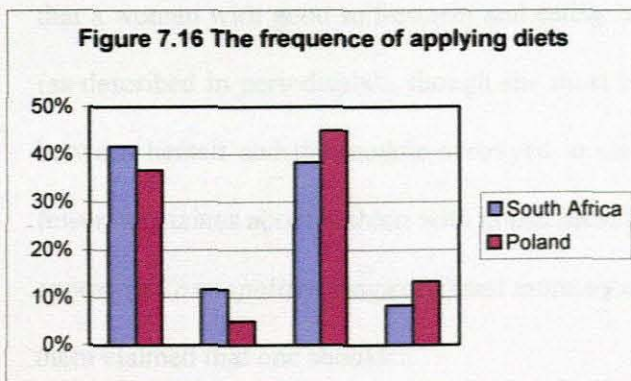
7.1.5 The respondents' rationale for objectifying attitudes towards their bodies



PL Participant 3 (a psychologist) was of the opinion that even women who obsessively take care of their bodies would never admit to the fact that they are so obsessed; she also stated that sometimes every woman has the need to change something about their look. As is indicated in Figure 7.14, although the majority of Polish participants (38%), in relation to 35% of the South African participants do not feel obsessed about their bodies, they would, nevertheless, like to

change something about them. The rest of South African participants (17%) indicated 'strongly no', 27% were unsure, 8% answered 'yes', and 13% answered 'strongly yes'. In Poland, 23% of the participants indicated 'no', 20% were unsure, 13% answered 'yes', and 5% answered 'strongly yes'. As the data suggests, the majority of Polish and South African

women admitted that they would willingly change something about their bodies, as is illustrated by the data presented in Figure 7.15. In South Africa, 20% of participants chose 'strongly no', 13% indicated 'no', 23% were unsure, 17% answered 'yes' and 27% answered 'strongly yes'. In Poland, 15% of participants chose 'strongly no', 27% indicated 'no', 27% were unsure, 20% answered 'yes' and 12% answered 'strongly yes'. As a few participants in SA Focus Group 1 pointed out: "Believe in yourself and do not worry what others think. But, in reality, this will never happen, because all women have some sort of negative body image", as can be seen in the data shown in Figure 7.15. Not surprisingly, such data is backed up by numerous surveys which suggest that a large number of women are dissatisfied with their appearance, and that many describe themselves as too fat (Wolf, 1990; Woodward, 2004).



In response to the question asking whether participants have ever been on a diet, again, in both South Africa and Poland two different groups of women indicated similar choices. One group of participants answered

that they had been on diet more than twice, with a score of 42% in South Africa (for the multicultural group) and of 37% in Poland, while another group answered 'no', with a score of 38% in South Africa and 45% in Poland. In South Africa, the rest of participants (12%) stated that they had been on diet fewer than ten times, while 8% of the participants said that it was hard to say how many times they had been on diet. In Poland, 5% of the participants indicated that they had been on diet fewer than ten times, and 13% of the participants said that it was hard to say. As can be deduced from the data provided in Figure 7.16, in terms of taking care of their body-image, women have similar attitudes across cultures.

In response to a question that asked what women can do to avoid the development of a negative body image and eating disorders, both Polish and South African women's responses indicated that one should distance oneself from advertising content. In other words, one should not take articles and advertisements too seriously, but rather adopt a rational approach to them; readers must not be influenced unduly by the media, but rather choose what is good for oneself from what is available: when one wants to make changes, they should not occur at all costs and against one's rational beliefs. In addition, by using healthy reasoning and intellect everyone should try to accept their own body, which should lead to the development of a healthier body image. Women should be realistic, rather than paying too much attention to magazine content.

In contrast, one-third of all participants (60 in Poland and 60 in South Africa) stated that a woman with good self-esteem and eating habits is a woman who follows a healthy diet (as described in periodicals!), though she must be mentally aware of the various differences between herself and the models portrayed in magazines. These participants advised reading fewer magazines about fashion with nonsensical tests and advice columns (such as frequently appear in *Cosmopolitan* magazine) and more about health (such as *Health* or *Shape*). Some of them claimed that one should:

"Figure out the best way to achieve confidence and self-esteem without any support from periodicals" (SA P5); "Should draw satisfaction from many different fields of life" (PL P6); "Should realise that in women's magazine pictures of models are not natural" (PL P4).

Once again, in the above-mentioned statements of participants in both Poland and South Africa, the majority of women did not refer to themselves personally, but rather advised 'other' women what to do. Thus, the ambiguity that women feel towards their own bodies in relation to advertised bodies becomes clear.

In response to the next two questions, participants pointed out that some women's magazines have a negative influence on them, while others have a positive influence on their self-image. However, ultimately the all-over content analysis illustrated that magazines emphasised the management and enhancement of the body itself, that is, the disciplining of the body.

7.1.7 Media influence on women's body-image

The following examples illustrate some of the respondents' answers to question 31³, which asked what magazines on the South African and Polish markets have a negative influence on their attitude towards their body and self-image, as well as to question 32, which asked participants whether there are any magazines that may positively influence their attitude. The majority of Polish participants agreed that most magazines have a negative influence on their self-image and that magazines featuring health and fitness content should have a more positive influence, as is reflected in the following responses:

Question 31: "Mostly all magazines have some kind of negative influence" (PL FG 1); "Most fashion magazines have a negative influence on women's self-image, including *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* as they exploit the stereotype" (PL FG 2).

Question 32: Participant 6: "Those magazines which do not feature starving models representing fashion have a positive influence on one's body-image" (PL FG 2); Participant 41: "Magazines about health and fitness have a more positive influence on my self-image" (PL FG 1).

The majority of South African white participants were of the opinion that, in some ways, all magazines have some sort of negative *and* positive influence, and that, in the end, it is up to the reader to find a balance between the world depicted in magazines and the real one, as reflected in the following responses:

Q31: "*Shape*, they have rude ads to (the) overweight people" (PL FG 1); "*Cosmo* – too many super models – makes you want to go jogging, why do we want to see the 'perfect' person in swimwear?" (PL FG 1); "*Sports Illustrated*, *FHM* – women are prize-winning trophies; some of the *Cosmo* pictures – women have more dimensions than lying on a bed in next to nothing"; Participant 11: "*Cosmo*, *Elle*, *Glamour* etc. all tell young girls that you should be beautiful and well-dressed!!! It makes you realise you are not those things." (PL FG 2)

³ Descriptive questions are numbered from this section onwards, and are not represented on the bar-chart.

Q32: “*Glamour* – positive insight towards your skin and make-up advice” (SA P1); “*Health* – actually has a positive side towards exercise, and what you can do to improve your image – but it’s all up to you!”(SA P 5).

In the following responses, South African coloured participants clearly affirmed that the ways in which women are represented in media does not relate to everyday reality and, therefore, the influence that magazines have should rather be assessed from a personal point of view:

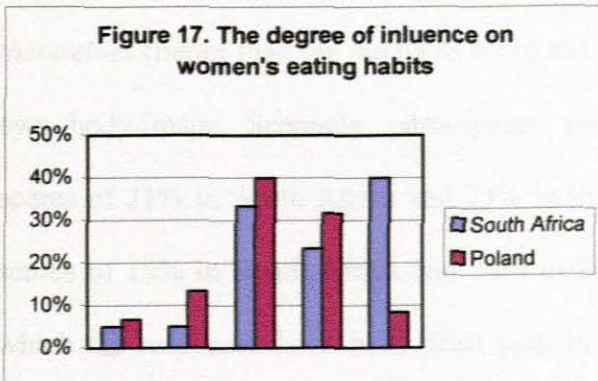
Q31: “*Cosmopolitan* – only use white and thin people for advertisements” (SA P 6); “Magazines don’t have a negative influence on my attitude towards my body and self-image.” (SA FG 2)

Question 32: “Yes, *Sarie*, because it inspires the people to have a better life” (SA FG 2); “Yes, *Huisgenoot* – they don’t always have thin models in their magazine, but also Donna-Claire’s models advertising their clothes.” (SA P1)

South African black women clearly claimed that most magazines, even those related to their cultural context, have a negative influence. However, they also stated that the only ones that could have any positive influence on their self-perception and body-image are those South African magazines that relate to their cultural context, as reflected in the following responses:

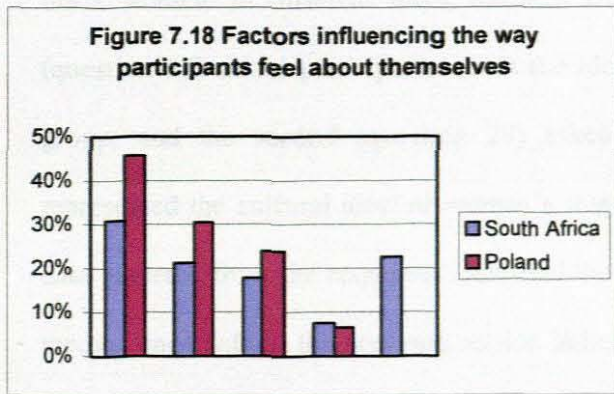
Q 31: “*GQ* – portrays women as sex symbols, *SL* – portrays women as alcoholics and sex toys” (SA FG 1); “*O* – takes pride in being fat. It is to uplift overweight women, however, it does not say ‘look after yourself’, it says ‘be proud of being fat!’ (SA P7); “*Drum, True Love, Fairlady*, there aren’t any” (SA P8).

Q 32: “*Drum*, because it has a positive influence on my attitude towards my body and self-image (SA P7); “*True Love* – they reveal the real beauty that is inside women” (SA FG 1);



However, in response to a question asking whether magazines influence women’s eating habits, the majority of South African women (63%) (23% opting for the ‘yes’ category and 40% for the ‘strongly yes’ category) answered that magazines definitely

influence women's eating habits, while 40% of Polish participants chose the 'unsure' category and another 40% (32% opting for the 'yes' category and 8% for the 'strongly yes' category) indicated that women's eating habits are influenced by magazines. The rest of the South African participants (5%) indicated 'strongly no' and 'no'. In Poland, 7% of participants indicated 'strongly no', while 13% chose to answer 'no'. As can be seen in Figure 7.17, such a variable response between South African and Polish participants partly relates to the cultural factors influencing consumer behaviour, particularly in terms of the dimensions of collectivism and individualism, as discussed in Section 3.8.



Once again, a noticeable difference exists between the responses of the participants, when they perceive that a question has personal relevance, as opposed to when they perceive that a question is aimed at other women. The question, for which the results are

portrayed in Figure 7.18, pressurises participants to address themselves personally to answering the question. In both Poland and South Africa, the majority of women indicated that the factors influencing the way they feel about themselves primarily relate to 'self', with scores of 31% in South Africa and 46% in Poland, which means that participants see *themselves* (rather than the media as such) as taking charge of their perception regarding their own body-image. Secondly, participants' self-perception is influenced by 'family', with scores of 21% in South Africa and 30% in Poland, followed by the 'friends' category, with scores of 18% in South Africa and 24% in Poland. In relation to the previous questions to which the responses have been dealt with in Sections 7.7.2 to 7.7.4, in both countries the greater majority of women did not admit that the media might in any possible way influence

them, with the variance in score being minimal between only 8% in South Africa and 7% in Poland (see Figure 7.18). Such a finding is symptomatic of the fact that much ambiguity exists regarding the formation of body-image and self-perception, and that the power of media is able to a large degree to negate notions of 'natural' beauty in feminine identity construction.

7.1.7 The cultural ideal of women's shape in South Africa and Poland

The following section deals with questions concerned with the participants' cultural backgrounds, resulting in my dividing the women's responses according to their cultural backgrounds, such as those of Polish white women and of South African white, coloured and black women. In different ways, the next two questions address similar issues. The first (question 28) asked participants about the ideal physical shape of women in their cultural group, and the second (question 29) asked whether *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazine represented the cultural ideal of women's shape in the participant's country accurately. The data gathered from the responses identified the way in which participants were influenced by media, since data in the previous section indicated that the majority of women believed that everything influences them apart from the mass media.

Polish participant (2), in response to the first question, commented that the ideal women's shape in Poland is "thin, healthy, well-dressed, educated, independent, strong and good-looking", which corresponds to the statement made by participant FG PL 2 that "the appearance created by media is one of a slender tall blonde, good looking and tanned". These findings also correspond with the data represented earlier in Figure 7.6, where, in contrast to the responses received from South African participants, the majority of Polish participants (38%) stated that they were unsure as to whether women are represented in stereotypical ways in women's magazines. Data addressing the second question indicated that the majority of all

participants agreed that *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines closely represent the cultural ideal of women's shape in their country, as is articulated in the following responses:

Question 28: "Thin, good-looking, elegant, businesswoman" (PL FG 1); "Tall, thin, blond (QP44); "tall, thin, blonde, long legs, nice hair" (PL FG 1); Participant PL 7 pointed out: "A graceful woman, nice and pleasant face, well-groomed young body and slim, which is perhaps the general schema in all western countries, but the truth is different – with every type of beauty women are accepted and loved by someone."

Question 29: "Yes, because there are lots of slim and well-groomed girls that are career orientated" (PL FG 2); "Yes, all the models and celebrities they feature fit into the cultural (ideal) in some way" (PL FG 1); Participant PL 3 pointed out: "There are lots of women who are well-groomed, elegant with nice make-up, that look after themselves. Therefore, I would say that women depicted in those magazines in some way resemble women in reality."

As can be seen from the responses of Polish participants PL7 and PL3, contested views are held regarding the representation of women in magazines – the first one stating that "the truth" is that the reality differs from that which is depicted in magazines, and the second stating that what is depicted in magazines in fact does reflect reality.

South African white women answered similarly to Polish white women, with participant SA 3 commenting that, in her cultural white group, "skinny with an hourglass shape is generally preferred as the ideal women's shape". However, in relation to question 29, South African white women living, as they do, in a culturally diverse country admitted that *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines do not exactly represent the cultural ideal of women's physical shape. According to participant SA 1: "they do a pretty good job of representing what South African women would like to look like, in the context of well-looked after, well-groomed and well dressed, but that's about it". The majority of participants responded in the following ways:

Question 28: "Flat stomach, medium butt and boobs, perfect Barbie legs and you have to be tanned with a beautiful shape as well" (SA P 3); "Thin, pretty with big boobs and a nice ass. Basically, a swimsuit model" (SA FG 1); "Hourglass shape, perfectly tanned and muscled perfectly toned" (SA FG 1); "Slim – not skinny – toned and athletic" (SA FG 1).

Question 29: "Yes, women have toned hips, legs and stomachs with large breasts" (SA FG 2); "Yes, they represent the ideal but not always the 'normal majority'" (SA FG 1); "Yes and no, some women do look like that – but I think that make-up, lighting and computers can easily misrepresent the truth" (SA FG 2);

However, participant SA 2 more realistically pointed out: “for the white and coloured population – yes”. In contrast to previous responses, coloured women indicated that more curvaceous bodies are preferred, and that *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines do not represent the ideal cultural shape of women in South Africa. Comparing the data gathered in Section 7.7.5 regarding whether women’s magazines negatively influence women’s self-perception, for South African coloured women it was seen as difficult to associate with the magazine content, because of its direct appeal to Western standards of beauty. The majority explained that those magazines do not represent the ideal shape of women, as can be seen reflected in their responses:

Question 28: “I think that it cannot be put into specific groups” (SA FG 2); “Small body – not tanned” (SA FG 1); “There is no specific shape. However, more curved women are preferred over those who look like skeletons” (SA P9); “Healthy women with a bit of curves in the right places” (SA FG 1); A participant in FG 2 stated that “physical shape depends mostly on the age groups, the young models are more fresh, slender and funky, but as they grow older they become less image-conscious.”

Question 29: “No, because the magazines showcase the perfect women and our country has different types of women” (SA FG 2); “They always use thin ladies and mostly whites” (SA FG 1); “No, they are too thin and white” (SA P9); “No, they are too thin and white and beautiful” (SA FG 2); “No, they are too beautiful, thin and white and we are mostly coloureds” (SA FG 1).

Similarly to coloured women, South African black women also responded that those magazines do not represent the cultural ideal of women’s shape in their cultural group. According to one participant (SA7):

“Not at all! They don’t represent the cultural ideal of women’s figure, it’s too Western. They do not look at the women that exist. They promote good health, slim waists whereas the majority of healthy African figures do not have skinny waists, and normally African sizes are bigger.”

The largeness of buttocks and thighs due to the fat deposits in such areas to which South African black women are genetically inclined to, is known as steatopygia. The data gathered suggests that, although magazines assume a shared experience among women in terms of taking care of the body, they promote Western standards of beauty that are difficult to achieve for black women, as is reflected in the following answers:

Question 28: “Small top, thin hips and ass, but definitely not huge bodies, otherwise the men won’t approach” (SA FG 1); “Pear shape like Beyonce” (SA FG 1); “Nicely curved, not too

thin and not too big” (SA FG 1). According to interviewed participant SA 8: “I am black. Big bums are socially acceptable only if they are not extremely distorted and out of shape. For me, whether slim or fat, big-butted or small, health will reflect somehow” (SA P8).

Question 29: “No, you can hardly see a black or coloured woman in those magazines” (SA FG 1); “I don’t think so, because most black women are too big” (QP55); “No, because they are too thin, and there are no blacks”; Participant 60: “There are not enough black women and they are too thin.”

Figure 7.19 Asking whether South African participants buy *Cosmopolitan* magazine

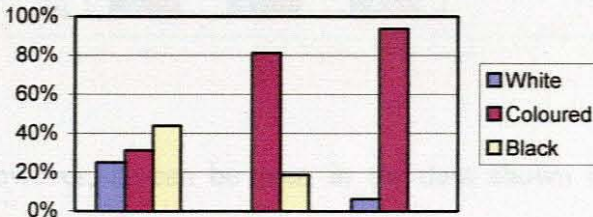
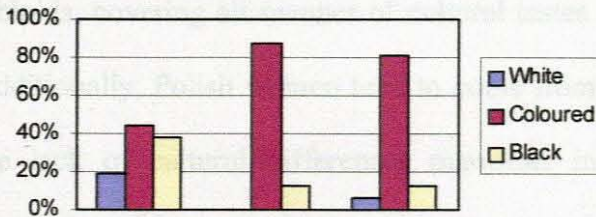
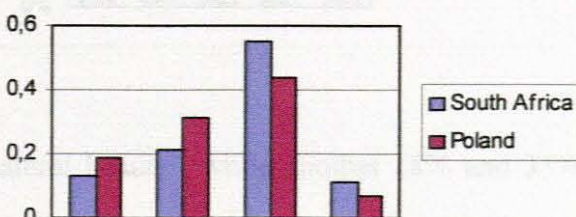


Figure 7.20 Asking whether South African participants buy *Elle* magazine



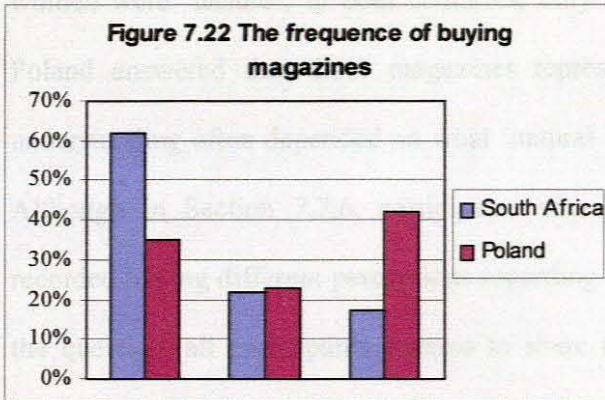
As can be seen, these magazines are mostly popular among white South African women, whereas over 80% of coloured- and black South African women do not purchase them. Thus, such findings clearly indicate that a cultural discourse exists in selected magazines.

Figure 7.21 The amount of magazines purchased monthly



As can be noticed, the perception of women’s bodies varies between participants who come from different cultural backgrounds. Also, the above-mentioned cultural issues in terms of women’s representation in magazines can be confirmed in relation to the two following questions asking whether participants buy *Cosmopolitan* magazine (see Figure 7.19), and whether participants buy *Elle* magazine (see Figure 7.20).

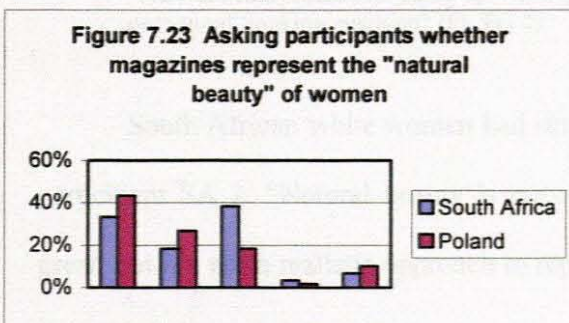
As can be seen, the advertisements articulate certain issues, such as those of social difference and hierarchy. In response to a question asking how frequently magazines are bought, and another question enquiring about the



number of magazines bought in both countries, respondents answered similarly. Figure 7.21 shows the data gleaned from responses encountered in both Poland and South Africa, with the majority of Polish (44%) and South African women (55%) purchasing magazines occasionally.

However, as can be seen in the data shown in Figure 7.22, in contrast to South African women, a higher proportion of Polish women tend to buy (42%) or buy frequently (62%) either 'one' or 'more than two' magazines. Such patterns of purchasing by Polish women tend to be due to the fact that the Polish market is saturated with various national magazines and tabloids, covering all manner of cultural tastes and preferences as is the South African one. Additionally, Polish women tend to come from a homogeneous cultural background, so that the lack of cultural differences manifests in similar patterns of consumerism, as was previously discussed in Section 3.8.

7.1.8 The examination of participants' opinions about the concept of 'natural beauty'



In response to the question asking participants whether magazines' content represented 'natural beauty', as seen in Figure 7.23, the majority of South African women (38%) were 'unsure' whether magazine content in fact represented

'natural beauty', while another 18% and 33% of South African participants stated that they felt strongly that 'natural beauty' is indeed not represented in those magazines. A higher

proportion of Polish women (43%) answered 'strongly no', while another 18% of Polish women were 'unsure'. In both countries, only 7% of women in South Africa and 10% in Poland answered that those magazines represent 'natural beauty'. In contrast, such an understanding often depended on what 'natural beauty' meant to each individual concerned. Although in Section 7.7.6, participants who come from different cultural backgrounds recorded having different perceptions regarding women's 'natural beauty', in another part of the question, all participants seemed to share the opinion that 'natural beauty' meant not wearing make-up and digital "corrections" made in the computer programme known as Photoshop. The following examples represent the majority of responses to the question.

Although the majority of Polish participants (PL 38%) expressed uncertainty as to whether women are represented in stereotypical ways in women's magazines (as is reflected in Figure 7.6), and although they answered that *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines closely represent the cultural ideal of women's shape in their country, in response to this question, Polish women admitted that magazines may inspire them to change some aspect of their being, though the magazines do not necessarily represent 'natural beauty'. According to participant PL 4: "A woman who has been told to pose for a camera can never be 'naturally' beautiful." This view was supported by other participants who often claim that natural beauty constitutes:

"No Photoshop alterations, less make-up, but inspires to look after yourself" (PL FG 1);
"Natural beauty means no make-up. Luckily the trend these days is to wear very little make-up or 'natural' looking make-up" (PL FG 2).

South African white women had similar sentiments, as is indicated by the comment of participant SA 2: "Natural beauty is *natural!* It is not airbrushed and edited, sure it looks great, but it's not a realistic approach to representing how we really look." Other respondents were of similar opinion, such as:

"Sometimes, it depends what your definition of natural beauty is" (A participant in SA FG 2);
"Mags might use girls with natural beauty, but only those who have the mainstream idea of

natural beauty (maybe big eyes, long hair, thick lips, long lashes)” (A participant in SA FG 1): “A woman needs to be in her own clothes, not posing and not airbrushed. All women are beautiful without all of those bells and whistles.” (SA P1)

South African coloured women also supported the view that women are not represented naturally, mostly because of their applied make-up and the artificial scenario created in studio settings. Most often they commented:

“Natural beauty is not wearing make-up, fairly slender but not looking starved...or one size for that matter” (SA P9); “They show there are people much more beautiful than you” (QP45); “In magazines, a natural looking woman is a woman who is not Photoshopped. Natural hair colour, eyes and complexion, no heavy make-up / fake tan” (SA FG 1); “Natural beauty is when you are happy with yourself. You are glowing with happiness because you are content and healthy” (SA FG 2); “Natural beauty is beauty without make-up” (SA P6).

South African black women pointed out that very seldom is African beauty depicted in those magazines. Apart from the make-up and generally unnatural portrayal, black women answered that the use of artificial hair also testifies to the fact that ‘natural beauty’ is not represented in those magazines. Such perceptions also result from the fact that many African women assimilate certain white female characteristics in order to fit the current standards of beauty, such as long straight hair and the wearing of contact lenses. The most popular answers were:

“Natural beauty in my country means no make-up, no chemicals. Just a simple, beautiful woman with natural African hair the way one was born. That’s ‘nature’” (SA FG 1); “Natural beauty means – a woman without make-up or artificial hair” (SA P8); “Without make-up and no hair extensions” (QP 56); “Without make-up and with natural hair” (QP 55); “It means being beautiful without applying make-up” (QP 57); “It means that the woman must be clean, beautiful and with make-up” (QP 58).

Again, as can be seen from the responses of the majority of South African black women, including that of participant (QP 58), a seeming contradiction applies regarding ‘natural beauty’.

In questions 33 and 34, which asked participants what is meant by beautiful women, a triangulation of data was applied in order to determine the validity of their responses. In answering Question 33, gathered data corresponded to that met with in response to Question

29, according to which Polish participants agreed that *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines closely represent the cultural ideal of women's shape in Poland. The adjectives that they used to describe beautiful women relate to the cultural ideal of a woman's shape in their country. Thus, amongst Polish women the most popular adjectives used to describe beautiful women were:

'confident', 'healthy', 'curvy', 'well-dressed', 'groomed and well put together', 'nurturing', 'loving', 'sensitive', 'unique', 'feminine', with a 'positive attitude', 'independent', 'elegant', with a 'gorgeous smile'.

In relation to Question 34, most responses supported the comment of a participant in Polish Focus Group 2 that a "natural body is being and looking natural, within the prescribed body weight – according to your age and height – with healthy skin and teeth, and the same beauty on the inside". Yet another comment of a participant in Polish Focus Group 1 was that "women who use some make-up to underline their beauty and who have a positive attitude are naturally beautiful women". Such a comment suggests that even natural beauty should be taken care of, in order to fulfil the criteria of naturally beautiful woman.

In response to questions 33 and 34, South African white women were of similar opinion that "women who keep their nails tidy, do not wear too much make-up, and wear clothes that suit their bodies are naturally beautiful. They look after themselves, they find themselves pretty even if they are fat or have a big mole" (stated by a participant in FG SA 1). Another statement of a participant in FG SA 2 was that "women that look beautiful without make-up, any size or shape but have beautiful radiant personalities that shine through make them beautiful".

Similarly, in response to questions 33 and 34, a comment made by a participant in South African Focus Group 1 shows how women are influenced by the media in terms of how strongly they internalize slogans. Participant SA FG 1 made the following comment: "Beauty

from the outside which you have from birth, like they say ... *you're born with it – L'Oreal*" was supported by South African coloured participants, who stated that, in order to be perceived as beautiful or as naturally beautiful, the beauty should firstly shine through in reflection of a beautiful personality, as is reflected in the following responses:

Question 33: "Healthy, with a sparkling personality, and a great attitude towards life" (SA P6); "Women with a good self-image"(QP37); "...that look after themselves, who won't let life get them down" (FG SA 2); "Women who are very friendly; women who make life easier for others" (FG SA 2); "Women who are healthy and wear suitable clothes for their shape" (QP39).

Question 34: "Women who don't wear make-up" (QP41); "Women on the cover of *Shape* magazine" (QP34); "Women with make-up, beautiful hair" (FG SA 1); "No make-up. Healthy" (QP 31); "Women with make-up and nice buttocks" (SA P6).

As can be seen in the responses of participants QP 41 and SA P6, oppositional discourse is formed regarding women's beauty. The first argued that beautiful women should wear make-up and be well-groomed, while the second participant was of the opinion that natural beauty meant being without make-up.

South African black participants commented that, for women to be perceived as beautiful, firstly, internal beauty should shine through, but that they should also take care of their bodies by wearing make-up and nice clothes. Although, in relation to question 33, black women shared the opinion of other participants coming from different backgrounds, the responses in relation to question 34 were culturally specific, due to the fact that participants replied that being naturally beautiful meant "one who wears no hair extensions" (QP 59), as is articulated in the following answers.

Question 33: "The beautiful woman is someone who puts on make-up and wears nice clothes" (QP47); "Beautiful women are women who make themselves beautiful" (FG SA 1); "Love, health, internal beauty will reflect on your skin, in your weight. If you find yourself beautiful, inside you will have no problem in going for a long walk ... and your body will shape" (SA P8).

Question 34: "Beautiful women must be natural with own hair and with no make-up" (OP57); "Is someone with natural beauty, without make-up" (SA P7).

7.1.9 The changing role of women in society

In response to Question 35, which asked whether women's role in society and the stereotypical way of portraying women in magazines had changed since South Africa and Poland became democratic countries, opinions varied in every group of participants. Some participants were of the opinion that women's situation had changed for the better, and that women are more independent and protected by various policies, while others claimed that women's portrayal and role in society had changed very little.

Most of the younger Polish participants were of the opinion that the woman's role in Poland had definitely changed for the better, meaning that women had become more independent, while enjoying more opportunities in the job market as is reflected in the following answers:

"Yes, I think so, women became more independent and are more protected by the policies" (PL P4);
"Of course, everything has changed for the better" (Q Participants 50, 54, 34, 20, 22, 26 and 56);

However, older and more experienced participants supported the comment made by a participant in Focus Group 2, who said:

"Before 1989, women had to work outside their households, weakening the family bonds. Therefore, after that year the majority of people wanted women to stay at home. Now, this fact manifests in advertisements portraying women as a 'Mother Pole' – dedicating herself to family, and also other types of stereotypes, which are now reinforced. Knowing that the professional advertising in a more Western style appeared only in the 1990s, I feel women's depiction has not changed yet."

Similarly, according to the comment made by SA Participant 10: "women's role in the economy and job market has changed considerably – we now sit above some men on the employment scale, yet portrayal of women in the media does not echo our development". This view was supported by other South African white women, who admitted that, although women have become more independent, the media still represent them in stereotypical ways, as is evident in the following responses:

"Some skin colours in magazines have changed, but nothing much else" (FG SA 2); "Women are now portrayed as breadwinners and not as homemakers and mothers" (FG SA 1); "Of course, women now have a well-respected place in the workplace, we are just as capable to run successful businesses as men, we have the power to be who we want to be in life. I think too

many young women are too drastically influenced by the gorgeous pictures they see in magazines. They should put more focus on what works for us as individuals.” (SA P2)

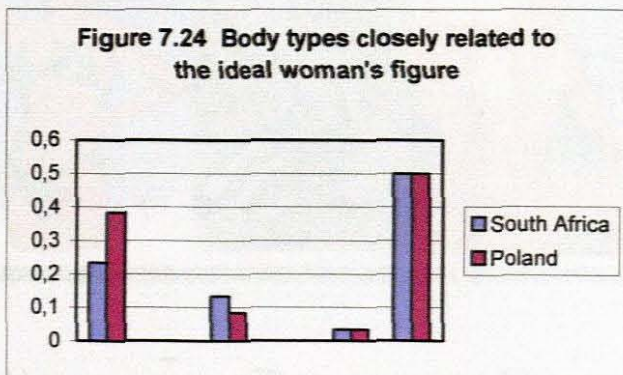
South African coloured women advanced the arguments of the previous two groups of women by noting that women also become more exposed when used as an advertised commodity, as the following arguments indicate:

“After reading *Huisgenoot*, women’s visual representation has not changed” (QP45); According to participants in Focus Group SA 2: “Back then, women covered their bodies – the tops were longer and there were no low-hip jeans. Even swimwear is getting smaller and thinner. Women today don’t have the class of women back then. Wearing less clothes won’t get you a long-term partner. Men like their women well-dressed, even if they look at those with little clothes on, they wouldn’t want them as their girlfriends.” Participant SA 6 stated: “Women’s representation has not changed, women still are just more and more naked.”

According to South African black women, whether women’s role in society and the stereotypical way of portraying women in magazines had changed was still a contested arena. South African participant 8 made the following comment: “There is a slight change, because now we have our rights as women, but in magazines we still need more exposure as black people, especially in magazines like *Elle* and *Cosmo*.” This comment was qualified and contested by other participants:

“There are more black people in the mags” (QP 55 and 56); “Yes, there are changes; there are more black people in the press” (FG SA 1); “I don’t see any changes, they are still stereotyped, beautiful and white as always” (QP59).

7.1.10 Gender differences in the perception of participants regarding women’s portrayal in the media



In response to a question in which participants had to choose a body type closely related to the ideal women’s figure in South Africa and Poland, women were found to share similar opinions, as reflected in Figure 7.24.

The majority of women (50%) in Poland and in South Africa (50%) chose a thin, model-like figure as represented by category 'F' (see Figure 7.26). In addition, 23% of participants in South Africa and 38% in Poland indicated a slim but curvy figure, as is represented in category 'A'. Only 13% of women in South Africa and 8% in Poland indicated a body type similar to that of a Barbie doll, category "C".

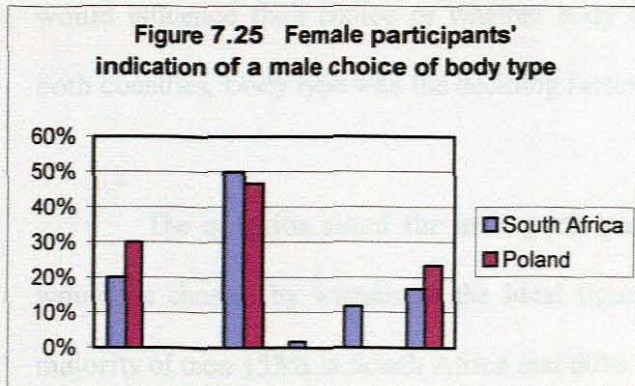
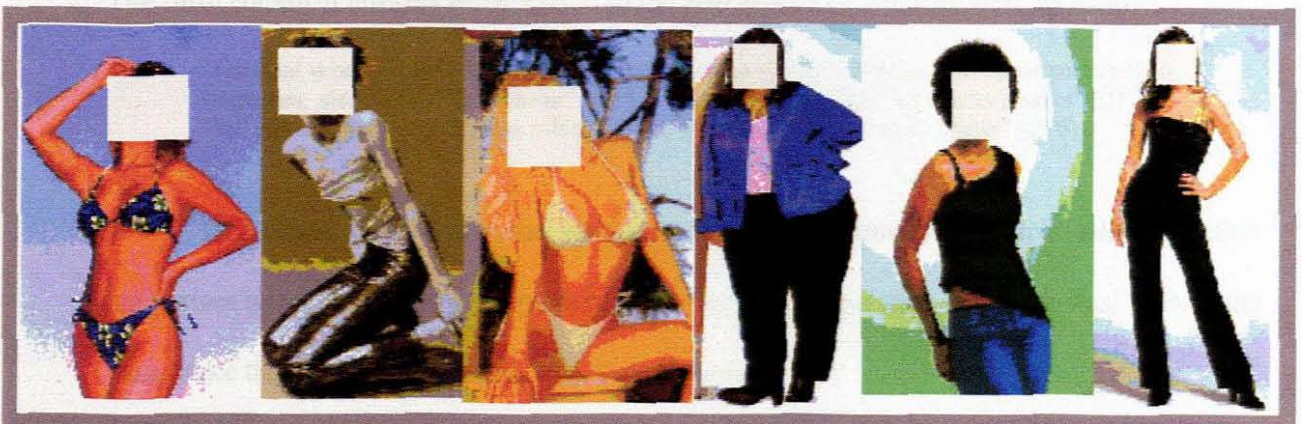


Figure 7.25 represents a response to a question in which participants were asked to select a figure or body type which a male would choose. Half of the female respondents in South Africa and 47% of women in Poland indicated figure 'C', which

resembled a Barbie doll. Their next choice was a figure represented in the 'A' category (which was slightly curvaceous), and a second, represented in the 'F' category (which was thin). However, in both countries the majority of women were mistaken in this assumption, as explained below (see Figure 7.26).

Figure 7.26



- A) B) C) D) E) F)

The survey conducted with 30 males in South Africa and 30 in Poland resulted in the majority of men in both countries choosing a thin, model-like body type as represented in category 'F'. Their second choice was the slightly curvaceous body type, as represented in category 'A' by 40% of South African men and 35% of Polish men selecting this type. In addition, in the South African questionnaire, women represented in the different categories had covered faces (in order to be nonsuggestive), and in Polish questionnaire women represented in the different categories had not covered faces. This was done in order to establish whether facial features would influence their choice or whether body type would be the major deciding factor. In both countries, body type was the deciding factor, since choices were very similar.

The question asked the male participants to select which of the figures portrayed would be chosen by women as the ideal figure in their culture. Similarly to women, the majority of men (53% in South Africa and 60% in Poland) chose a thin, model-like figure, as represented in category 'F'. This can be advanced by the following arguments in response to another question, which asked about the 'ideal' women's physical shape and size in the male participants' country or cultural group, the most popular answers among males in Poland were:

"It is probably an hour-glass figure, nicely toned stomach or a size 28 waist" (QP9); "Women with nice curves" (QP12); "thin" (QP3); "curves" (QP15).

The most common answers encountered in the South African samples were as follows:

"The ideal woman's shape depends on presence, most typically Western standards portrayed in magazines, slender" (QP2); "curves" (QP8, 10, 11, 12 14 and 17); "nice curvy shapes" (QP22); "Tall and slender in my African cultural group is ideal. *Coca-cola* bottle shape" (QP6).

It became clear from the responses to another question which asked whether magazines influence men's perception of ideal body types and size, that such was, indeed, the case, since the most popular answers in Poland were:

"Yes, it does, in magazines they tend to computerise images of women to make their bodies appear slimmer than they actually are" (QP7); "Yes, everyone wants a girl with a good body, so

by showing celebrities and sexy bodies, it makes men want that" (QP13); "Yes, all the women have similar figures in magazines" (QP16).

The South African responses indicated that men are influenced by the mainstream, stereotypical Western representations, as these arguments indicate:

"They all look alike" (QP4); "Yes, because it sets the standard in society, which then influences general perceptions and what one should expect or desire" (QP17); "Yes. Women in magazines are mostly slim" (QP7); "Yes, magazines (especially men's) are full of half-naked thin, beautiful women" (QP16); "Yes, when paging through a mag, such as *Cosmo*, you tend to believe that all women should look like models" (QP23).

The data showed that magazines reinforce the standards of Western beauty, which influence male perceptions regarding women's body image. The data also illustrated that magazines encourage women to modify their behaviour in order firstly to prioritise their bodies and, secondly, to prioritise the needs of males, which subsequently created a closed circle for the cult of the body.

7.2 A presentation of data regarding interviews conducted with individuals working in the advertising and magazine industry

In Poland, four individual interviews were conducted with two male designers working in an advertising agency. Another was conducted with a female designer working in the design department in *Cosmopolitan* magazine and a fourth with a marketing assistant working for *Twoj Styl* magazine. In South Africa, three individual interviews were conducted with an art director and a graphic designer working in an advertising agency with links to media work and a third with a senior designer in *Cosmopolitan*. These interviews were conducted in order to gain some perspective into advertising and magazine design from media professional's perspective.

All of those interviewed emphasised the importance of the process of visual communication, and that the content of the magazine was modified by various co-workers –

both male and female editors who influenced their point of view, as they had the most control over magazine content. For example, in South Africa the *Cosmopolitan's* senior designer agreed that regarding women's representation, in general, the media content is male-dominated and that "roles of males in the mass media have been shown to be dominant, active and authoritative, while females have been shown to be submissive, passive". However, she also pointed out that the value of advertising appeals should be analysed together with the role of the audience, which also influences the character of the magazine.

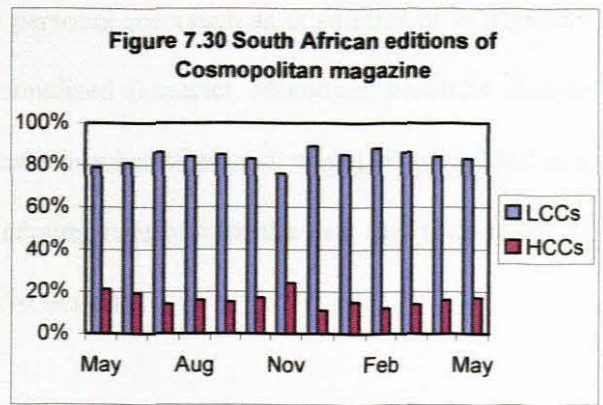
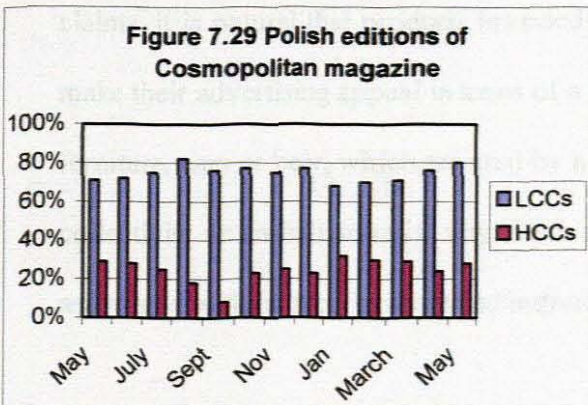
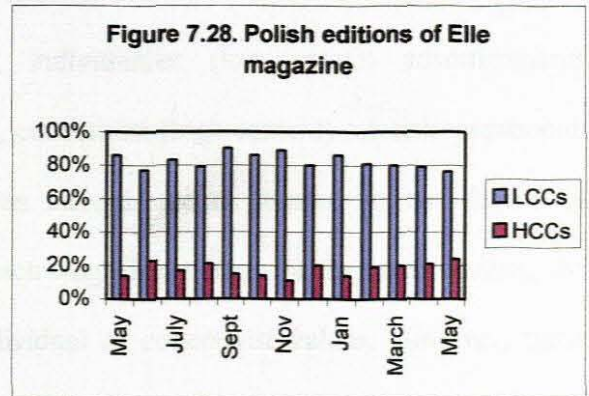
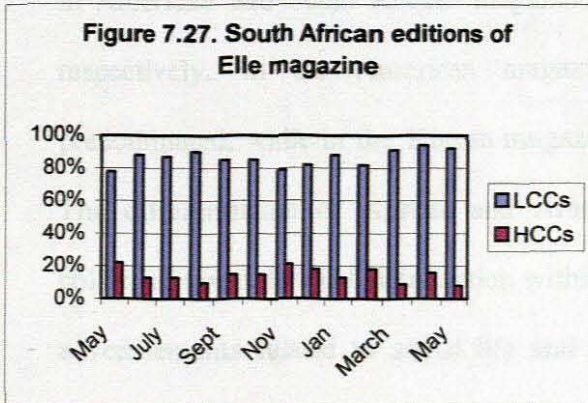
In summary, data from interviews conducted with individuals working in the print media industry indicate that, although magazine content is not directly linked to the promotion of advertised goods, such media support an ideology imply that, in order to become sexually attractive, the consumption and purchase of beauty products is necessary. It also became clear that such contestation is driven by the particular point of view held by the magazine editorial team, who occupy a powerful position from which they can shape and select the cult of femininity. Also, from the interview conducted with the marketing manager working in the marketing department of *Twoj Styl* magazine, in women's magazines, the promotional agenda of advertisers occupy enough space to influence the character of femininity by promoting various products that would influence readers' perception of their bodies.

7.3 THE PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS OF MAGAZINE AND ADVERTISING CONTENT

7.3.1 The individualist and collectivist context in advertising approaches and content in Polish and South African magazines

Previous studies suggest that in advertising and marketing communication, the differences between high- and low-context communication systems are very important (as

was highlighted in Section 3.8). Thus, in order to differentiate between the approach adopted in globally and locally distributed magazines, Polish and South African editions of *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines from May 2005 to May 2006, as well as the Polish *Twoj Styl* (“Your Style”) magazine and the South African *Fairlady* were selected for the investigation. The analysis was restricted to full-page and half-page advertisements, whereas the degree of interdependent- (collectivist, HCC) and independent- (individualist, LCC) visual appeals was analysed in terms of the number of people that was present in the visual image (as was mentioned in Section 6.9.1).



As represented in Figures 7.27, 7.28, 7.29, and 7.30, the overall results support the first assumption in Section 6.6.1, which stated that magazines distributed worldwide, such as *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*, largely predominate in terms of individualist low-context advertised

appeals, which was evident in the editions of the magazines in both countries. Figures 7.27 to 7.30 clearly indicate that, in both countries, throughout the year, from May 2005 until May 2006, every issue of the selected magazines widely featured individualist low-context advertised appeals (71%). Such a finding suggested that there was no noticeable difference between the degree of low-context advertisements experienced in the South African and Polish editions of *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines. In order to establish why low-context appeals predominated in selected magazines, Sang-Pil Han and Sharon Shavitt's research (in Dolinski, 2003) was used to categorise each advertisement in terms of product.

Sang-Pil Han and Sharon Shavitt (in Dolinski, 2003) established that advertisements in American and South Korean magazines reflected individualist and collectivist contexts respectively. In the American magazine, individualist (low-context) advertisements predominated, while in the Korean magazine, collectivist (high-context) advertisements did. The differentiation of Korean and American advertisements attested to the degree of collectivist or individualist saturation within each magazine, where, for the given country, the advertisements related to social life and individual or collectivist values. However, these differences were also noticeable in reference to specific products. As Dolinski (2003:70) claims, it is natural that products intended for personal use (such as cosmetics or toothpaste) make their advertising appeal in terms of a personalised character. Moreover, products such as furniture, cars or beer, which are used by a greater number of people, might be advertised in a collectivist or an individualist way. Such advertising results from the fact that their usage is associated with both collectivist and individualist benefits.

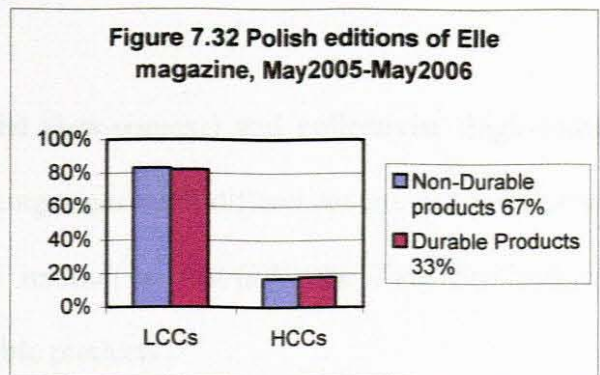
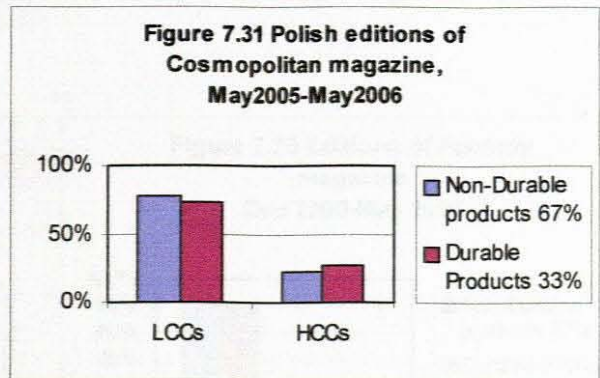
As mentioned before, in order to research why, in both South Africa and Poland, selected magazines predominate in terms of low-context appeal; each advertisement was

identified according to the specific product category. The individual products were grouped into categories of consumer non-durables (such as coffee, soap, toothpaste, perfumes, and cosmetics) and consumer durables (such as cars, furniture, electronics, bank or insurance services) according to Cutler and Javalgi (in Dallmann, 2001). A total of 3 263 full-page and half-page advertisements were examined, of which 1 952 were for non-durable products and 1 311 for durable products, as represented in Table 7.2.

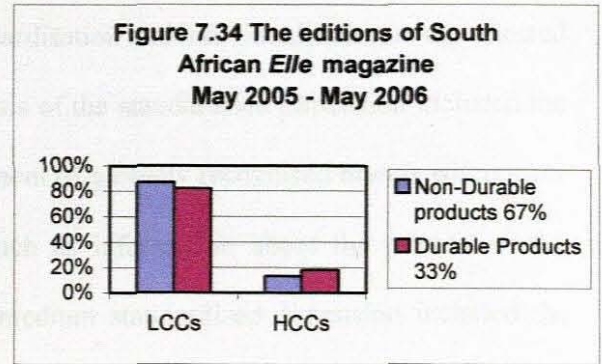
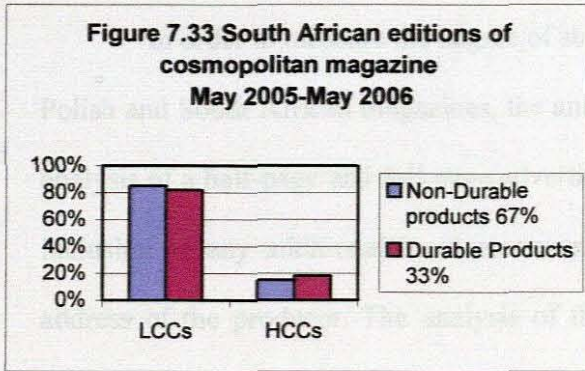
Table 7.2 The amount of analysed advertisements.

ADVERTISEMENTS		
Magazines	Non - Durable	Durable
PL <i>Cosmopolitan</i>	342	172
SA <i>Cosmopolitan</i>	504	353
PL <i>Elle</i>	404	328
SA <i>Elle</i>	261	214
<i>Fairlay</i>	271	136
<i>Twoj Styl</i>	170	108
TOTAL	1952	1311
		3 263

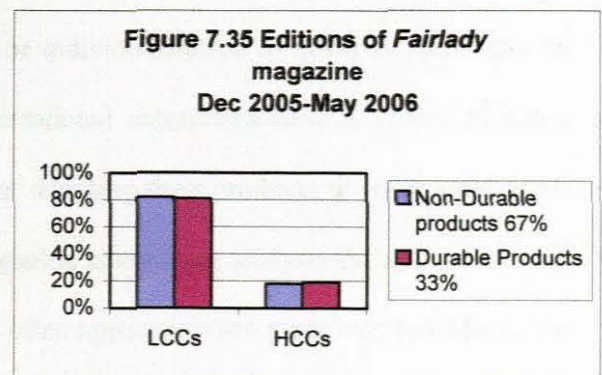
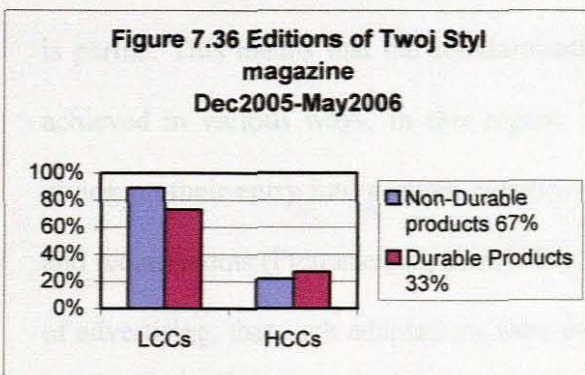
As represented in Figures 7.31, 7.32, 7.33 and 7.34, advertising in women’s magazines in both countries predominates in regard to personal use products, which therefore bear a personalised character. Such a finding suggests that, internationally, the women’s market is considered as homogenous, possessing ‘universal characteristics’ regarding body-related practices, an argument endorsed by Dallman (2001). This argument can



also be advanced in relation to the culturally relevant magazines, namely *Fairlady* and *Twoj Styl*.



As represented in Figures 7.35 and 7.36 in both countries, the results of non-durable and durable products also indicate that even local magazines have a personalised character, with *Fairlady* having a score of 82% for non-durable products, constituting 67% of magazine space, and 81% for durable products, constituting 33% of the magazine space. *Twoj Styl*, similar to *Fairlady*, reflects scores of 89% for non-durable products, constituting 61% of the magazine space, and 73% for durable products, constituting 39% of the magazine space.



Regarding the degree of individualist (low-context) and collectivist (high-context) appeals, the data suggest that in women's magazines such differences are not noticeable in reference to specific products, although in relation to *Fairlady*, the *Twoj Styl* magazine showed slightly higher scores (27%) for durable products.

7.3.2 The measurement of standardisation and individualisation (localisation) in Polish and South African print media

In order to measure the degree of standardisation and individualisation in the selected Polish and South African magazines, the analysis of the standardised dimension included the analysis of a half-page and full-page advertisement of globally recognised brands without the inclusion of any additional local elements, such as information about the product or the address of the producer. The analysis of the medium standardised dimension included the analysis of a half-page and full-page advertisement of globally recognised brands, with the inclusion of additional local elements, such as information about the product and the address of the producer. The analysis of the cultural dimension included the analysis of a half-page and full-page advertisement of nationally recognised brands, with the inclusion of additional local elements, such as information about the product and the address of the producer.

The data, as presented in Figures 7.27, 7.28, 7.29 and 7.30, indicate that global enterprises more often individualise rather than standardise international advertising campaigns, in which the use of both of these concepts (standardisation and individualisation) is partial. This means that the standardisation or individualisation of advertisements can be achieved in various ways. In this regard, international enterprises have a choice of either giving up their entry into a given country, or of adapting their products to meet local needs and requirements (Pietrasienski, 2005). The magazine advertising analysis showed, in the case of advertising, that such adaptations were most often apparent when perceived to relate to the external features of a product. As can be observed in Figures 7.27 and 7.30, South African editions of *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines feature a greater degree of standardised advertisements, with scores varying between 20% and 58%, compared to Polish magazines, with scores varying between 10% and 30%. In addition, no significant differences exist

between *Fairlady* (with scores of from 10% to 19%) and *Twoj Styl* (with scores of from 14% to 25%) magazines and their degree of standardisation. Again, the data suggests that, in the international market, approximate profiles of recipients' segments exist, especially in the case of the market segment dominated by women.

In both South African and Polish magazines, the ideology of content has a similar construction (apart from the visual side, which will be discussed later). Such similar construction furnishes more proof that global marketers employ similar approaches in targeting the universal characteristics of the female consumer. For example, in both South Africa and Poland, the order of features in the *Elle* magazine is as follows:

Table 7.2a The order of features in the *Elle* magazine

Contents page	
Editorial letter	
Readers' letters	
In between advertisements, several pages of contemporary fashion trends and gossip	
First Buzz – a section reviewing books, films and theatrical productions, as well as regular columns	
Regular columns:	
The Polish <i>Elle</i> features a TV and radio journalist, Wojciech Mann.	The South African <i>Elle</i> features a fashion stylist and social commentator, Dion Chang.
Although the above-mentioned personalities are very different, the style and subjects of their articles are written in a similar style.	
Between several more pages of advertisements are an interview with the cover girl, another interview with a celebrity, some articles written by freelancers about life stories, social anecdotes and women's agendas	
Fashion , as represented by local models	
The Beauty section , containing articles about cosmetics and treatments, concerning issues of women's health and beauty	
Home and Away , featuring food recipes, travel and décor news, and shop addresses	
Horoscopes	
The last few pages, consisting of the advertising of various national brands	

Also, with the use of the same structurally ordered visual elements, the *Elle* magazine has changed its visual appearance for the January 2006 issue

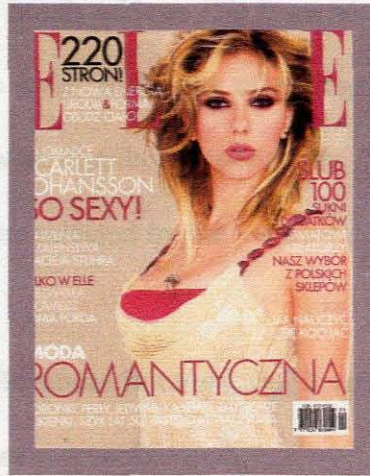


Figure 7.37

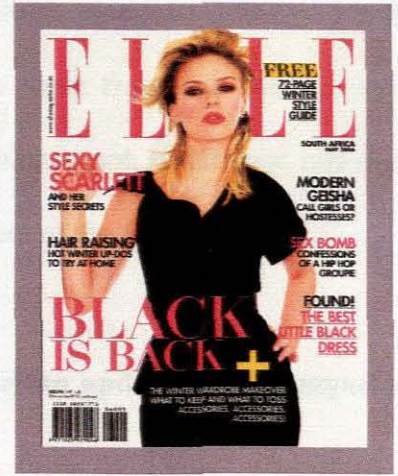


Figure 7.38

simultaneously in both Poland and South Africa.

Such a change is, according to the South African editor, Jacqueline Myburgh Chemaly, a result of planning which happens yearly around July, when editorial teams around the

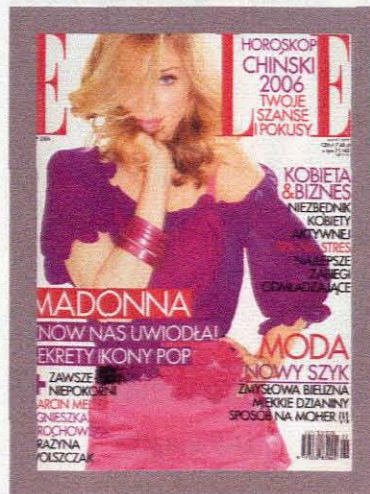


Figure 7.39

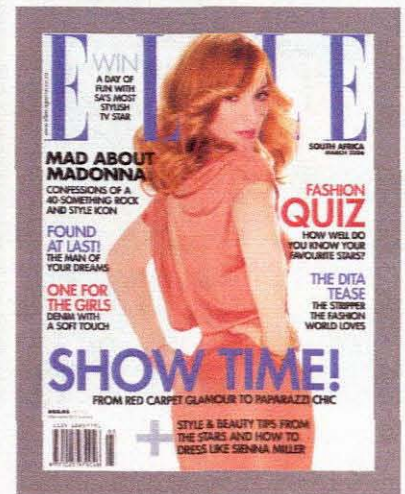


Figure 7.40

world start planning their line-up for the following

year. However, due to the ‘touch’ of local magazine designers and some local cultural context, such elements are applied slightly differently in various countries. Other than that, in the South African *Elle* magazine, the focus is more on fashion, with its featuring a greater number of articles concerning local celebrities. Cover lines concerning international celebrities share the same tone in both countries’ editions, as is represented in Figures 7.37 and 7.38. The Polish *Elle*, April 2006, has as a cover line: “Scarlett Johansson so sexy”, while the South African *Elle*, May 2006, has as its cover line: “Sexy Scarlett – and her style secrets”. Also, as represented in Figures 7.39 and 7.40, on the covers of both the Polish *Elle*

from February 2006 and the South African *Elle* from March 2006, Madonna is featured in the same characteristically 70's style. Both sets of photographs come from one specific photo shoot, the photos of which were distributed worldwide. The photograph which best suited the local cultural content was then selected by the local art directors of the magazine.

7.3.2.1 Similarities and differences between the South African and Polish *Cosmopolitan* regarding a localised culture

As represented in Figures 7.41 and 7.42, the covers of South African *Cosmopolitan* from June 2005 and the Polish *Cosmopolitan* from June 2005 are good examples of the standardised structure applied to those internationally recognised brands. Both covers are designed in the same colour tones, featuring an identical photograph of the celebrity Jennifer Lopez.

In an interview with a Polish graphic designer working in the

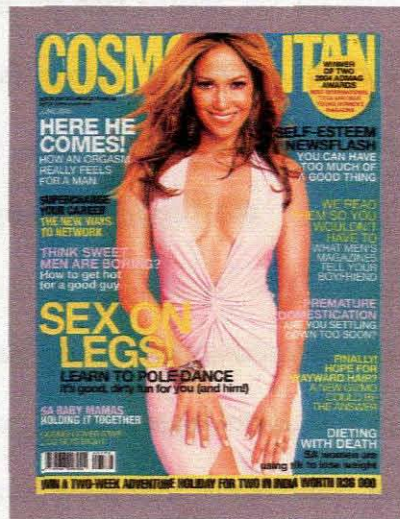


Figure 7.41



Figure 7.42

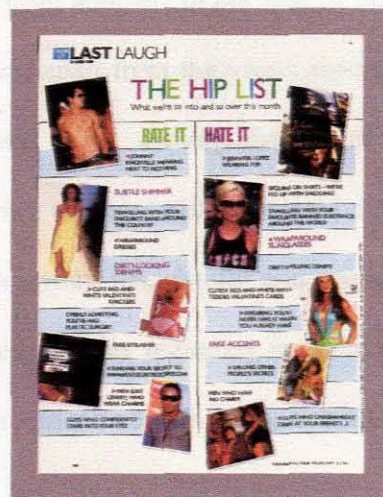


Figure 7.41a



Figure 7.42b

Cosmopolitan's art department, it emerged that that kind of standardisation happens due to the fact that in each country the editor receives a CD containing a copy of the following month's issue from the head office in America. The local editorial team then decides what elements to leave out, or to slightly rearrange in order to align the cover with the ideological character in each country. What distinguishes these magazines from one another is the fact that, due to the Polish *Cosmopolitan* being printed in a smaller format (in accordance with the existing cost factor and market competition), it provides the advantage of being much more portable. Apart from this fact, both countries' editions have a similarly designed ideological structure, which will be discussed further on in the next Section. For example, all issues contain many articles concerning desire and sexual agenda. In addition, the magazines end on a similar note, employing the same concept of the "*The Hip List* – the things we're so into and so over this month", as represented in Figures 7.41a and 7.42b.

The comparison clearly shows that popular women's magazines have similar content. Subsequently, in addition, they repeat certain topics, as well as the cover lines almost every year, depending on the occasion of the year. For example, the South African *Elle's* cover line "Sex, Love, Money" featured in both the July 2005 and July 2006 issues. The order of features and any additional accents that may change from issue to issue serve to distinguish the identity of one magazine from another. In the case of more culturally specific magazines, such as *Twoj Styl* and *Fairlady*, apart from the visual aspect, they have the standard structure of general interest magazines. What distinguishes them from internationally distributed magazines is that they feature a coherent mix of related articles depicted in a more relevant cultural context, regarding everyday life, family and social issues. For instance, the Polish version features many different articles regarding national celebrities and information about social events, while the South African version includes a social agenda and culinary recipes.

7.3.3 Similarities and differences in the communicational approach of Polish and South African magazines

Examining the editorial letter assists when analysing the tone of a magazine's content, because the style of such letters corresponds with the style of the magazine as a whole (McLoughlin, 2000). For example, South African editors speak to the reader in the first person singular and the second person plural form 'we', on behalf of the team. Such an approach corresponds with the low-context outlook of the magazine's editorial content, which is depicted more explicitly (see Appendix 11).

Usually, the *Elle* and *Cosmo* letters are written interchangeably in the first person plural 'we' to invoke a sense of the rest of the team and of a first-person narrative account of the editor's private life. The tone of the letter usually conveys a note of irony, which the reader may identify as humorous, such as, "I've never met a pair of hot pants I like better than a roast potato" (SA *Cosmopolitan*, December 2005:5). Although, in the letter, the editor opens herself and the team up, the conversational style employed in the editorial content is expressed more distantly and carefully by means of the use of the pronoun 'you' (the implied reader) (see Appendix 12). As was explained in Section 3.8, such usage might be due to the fact that South African society is heterogeneous, with strong social and cultural differences existing between the different cultural groups (Crafford *et al.*, 2006).

By contrast, in Poland, it is possible to convey information more implicitly. For example, although all editors use the pronouns 'I' and 'we' interchangeably in order to bond with the reader, the conversational style in the first plural person 'we' tends to be employed more frequently. Such usage constructs a common ground and creates a sentimental or patriotic attachment between the editorial content and the reader, as argued by McLoughlin

(2000). For example, *Elle*'s editor omits speaking in the first person singular, rather speaking on behalf of the team as a whole. Even when the editor refers to private issues, she uses the personal pronoun 'we' when relating to the editorial style of the magazine while introducing social entertainment news, fashion or beauty issues to the reader, and the conversational style is therefore maintained throughout the publication through the use of the first plural person 'we'. As was indicated in Section 3.8, such an approach is culturally constructed in a more collective way.

7.3.4 A comparative visual analysis of *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Fairlady* and *Twoj Styl* covers

As can be noticed in the above-mentioned examples, as well as in the following Figures 7.43 to 7.48 (starting on page 201), magazines explore the dynamics of layout and visual perception in various ways, experimenting with contrasting sizes, colour values, typographic symbols, and degrees of depth and perspective.

1. In this place a self-congratulatory cover line reminding the reader of being "Voted best women's special interest magazine" is usually placed. Also a cover line "win" (indicating winning smth) is often interchangeably situated here or in the place of the eye-catching cover line in no.4

2. A cover line concerning a cover model.

3. In the optical zone on the left- or right-hand side a cover line referring to the focus of a particular issue, usually in the declarative or imperative form, is placed.



4. An eye-catching cover line, distinguished by an enlarged typeface, balances the composition of the layout. Also in this area, numbers attracting the viewer's attention are often placed, or the cover line "win".

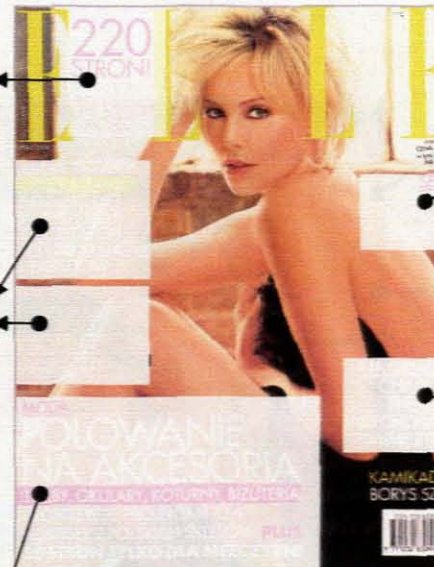
5. In this area, the "plus" sign that attracts the viewer's attention is often used.

Figure 7.43 South African *Elle* magazine, April 2006

1. Purposely, in the area of the models face, a cover line is sometimes placed attracting the viewer's attention to the advantages of a particular issue.

2. In this area, a cover line concerning cover model is placed. Although cover lines are placed in sequence, their place depends on the entire composition of the cover for a particular issue.

3. In the lower area of the optical zone a cover line referring to the focus of a particular issue is placed, usually on the left-hand side. Similarly to South African *Elle*, this cover line is kept in the declarative or imperative tone.



4. In this area a cover line is purposely placed just under the title, and in the area of the models face, due to the fact that it will have a bigger

5. On the right-hand side a cover line usually balance the composition of the layout.

Figure 7.44 Polish *Elle* magazine, May 2006

1. A cover line attracting attention usually in the form of a pun.

2. In the optical zone on the left-hand side a cover line referring to the focus of a particular issue in the exclamative form is placed.

3. A cover line concerning cover model.



Figure 7.45 South African *Cosmopolitan*, Sept 2005

4. A self-congratulating cover line, and at the same time reminding the reader of being the “Best young women’s magazine and best international tile.

5. In this place a big cover line balances the composition of the layout. In addition, a cover line placed just under the title and in the area of the models face, has a bigger chance to be noticed.

6. This area interchangeably feature “Sa report” and exclamative cover lines used to express alarm and strong opinion.

1. A cover line attracting attention usually in the form of a pun.

2. In the optical zone on the left-hand side a cover line referring to the focus of a particular issue, usually in the declarative or interrogative form, is placed.

3. In both examples, the brightness of tone suggests excitement and good balance of diverse elements into one coherent totality, and this arouses pleasing and exiting reception.



Figure 7.46 Polish *Cosmopolitan*, May 2006

4. An intriguing cover line in the form of interrogatives or exclamatives such as “Forever thin!” or “win!”

6. Often, in this area numbers attracting the viewer’s attention are placed.

7. In this area, arrows or highlights attracting the viewer’s attention are often placed.

1. A cover line concerning a cover model

2. Often, in this area, numbers attracting the viewer's attention are placed.

3. Cover lines are placed in sequence. Each upper phrase of a cover line is distinguished by the same use of colour as the title. The regular movement of cover lines gives the cover a certain dynamic and intriguing tension. Balance is achieved asymmetrically. The tone of cover lines is kept rather in the declarative style. The design strategy emphasizes the unexpected variety of cover cropping.



Figure 7.47 Polish *Twoj Styl*, March 2006

4. Eye-catching cover line

5. A cover line referring to the focus of a particular

3. A cover line concerning a cover model is placed just under (or on) the title in the area of the model's face to be easier noticeable and possibly sell the magazine.

1. Cover lines are usually placed in a regular order on the left-hand side.

2. A cover line, referring to the focus of a particular issue, is sometimes placed on the left- or the right-hand side of a page, depending on the design.

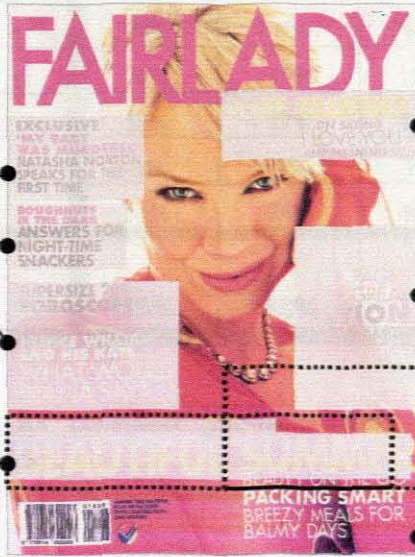


Figure 7.48 South African *Fairlady*, March 2006

4. Eye-catching cover line

5. The visual arrangement of the cover lines is not definable enough; as a result the cover lines become ambiguous, and consequently become confusing conveyers of information. Typographic style overlays the standard structure of a magazine, over saturated combinations of words and images cause confusion; the essential information is not visible. For example, letters squeezed into an arbitrary shape like a square without a fresh approach and typographic clarity. There is a lack of order based on some kind of method or principle of visual communication. Therefore, the lack of balance of visual weights such as colour or typeface is distorting, arousing the impression of stress and boredom, resulting in a difficult process of clearly organizing the meaning into the pattern. On the other hand, the magazine associates with working-class people which manifests in poor design.

7.3.5 The manipulative role of magazine discourses manifested in the construction of femininity

The advertising text in women’s magazines patterns its choice of words, which is central to the construction of femininity regarding topics such as fashion, sex, cosmetics, love and money, as can be seen in Table 7.3. In this way, women’s magazine texts seek to prescribe shopping and social patterns, and to offer advice on what to say and eat or where to party. Table 7.3 summarises the findings of advertisements in relation to appearance.

Table 7.3 The percentage of advertisements concerned with appearance in the specified magazines

	<i>SA Cosmo</i>	<i>PI Cosmo</i>	<i>SA Elle</i>	<i>PI Elle</i>	<i>Fairlady</i>	<i>Twoj Styl</i>
Body/Face care	25%	34%	25%	27%	48%	45%
Make-up	11%	13%	8%	5%	7%	6%
Hair care	6%	6%	8%	5%	13%	7%
Perfumes	20%	15%	15%	12%	7%	8%
Fashion/Accessories	35%	27%	42%	46%	20%	31%
Weight-loss methods	2%	4%	1%	5%	5%	3%
Beauty advice columns	31%	28%	40%	33%	18%	29%
Total percentage of advertisements concerned with appearance	83%	88%	77%	79%	55%	69%

Advertisements for consumer goods, such as those for mobile phones, cars or insurance, have not been considered, because they are not overtly concerned with appearance. Advertisements were identified according to the product categories featured in Table 7.3 (Section 6.3.8 also described these categories in depth). Over half of the analysed advertisements (ranging from 55% to 88%) were found to be concerned with various body treatments, while another 30% of the magazines’ advertising space, as found in the *Beauty advice* columns, constituted body care articles and advice, on which experts, doctors and beauticians commented. These statistics illuminate the exact relationship between the

percentage of advice-related articles and contradictory editorial content that sought to propagate consumer attitudes. Moreover, in all the analysed women’s magazines (the Polish *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Twoj Styl*, and the South African *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Fairlady*), the section, constituting *Body/Face care* and *Fashion/Accessories* made up from 25% to 48% of all advertisements, while beauty- related articles occupied from 18% to 40% of the advertising space used. The large number of advice and advertisements related to body care and fashion testify to the fact that women’s bodies are not perceived to be beautiful in their unaltered state, and therefore should be constantly improved in order to be desirable and admired. The analysis furthermore are indicated that this tendency to discipline the female body leads to a cult of femininity that locks women into a position of subordination, which will be discussed in the next Chapter.

7.3.6 The depiction of feminine power over men in women’s magazines

In terms of liberation and obliteration (by way of imprisonment) of women, the magazine content was found mainly to associate feminine power with power over men (Baehr & Gray, 1996). As can be observed in the following headlines (Table 7.4), the most common subjects covered dealt with self-help, getting and keeping your man, achieving perfection, and happy families.

Table 7.4 Examples of magazine headlines

SA <i>Elle</i> February 2006:122	“What men think of our make-up”
<i>Fairlady</i> December 2005:74	“21 st -century marriage – is he playing by the new rules?”
PL <i>Cosmopolitan</i> April 2006:64	“Check if he is the Mr. Right”
SA <i>Cosmopolitan</i> August 2005:55	“Teddy must die! – 8 things that’ll make him run a mile”
PL <i>Cosmopolitan</i> May 2006:106	“24 hours from the man’s world”
SA <i>Cosmopolitan</i> July 2005:82	“Who needs boyfriends? – What happy single women know”

It is evident that feminine power is not framed in professional terms, but rather in the personal and, generally speaking, the sexual domain.

7.3.7 THE VERBAL LAYER OF FEMININE REPRESENTATION IN MAGAZINE CONTENT

7.3.7.1 Professionalism and career orientation constituting the verbal layer

The magazine's shared version of femininity varies; therefore, this perspective is covered in various components that make up the complex definition of womanhood available in those magazines. The following examples indicate that in every issue of the South African and Polish women's magazines; articles and interviews can mainly be found concerned with independent professions.

Table 7.5 Examples of articles and interviews concerned with independent professions.

SA <i>Cosmopolitan</i> May 2006:190	"Career movers", which is about women who have shown ingenuity and determination in turning a dream into a successful venture
<i>Fairlady</i> December 2005:80	"My incredible year", a career-orientated article about South African <i>Morning Live</i> anchor Leanne Manas aimed at inspiring other women
SA <i>Elle</i> April 2006:82	"Girl power", featuring women occupying top jobs in "the traditionally male-dominated high ranks of government"
SA <i>Elle</i> June 2005:51	"The real-life apprentice", concerned with the transformation of a determined young woman into a successful businesswoman
PL <i>Elle</i> June 2005:48	"Julia w koronie", describing an inspiring career story about the self-determined Ukraine female premier Julji Tomaszenko
PL <i>Elle</i> , November 2005:45	An interview featured with Polish singer Anita Lipnicka and describing her life and career path
PL <i>Elle</i> March 2006:62	"Czego szuka kobieta", an interview with a Polish actress about her career path and success in a television sitcom and the theatre
PL <i>Twój Styl</i> March 2006:40	"Ksiezniczki z Wiezy", an article about a professional, self-sufficient and confident women advising on how to find a balance between professional and private concerns

7.3.7.2 Political issues constituting the verbal layer

Baehr and Gray (1996) point out that the representation of 'political' issues is usually considered in one of three different ways:

a) Discussion about issues such as rape, violence and struggling women who achieve success in the end.

Table 7.6 Examples of the representation of ‘political’ issues in women’s magazines

SA <i>Elle</i> November 2005:94	“ On my feet again ”, an inspiring story about a woman who, after a tragic accident, refused to give up hope and managed to walk again three years later
<i>Fairlady</i> March 2006:30.	“ Country of Riches ”, touching stories about hard-working South African women who wanted to make a difference after experiencing a range of tragedies

It is also important to take note that in both Poland and South Africa, magazines tend to award women who make a visible difference in their community. In addition, readers have the opportunity to vote for their favourite finalist and to donate money to charity.

Table 7.7 Examples of the representation of ‘political’ issues in women’s magazines

<i>Fairlady</i> March 2006:62	“ No ordinary women ” and The <i>Clarins/Fairlady</i> Woman Award, which aim to recognise South African women who are dedicated to improving the lives of children
<i>Twoj Styl</i> January 2006:24	“ Kobieta Roku 2005 ” (Woman of the year 2005). The competition provides an opportunity for readers to vote for the favourite finalist amongst a number of deserving women.
SA <i>Elle</i> March 2006	“ Women of distinction ” The <i>Elle Elizabeth Arden</i> Visible Difference Awards, named after Elizabeth Arden Refining Moisture Cream Complex, were launched in May 2000 to pay homage to those South African women who empower their community.

b) Interviews with successful women or leading public figures discussing their lifestyle, friends and domestic lives and the conflicting demands of the workplace and family. Sound examples of such interviews can be seen in the following two articles:

Table 7.8 Examples of the representation of ‘political’ issues in women’s magazines

<i>Twoj Styl</i> January 2006:58	“ Juz nie biegną, robie swoje ”, an article concerned with very successful women who could not find a balance between their home duties, family and career. They quit their demanding jobs in order to find inner peace and happiness performing minor tasks and managing small companies
SA <i>Elle</i> May 2005:70	“ Rockin’ the Suburbs ”, an article concerned with women caught between wanting to do the best for the family and feeling trapped, worthless and guilty for sacrificing their careers

The overall tone of these articles is aimed at demanding men to help build a partnership, which would enable women to combine both a family and professional role.

c) Discussions about political rights. Women’s magazines were found in the past to pay scant attention to issues concerned with gender discrimination (Baehr & Gray, 1996). The only example that I found of such a discussion was an article that appeared in the South African *Elle*, November 2005 issue. The article, which did not refer to South African women at all, was about Nepalese women, who had to face a harsh choice between fighting for national freedom and fighting for their own rights as women (SA *Elle* November 2005:94). Another article, concerned with parliamentary choices and hence political rights, appeared in the Polish *Elle* (September 2005:68). The article covered the small number of women represented in electoral lists and on the political scene, urging the necessity for change. The article creates the impression that Polish society is conservative in regard to gender issues, showing that the younger generation of men is more conservative than is the generation of their parents, and that younger women tend to be more liberated.

Moreover, reports about real-life stories describing women’s problems in society are common in women’s magazines:

Table 7.9 Examples of the real-life stories describing women’s problems in society

PL <i>Elle</i> September 2005:72	“Panuje nad wszystkim” (a psychological approach to self-control)
SA <i>Cosmopolitan</i> January 2006:82	“Do not let others control your life”
PL <i>Elle</i> October 2005:78	“Trupy w szafie” (advice on how to overcome phobias and low self-esteem)
SA <i>Elle</i> June 2005:60	“Finding Neverland” (advice for women who need to spice up their sexual life in order to love again)
PL <i>Elle</i> June 2005:64	“Zdradzona przez ojca” (about abused women struggling to accept the past)

The analysis of these feature articles indicated that the presence of such columns serve to attract the readers’ attention to women’s problems, such as femininity, rather than to

discussions about political rights. In this way, traditional roles are promoted and reinforced through repetition, while non-traditional roles are not.

7.3.7.3 Obliteration of women from the verbal layer

One aspect of the modern femininity model showing women's obliteration relates to the maintenance of an obsessive body image and underscores the ambivalence that women experience regarding their own liberation when evaluated against contemporary perspectives of the body (Woodward, 2003). The meaning of external appearance is strengthened through mass media advertising and obligated



Figure 7.49 An article in *People* magazine, Sept 9 (19):35

stereotypes, as is shown in Table 7.3 in Section 7.3.5. Research indicates that such strengthening by way of stereotyping is the case because stereotypical perception is rooted in the process of socialisation. For example, young Western girls are acquainted from an early age with the obligatory ideal of femininity, which is personified by the Barbie™ doll. This apparently innocent toy has had a wide-ranging impact on the perception and construction of femininity, due to the Barbie™ symbolising a desirable example of beauty, the stereotype of a young white woman, with her long, slim legs; her narrow waist; and her large breasts and pretty face. According to Melosik (1996:117), in their early childhood, girls are already introduced to the advertised world of fashion, elegance and cosmetics. *People* magazine featured an article entitled “I’m just like Barbie”, the contemporary story of a woman “who transformed herself from a pretty brunette to a plastic Barbie doll”, (see Figure 7.49 (*People* September 9 (19):35). After telling her doctor that she wanted Michael Jackson’s nose, Angelina Jolie’s lips, Jennifer Aniston’s cheeks and jawline, and Jennifer Lopez’s profile, the

young woman underwent no less than 26 cosmetic procedures performed on her body by the age of 28 (*People*, September 9 (19):35).

In contrast to the pursuit of this popular feminine ideal, the French artist Orlan exposes the aspirations of women who try at all costs to make themselves into idealised, advertised and ultimately unattainable objects of beauty. In her art piece entitled “I want to be a work of art”, instead of feelings of pleasure, she elicits feelings of discomfort, embarrassment and disgust in the viewer. After collecting many different reproductions of art (such as one of the *Mona Lisa*), she tried to create a picture of the ideal woman. She achieved her aim through requiring that many dangerous cosmetic surgery procedures be performed on her body. Her artistic process did not deal with the aesthetic effect of the operations undergone, but with the suffering, disfigurement and pain endured during surgery. Her art pieces consists of reports of her surgical procedures, photos documenting her numerous facial scars and the distorted images detailing aspects of her surgically swollen body. Through her art, she comments on the present objectification of women’s bodies, which constantly has to be exposed and manipulated in order to match the advertised ‘ideal’ that can be enjoyed and consumed.

Such social commentary also suggests that the media strengthens the ‘terror’ of the beauty regime made easily accessible in popular women’s magazines. Plastic surgery procedures are the most effective and durable form of metamorphosis, constituting a way of ‘magically’ transforming one’s appearance. On a large scale, constant media and tabloid attention have contributed to the normalisation of weight-loss, aesthetic operations and the striving for an ‘ideal look’, by showing countless numbers of beautifying products and famous people who have surrendered to the allure of undergoing aesthetic operations. In

recent years, ordinary people have increasingly resorted to cosmetic surgery procedures to enhance their own beauty. The following table illustrates this trend in magazines (Table 7.10).

Table 7.10 Examples of articles concerned with plastic surgeries

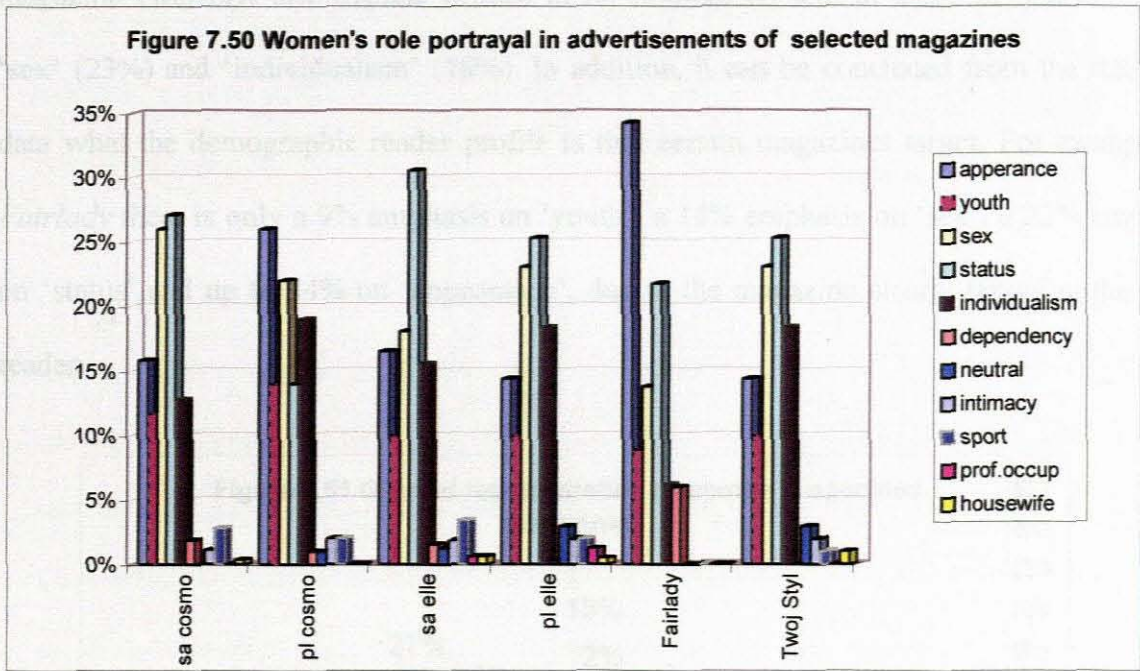
<i>People</i> , February 2006 20:6	“Stars addicted to plastic surgery”
PL <i>Cosmopolitan</i> , May 2005:06	“Get a sexy summer look”
SA <i>Cosmopolitan</i> August 2005:130	“Diet of the year! How GIs and GLs make the kilos fall off”
PL <i>Elle</i> March 2006:180	“Awesome looks”
SA <i>Cosmopolitan</i> December 2005:42	“Shine at every party, celebritise your makeup...glam up tired hair”
<i>Heat</i> , Issue 76	“Wobbly just like us!”
SA <i>Elle</i> March 2006:117	“The best of beauty”
SA <i>Cosmopolitan</i> October 2005:12	“76 pages to whip your winter bod into summer shape”
SA <i>Cosmopolitan</i> November 2005:173	“Viva ice cream, viva! – The diet-phobe’s way to a happy weight”
PL <i>Elle</i> October 2005:6	“Aesthetic operations – what you must know before...”

As a result of such coverage, the reader is convinced that nobody is so beautiful as not to feel tempted to become more beautiful. For example, the article entitled “Laser or scalpel” tells of a world in which the *Botox* injection has become a basic intervention beauty treatment (PL *Elle* September 2006:153). In Poland, the number of aesthetic interventions increased by 40%, while in the USA in 2004 over 2,8 million women underwent aesthetic operations, indicating that from 1997 on the popularity of aesthetic treatments increased by 4116%, due to the media continuing to advertise beautifying means and aesthetic interventions as an effective and acceptable way of enhancing one’s appearance in order to be more successful.

7.3.8 Women’s portrayal in the visual layer of magazines

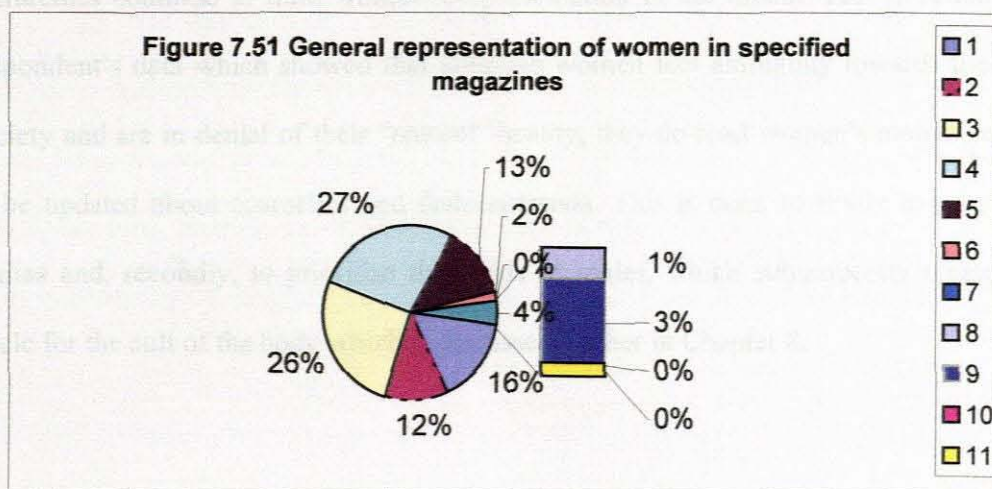
In this section, I discuss my examination of selected magazines in order to show which types of role portrayals are used to depict women. Once again, I analysed the Polish and South African *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines, as well as the culturally specific ones, namely the *Fairlady* and *Twoj Styl*. I used the grounded theory approach to count and code selected advertisements. The codes depended on a theorised connection between the image

and the broader cultural context in which the construction of meaning occurs, which is referred to as open coding (as discussed in Section 6.8.4). Such a process was followed in order to examine whether the magazines concerned varied in their representation of women and role portrayal.



As seen in Figure 7.50, across cultures similar trends may be observed in advertising which is aimed at women. Since the current trend manifested in the Polish and South African *Cosmopolitan* constitutes the intensification of interest in the topic of sex, women's portrayal as sexual objects also received the highest score: 26% in South Africa and 22% in Poland. Although sexual techniques frequently were described in these magazines, they were not directly linked to the promotion of goods, but aimed at triggering the consumption of beauty products in order to enhance the attractiveness of the purchaser, which manifested in the overall South Africa scores of 27% for 'status'; 16% for 'appearance'; 13% for 'individualism' and 12% for 'youth'. In relation to the Polish sample, the scores were 26% for 'appearance'; 19% for 'individualism'; and 14% for both 'youth' and 'status'. The title *Cosmopolitan* appeals to cosmopolitan individuals, and serves to reinforce the sexualised messages of women which are represented in terms of their appearance as young sex objects

with status. The statistics of *Elle* magazine also appeared similar. Such magazines want to be associated with glamour and sophistication, and so portray women in this way. In both South Africa and Poland, women are represented in terms of their ‘status’, as represented by the highest scores of 31% in South Africa and 25% in Poland. The Polish culturally relevant magazine *Twoj Styl* also depicts women in its editorial content in terms of ‘status’ (25%), ‘sex’ (23%) and ‘individualism’ (18%). In addition, it can be concluded from the statistical data what the demographic reader profile is that certain magazines target. For example, in *Fairlady* there is only a 9% emphasis on ‘youth’, a 14% emphasis on ‘sex’, a 22% emphasis on ‘status’ and up to 34% on ‘appearance’, due to the magazine clearly targeting the older reader.



The data obtained indicate that the representation of women in both Poland and South Africa in local magazines, namely the *Fairlady* in South Africa and *Twoj Styl* in Poland, and internationally recognised magazines, namely the *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*, emerged as similar. As seen in Figure 7.51, women’s representation manifested in the highest percentage being allocated to the category ‘status’ (27%), while that for ‘sex’ was 26%, that for ‘appearance’ 16%, that for ‘individualism’ 13%, and that for ‘youth’ 12%. It also seems that advertisers have polarised the character of advertising appeals more in the direction of status (see Appendix 13); sex (see Appendix 14); appearance (see Appendix 15) and individualism (see

Appendix 16), which are meant to constitute a seemingly liberated woman, but one who is still imprisoned in her body, an aspect which discussed further in Chapter 8.

Summary

The presentation of the findings in this chapter was juxtaposed with the discussion of the findings in Chapter 8. In this chapter the research findings collected by means of various methods, such as grouping and the categorising of data, were explored in order to establish prevailing trends and patterns.

The findings revealed that susceptibility and response to media influences are partly determined by gender difference. Such difference means that the traditional gender hierarchies continue to limit women's representation in the media. This is reflected in the respondent's data which showed that although women feel ambiguity towards their roles in society and are in denial of their "natural" beauty, they do read women's magazines in order to be updated about cosmetics and fashion trends. This is done to firstly to prioritise their bodies and, secondly, to prioritise the needs of males, which subsequently create a closed circle for the cult of the body which is discussed further in Chapter 8.

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

To please a man and children, women lubricate slices of bread (sometimes even from both sides), they bake cakes and with pride place them at the center of the table. They also make powder soups and so-called ready-made pastas; they give yoghurts and sweets to kids, they buy iodine salt, low fat mayonnaise and healthy oil to use both on salads and to fry in. On the other hand, to provide some comfort to themselves and to look youthful and smiley, women use glossy lipsticks, shampoos and hair dyes, day and night creams, eye-shadow (only during the day) and deodorants. Moreover, they breathe in the aroma of fragrant coffee, and discover the charms of sanitary towels, tampons and depilators...

In this chapter the research findings are discussed in terms of the different ways in which the ideologically manipulative role of Polish and South African women's magazines manifest in a prescriptive construction of femininity.

8.1 Discussion of the comparative visual analysis of *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Fairlady* and *Twoj Styl* covers

The findings revealed that the manipulative power of popular magazines and advertising geared towards women is evident in the selected women's magazines, namely the South African and Polish *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*, as well as the South African *Fairlady* and the Polish *Twoj Styl*. An awareness of the presence of such power emerged from interviews with individuals working in the print media industry, which showed that magazine editors have the capacity to influence the perception and construction of femininity and the perception of their readers by presenting particular world views. As was discussed in Chapter 4 and in the presentation of findings in Section 7.3.3, copywriters employ the wording of specific semantic fields to refer to a particular area of experience and knowledge. McLoughlin (2000) supports such a view when she argues that the choice of words and visual images is used in accordance with the ideology of a particular magazine. Such an argument is also advanced by the majority of respondents in both South Africa and Poland, who indicated that they read cover lines before deciding to purchase a magazine (as is indicated in Figure 7.1 in Section 7.1.2). The language used in cover lines reflects the specific semantic fields, and so fits into the ideology of the magazine, as was previously discussed in Chapter 4. The data also

revealed that Polish women were more aware of the fact that advertisements might be designed in line with a specific psychological approach. Well over half of the Polish participants stated that they were aware of the psychological manipulation present in advertisements, as opposed to just under half of the South African participants, as represented in Figure 7.4. Such figures support Lowe-Morna's assumption that culturally diverse South African women are susceptible to media influences to different degrees (Lowe-Morna, 2001). Although participants in both Poland and South Africa reported an awareness of advertising manipulation, they also stated that they were unsure about the ways in which such psychological influence may work. In addition, they stated that they did not realise that there was a definite rationale in the placement of cover lines, in keeping with the ideology of the magazine concerned.

8.1.1 Visual analysis of magazine covers

The data presented in the comparative visual analysis in Figures 7.43 to 7.48 in Section 7.3.4 indicated that the placement and the character of cover lines depended on the ideology behind the design of a particular magazine. This means that each magazine was seen to have its own ideological model of visual communication that is shared by all editions of the magazine, across the world. For example, on the Polish and South African *Elle* covers, information concerning the cover girl is placed in the top left-hand corner, with the cover lines indicating the focus of a particular edition usually falling in the optical zone on the left-hand side of the page. Sometimes, however, the subjects of the cover lines fall on the right-hand side, according to the overall composition of the cover layout, as seen in Figures 7.43 to 7.48 in Section 7.3.4. In both Poland and South Africa, the ideological model of the placement of cover lines is very similar, which testifies to the fact that the form and layout of the magazine is centrally prescribed, but the creativity involved in organising the various

visual elements within the layout depends on the decision making of the local magazine team, as can be observed in the case of *Cosmopolitan*, as shown in Figures 7.45 and 7.46.

As for culturally specific magazines, each magazine has its own cover-line ideology. For example, in *Twoj Styl* and *Fairlady*, the cover line focusing on the central concern of a particular edition is similarly placed within the optical zone, which is either on the left- or the right-hand side of the page, as is represented in Figures 7.47 and 7.48. In contrast, the cover line concerning the cover model in *Twoj Styl* magazine is placed in the top left-hand corner, whereas, in *Fairlady*, it appears in the top right-hand corner. In general, the main cover line, which is intended to attract viewers to purchase the magazine, is usually placed just below the title in the region of the model's face (see Figure 7.48). Thus, it is important to notice that the manipulation of visual elements and cover lines depends on the magazine's ideological character and design. Although readers are not required to view the inside of the magazine according to how it is presented in the cover frame, a given model of interpretation is part of the cover's code aimed at visually exerting an influence over the consumer, an argument advanced by McCracken (in Baehr & Gray, 1996).

Furthermore, as the findings indicated in Figures 7.43 to 7.48 in Section 7.3.4, the cover models usually are shown gazing directly into the camera with an enigmatic expression. The pictured head of the model usually is used to overlap the logo of the magazine in order to create varying planes of depth. What distinguishes magazines covers from one another are the poses of the models portrayed, and the different fashion styles, cover lines, and colours surrounding them, which, when treated as a single entity, go to make up the 'personality' of a magazine. According to Owen (1991:131), "The interaction of these elements is a function of the complex relationship between the editorial, technical and aesthetic priorities which together create the 'look' of a magazine." For example, the comparative visual analysis

revealed in both countries in terms of *Elle*'s models, that they are introduced with a note of sophistication, featuring graceful poses, which are very different from those of *Cosmopolitan*, which are young and exude sexuality, featuring provocative gestures and stances. As for the culturally relevant magazines (see Appendix 9), the picture of a model is usually closely cropped in order to create a space for the cover lines, and *Fairlady* often features mature women in full-face poses, who exude confidence and independence; whereas *Twoj Styl* features models and national celebrities from different age groups. However, the pictures of those celebrities are so airbrushed and retouched in the Photoshop computer programme that those covers still do not break away from the stereotypical representation of women.

As Owen (1991) indicates, cover design may also reveal national characteristics. For example, in contrast to the covers of South African magazines (*Cosmopolitan*, *Elle* and *Fairlady*), the Polish magazine covers (*Cosmopolitan*, *Elle* and *Twoj Styl*) frequently represent national models and celebrities. Data indicates that from May 2005 until May 2006, South African *Cosmopolitan* covers featured only three national models. Similarly to *Elle*, *Fairlady* (from December 2005 to May 2006) featured only one international (but South African) celebrity, Charlize Theron. In contrast, the Polish culturally relevant magazine *Twoj Styl* (from December 2005 to May 2006) featured national celebrities in all seven of its issues, while *Cosmopolitan* featured six and *Elle* seven. This example suggests that Polish society has a more collective character than that of South Africa, and that collectivist societies are more homogeneous and therefore integrated.

The cover photograph, according Woodward (2003) to also articulates both the potential sources of reader identification and the ideological implications of content that reflect the producers' perceptions of what constitutes culturally agreed upon roles and values. According to many contemporary feminists (such as Hermes, 1997; Tuchman 1978; Wolf,

1990) who have been influenced by the neo-Marxist philosopher, Louis Althusser, the ideology of magazines “is not just a set of illusory ideas, it is a material form existing as something that is carried out by groups and institutions in society” (Althusser, in Gough-Yates, 2003:8). It is furthermore argued that, in order for this ideology to be effective, “the people living this imaginary relation to the real conditions of existence must engage in rituals and practices” (Gough-Yates, 2003:8). For example, in the case of magazines, such rituals manifest in the continuous enhancement of one’s appearance and in the various contemporary practices of ‘disciplining’ the body.

Moreover, images of cover models feature as the visible packaging for complex cover messages, reflecting the magazine’s ideology and identity, as well as understanding of its audience. In representing both a magazine’s ideology and its reader idealisations, the personal importance of the cover girl depicts her symbolic meaning. In this context, the social role of the cover image projects culturally desirable attributes, such as physical beauty and social importance, as a reflection of a broader cultural reality. Therefore, the cover embodies imitative acts, representing an idealistic form of what the readers themselves can identify with, as Freud (in Tuchman *et al.*, 1978) argues, the conscious or unconscious search for confirmation of their own femaleness. Seen in this context, the commercial rationale and editorial ideology that defines women as housewives, sex objects or homemakers according to Tuchman (*et al.*, 1978:103) “offer confirmation that female areas of concern and social control are narrowed to the domestic sphere that is based on a premise of reduced, contained, and informal power”.

8.2 The ideologically manipulative role played by magazines

The ideologically manipulative role of magazines succeeds in persuading women to engage in ‘disciplining’ their bodies by promoting dominant mainstream cultural and global

standards regarding size, beauty and shape, which serve as a fundamental model for the judgment of women in many societies (Krolikowska, 2004). Therefore, such practices place women in a position of loss by indicating the inadequacies of most women's bodies, indicating that, due to the insufficiency of women, they need to engage in various practices related to disciplining their bodies. In this regard, and bearing the judgement of women in mind, neither the cult of the body nor concern about personal image can be denied. This concern is supported by Hall who states that ignoring present requirements relating to appearance is simply naïve, as appearance are inextricably related to issues of reward and power (Hall, in Woodward, 2003). The data presented in Table 7.3 in Section 7.3.5 revealed that, in selected magazines, advertisements of beauty products constitute from 55% to 88% of the magazine space. As reflected in respondent's data analysis this continued exposure to idealised body images and beauty products simultaneously lowers women's self-image, while, in turn, stimulating the need to practise such regimens in real life. This position is supported by Kelly (2000) who advances that exposure to idealised body-images induce disciplining patterns.

8.3 Magazine discourses manifesting in the construction of femininity

Making oneself attractive to the opposite gender involves extensive consumption of goods, which readers are encouraged to purchase by means of advertising and promotional features. Analysis of the advertisements in selected magazines showed that well over 80% of advertisements relate to body care and fashion. This testify to the fact that women's bodies are not perceived to be beautiful in their unaltered state, and therefore should be constantly improved in order to be desirable and admired (see Table 7.3 in Section 7.3.5). Therefore, advertising and magazine content complement each other in their ideological discourse in regards to the encouragement of readers to consume goods and to purchase their products. Data generated from interviews with individuals working in the print media industry indicate

that, although magazine content does not directly promote goods and services, it nevertheless supports the ideology that, in order to become sexually attractive, the purchase and consumption of beauty products is essential. Such a finding is endorsed by the data (as can be seen in Table 7.3) generated by means of the comparative analysis of all the selected women's magazines. The sections *Body/Face care* and *Fashion/Accessories* were found to constitute from 25% to 48% of magazine space, while beauty-related articles occupied from 18% to 40% of such space. Such a finding indicated a double-bind in that while, on the one hand, "the motivation of modern magazines is to encourage the consumption of ready-made commodities" (McLoughlin, 2000:100), on the other hand, the message is conveyed to women that they should continuously strive to improve their own self-image (in order to encourage more consumption). Thus, the content analysis revealed that magazines dictate to women not only how to behave, but also what to think, desire and value, fulfilling the role of 'life expert' or 'guide' to women readers, as the majority of Polish and South African participants admitted that magazines encourage them to modify their behaviour in order firstly to prioritise their bodies and, secondly, to prioritise the needs of males.

Seen in this light, the perspectives, lifestyles and attitudes which were promoted could be identified. Firstly, all the selected magazines (the South African *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Fairlady*, and the Polish *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Twoj Style*) were found to promote the ideal of a slim body. In the magazines surveyed, the prevalence of photographs representing underweight models was evident in a total of 3 263 full-page and half-page advertisements. Their proportions and tiny sizes communicated that such figures are attractive to the opposite gender and serve to guarantee happiness. Secondly, the analysis of the magazine's content shared the characteristic that, in a consumerist culture, the process of aging is unacceptable and that the fragmented nurturing of separate body parts exploits the cult of a slim, young body. Overall, the findings, as revealed in Section 7.3.8, showed that women's magazines

promote ideals of femininity resulting from disciplining of the body that leads to the objectification of women's sexuality (as seen in Section 8.3.1); their fragmentation (as seen in Section 8.3.2); their thinness (as seen in Section 8.3.3); their youthfulness (as seen in Section 8.3.4); their health (as seen in Section 8.3.5); and their consumption patterns (as seen in Section 8.3.6).

8.3.1 Disciplining the body: women's objectified sexuality

Although magazines prompt women to exert control over men in terms of their sexuality, Baehr and Gray (1996) argue that feminine sexuality has always been defined in terms of masculinity, either in opposition to male sexuality or in reference to it. Even in magazines such as *Cosmopolitan*, whose content is overtly based on the portrayal of relationships and sexuality, physical intercourse and pleasure are ultimately described in terms of masculine pleasure. The articles reviewed were found to feature content, such as "A low-down – a guy's guide to getting you off" (SA *Cosmopolitan* (March 2006:171) or "His porn, clubs and you" (SA *Cosmopolitan* March 2006:104). In the above-mentioned articles, women's sexuality is defined by means of terms such as 'lack', 'atrophy' and 'jealousy about the penis'. In this way, female sexuality is represented as subordinated to men's needs and fantasies, and is subsequently defined in reference to such. As a result, the way in which a woman experiences her own body and the feminine feeling of pleasure is negated. The sexual discourse represented in *Cosmopolitan* suggests that passivity and 'goodness' will finally bring its own reward (in the form of a relationship) and that pleasing a man takes precedence over the pleasure experienced by a woman in her own being. Such discourse suggests that "whatever else female sexuality might be, it is punishable" (Ballaster, Baehr & Gray, 1996:90).

8.3.2 Disciplining the body: fragmentation

In all the magazines reviewed in terms of the current study, an analysis of the 3 263 colourful advertisements and pictures contained therein indicated one of the characteristics of the contemporary body – fragmentation. In an abstract sense, the body has been divided into many different pieces, each of which is accorded the recognition of a separate identity, a notion endorsed by Woodward (2003). Mass media images do not tend to show the entire body of a woman. Therefore, in relation to advertised products, certain fragments of the body are chosen, such as lips to advertise lipstick, the eyes to advertise false eyelashes and the legs to advertise depilatory or anticellulite creams. In this way, magazines create the impression that every part of the female body can be separately improved, with the ‘repaired’ pieces being built into a new and prettier whole. In this way, the message is conveyed that every fragment of the feminine body, such as the lips, the neck, the breasts, the stomach, the hips or the legs is problematic, and, therefore, that every fragment requires incessant monitoring and improvement.

Furthermore, advertisements seek to convince the reader that the purchase of an advertised product is necessary from a ‘reward’ point of view. “Because you’re worth it”, the slogan of the cosmetics company *L’Oreal*, embraces this notion. In addition, the construction of a ‘new’ body means the construction of a new life and identity (Melosik, 1996), as reflected in the respondent’s analysis data, which showed that in both countries, although women do not feel obsessed about their bodies, they would, nevertheless, like to change something about them, as discussed in Section 7.1.5. Beauty-related advertisements, furthermore, promise women more social acceptance, more beauty and more acknowledgment. From such a point of view, the control of the body is equivalent to the control of an entire life, creating the impression that solving problems related to appearance should solve all other problems. Such manipulatively constructed messages therefore may

cause women to fall into the trap of feeling that they have to discipline their own bodies, as was shown in the data discussed in Section 7.1.4.

8.3.3 Disciplining the body: thinness

Generally, obesity and ageism are excluded from the visual layer of women's magazines. In fact, the majority of models appearing in fashion and in beauty advertisements concerned with aging seem very slim and young. Therefore, a second characteristic feature of disciplining the body is thinness. All the selected magazines (the Polish *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Twoj Styl* and the South African *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Fairlady*), overwhelmingly showed evidence of the magazines constantly paying attention to ultra-thin and, at times, skeletal celebrities. Although the verbal layer of magazines frequently warns of the negative consequences of the 'terror of beauty' and obsessive body practices, and aims to convince the reader that she should learn to like herself as she is, the visual layer contradicts the message contained by the verbal layer entirely. For example, in the questionnaire survey conducted with 30 males in South Africa and 30 in Poland, their responses to Question 4 asking whether magazines influence male perceptions of women's body image and size, the majority of respondents answered affirmatively, as shown by the data presented in Section 7.1.9.

One of the male participants responded in the following way: "Yes, because it sets the standard in society, which then influences general perceptions of what one should expect or desire". Another participant answered: "Yes, when paging through a mag, such as *Cosmo*, you tend to believe that all women should look like models". The majority of Polish and South African men argued that a woman should be slim, but still curvaceous. However, in all the representative magazines, in terms of the slogan 'big is beautiful', the visual layer limits such appraisal to the possession of full breasts and lips.

8.3.4 Disciplining the body: youthfulness

Aging bodies, obesity and disease are omitted from the contemporary popular media. In the world of advertising people seem not to live beyond the age of thirty, and even cosmetics for mature women are advertised by young girls. Only a small number of cosmetic manufacturers have the courage to show mature women, because youth, and not maturity, is fashionable and therefore sells products. In this way, older women are excluded from public discourse, because they represent a contradiction to the obligatory ideals of beauty. In addition, they are tangible proof that time is unstoppable, and, with it, the effects of time on the human, in terms of aging and illness. This view was endorsed by the data generated from the Polish Focus Group, which claimed that, no matter how much money is spent on moisturisers, night and day creams, the aging process is unstoppable. For example, one of my participants in Polish Focus Group 2 stated that she prefers sleeping one hour longer than spending her money for the improvement of her appearance. She does not condemn women who take care about their appearance, but ironically she pointed out that “sometimes it is good to look in the mirror and count: how much time, money, nerves and effort this effect cost, and then ask the question – was it worth it?”

The Polish artist Kozyra takes up this notion of exclusion in her artwork ‘Olympia’, in which she illustrates how a person who is ill is extracted from society in terms of this work, as discussed in Section 2.3.3. Kozyra presented ill and old bodies that are usually excluded from the discourse of visibility, because they are the opposite of the ideal of a healthy and beautiful feminine body as promoted by many artworks, as well as the present-day mass media. The ill and old ‘Olympia’ art piece demands the right for the real representation of the body to be made visible, as seen in Figure 2.22a in Section 2.3.3.

Moreover, the tendency was noticed that, the older the age group, the fewer the women who appeared from that age group in advertisements such as those in *Fairlady*. For example, one of the most frequently advertised cosmetics is anti-wrinkle and lifting creams, which promise women eternal youth. Ironically, though, such cosmetics are not advertised by older women, but by young girls. The use of young models suggests that, at a very young age, one should already start the ‘fight’ against ageing. For example, cosmetic industries urge “instead of operations against aging, use our new anti-wrinkle cream”, while another provides the assurance of a victorious fight being waged against wrinkles without the need for surgical lifting (see *L’Oreal’s* Paris advertisement from May 2006:52 in Section 8.7).

An example of an attempt to break the dominant pattern of eternal youth, thinness and beautiful woman can be seen on the cover of *Twoj Styl* magazine (particularly the editions from November and December 2005, or April 2006 (see Appendix 9). The covers feature female journalists, politicians, actresses or female musicians. In addition, the covers feature both young and mature women. However, the attention paid to the latter, as discussed previously, is difficult to break away from due to the dominant mainstream representation of women. The images on magazine covers target women as consumers in order to integrate them further into the consumer economy, by offering them “idealised mirror images”, as advanced by Baehr and Gray (1996).

8.3.5 Disciplining the body: health

At times, cosmetics advertisements featured in the specified magazines fall into the discourse of health. Such discourse in advertising means that the application of a certain cosmetic preparation will improve not only the user’s beauty, but also the state of her health. In both countries the respondents admitted that health is a highly esteemed ‘commodity’; therefore, the use of the health motive is a good advertising device. For example, one of the

cosmetic firms that distributes cosmetic articles only in pharmacies convinces readers that their products are the source of a healthy skin, as can be seen in advertisements for *Vichy* products (see Figure 8.1). These cosmetics are expensive and therefore the discourse of health is cleverly applied to justify the highest cost of the product. Another company advertising lipstick containing vitamin E suggests that the value of the lipstick is not only to be found in the aesthetic quality, but also in its health-promoting quality. Promotion of the latter quality can be seen in the *Rimmel* advertisement, which states that “*Rimmel* lips are healthy lips”.



Figure 8.1 *Vichy* advertisement in PL *Cosmopolitan*, December 2005

Another group of advertised products constitutes medicines, which can be classified as cosmetic medicines. In the selected magazines, these medicines are usually promoted as products that will strengthen organs and improve one's metabolism in order for the reader to “eat without getting fat” (“Therm Line 2”, *Olim*'s advertisement in PL *Cosmopolitan* April 2006:147). Some medicines, advertisements, and cosmetics manipulatively encourage women to conform to the required patterns of femininity, such as beauty, youth and thinness. These magazines do not tend to feature medicine advertisements with purely healing functions. As some participants in the Polish Focus Group noticed, little attention is paid to the problems of health concerning obesity and age, rather than continuously advertising what products to buy to enhance one's beauty and attractiveness.

8.3.6 Disciplining the body: consumption

In the South African and Polish *Elle*, and in the culturally relevant Polish magazine *Twoj Styl*, but especially in the South African *Fairlady*, the discourse of the thin body is connected with the discourse of food. This means that the reader has to deal with the oppositional discourse: “eat – do not eat”. The message “do not eat” can be seen in advertisements representing beauty clinics and cosmetics helping with weight loss. The reader can tell herself “do not eat” while paging through the magazine containing pictures featuring thin models. From another angle, the advertisers encourage readers to eat. For example, the magazine analysis revealed that in every issue of the Polish and South African *Elle* and *Twoj Styl* there are at least two, or, in the case of *Fairlady*, several pages of culinary recipes illustrated with beautiful photographs. The foods featured are usually not dietetic because, except for recipes in which the main ingredient constitutes a butter or vegetable, there are also many recipes of various sweets, cakes and ice-cream desserts.

The most advertised kinds of foods are sweets such as chocolate, which, if consumed, do not favour maintaining a thin figure. Regarding the discourse of food and thin bodies, advertisements of alcohol can also be found in every selected magazine. For example, alcohol is usually advertised by very thin models or by athletic men. Once again, the mass media construct evidence that one can have it all: drink alcohol; be healthy; be in shape; and have a beautiful complexion. The relationship between alcohol and thin figures is found in slogans such as “Sip the *light* fantastic” (*Drostdy-Hof* in *Fairlady* January 2006:123).

8.4 The depiction of feminine power over men in women’s magazines

It appears that in the world of magazines, on the one hand, women and men are entirely in opposition, but, on the other hand, they are pictured as always being in pursuit of each other. The invocation of this opposition partly contributes to the construction of women

as a homogeneous group. As Baehr and Gray indicate, “this is achieved by the tension aroused between the need to confirm the centrality and desirability of men in all women’s lives and the recognition of men as a problem for, and a threat to, women” (Baehr & Gray, 1996:88). Women’s magazines usually portray men as problematic, lazy, untidy, and sexist. In addition, they require constant maintenance and are susceptible to unfaithfulness. Thus, in terms of the editorial content, magazines, as if from a feminist perspective, indicate various solutions and instructions on how to be dominant *and* more desirable as women in order to overcome the conflicting relations manifesting at the end of a power struggle.

As the findings revealed in Section 7.3.6, in terms of women’s liberation and their obliteration, magazine content mainly associates feminine power with power over men, and is not as a rule framed in the professional domain, but rather in the sexual domain. In addition, the magazines’ shared version of femininity varies; therefore, this perspective is clothed in the various components that make up the complex definition of womanhood featured in those magazines. For example, as magazine analysis revealed in *Cosmopolitan*, such domination (female versus male) manifests in a sexually confident form and in the independent representation of femininity. *Elle* and *Twoj Styl* depict femininity as a form of confident participation in the competitive world of business, while in *Fairlady* one must learn to prepare decorated food or to make crafts in order to achieve the status of ideal womanhood. The majority of women’s magazines still situate women close to the domestic sphere. Although such magazines range between those encouraging women to work as a homemaker or as a businesswoman, or those encouraging them to be independent, the magazines such as *Elle* and *Twoj Styl*, which celebrate the ‘independent’ woman, nevertheless, also feature articles on cookery and interior decoration.

8.4.1 The structuring of the visual element in a gendered way

As was discussed in Section 8.2.1, in women's magazines, a woman's own experiences of her body and the feminine feeling of pleasure is negated. One might reduce this negation to the simple premise of "*men act and women appear*" (Mulvey, 1989 in Rose, 2002:12). Men look at women, while women watch themselves being looked at. Such viewing of the feminine form determines the relations between women and men, and amongst women themselves. The persuasiveness of visuality is argued by Rose who states that the "visual is central to the cultural construction of social life in contemporary Western societies" (Rose, 2002:6). The argument can therefore be advanced that social difference and social power relations are articulated via advertised images, because "visual images have social conditions and social effects that are articulated both through the image itself and through the social modality of the system" (Rose, 2002:99). In addition, this visuality, the feminist writer Mulvey (in Rose, 2002:107) claims, "is structured in a gendered way". She assumes that "the most important of the social formations shaping the subject is patriarchy" (Mulvey, in Rose, 2002:107). In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, "the determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly" (Mulvey, in Rose, 2002:107). This is reflected in the respondent's data which showed that although women feel ambiguity towards their roles in society and are in denial of their "natural" beauty, they do read women's magazines in order to be updated about the cosmetics and fashion trends, firstly to prioritise their bodies and, secondly, to prioritise the needs of males, which subsequently create a closed circle for the cult of the body.

As a consequence, women are represented as a passive spectacle. The psychoanalyst Joan Riviere (in Rose, 2002) suggests that femininity is not natural, but constructed through modern activities like the process of watching television or viewing advertisements, and that, therefore, there are different ways of thinking about femininity as a construction. For example, data generated from the questionnaires used for both women and men in South

Africa and Poland (see Section 7.1.9) showed that, in both countries, women mistakenly thought that men would prefer the 'Barbie-doll' figure-type promoted by the media. Instead, the majority of male participants did not select this buxom stereotype, which suggests that every society creates a set of expectations in relation to both women's and men's behaviour, so it seems that the susceptibility to media influence is determined by gender differences.

Moreover, similarly to the findings for women, the majority of men (53% in South Africa and 60% in Poland) chose a thin model-like figure in category 'F' (Figure 7.26). Gathered data clearly indicate that the male perception regarding women's body-image is influenced by the media. This is because, according to questionnaire survey Participant 17: "media sets the standards in society, which then influences general perceptions and what one should expect or desire". Thus, in this case, what is important about the advertised images "is not the image itself, but how it is seen by particular spectators who look at it in particular ways" (Rose, 2002:12). In a consumerist culture, the approach to the feminine body and its disciplining, as well as other forms of 'violence' perpetrated against the female body, represent the ways in which femininity is constructed and the complexity of the power relations defining women's lives. In turn, such power relations play out in the role of woman in contemporary society, as she finds it difficult to reconcile her many different identities and roles in an ever-tightening spiral of trying to be everything to everyone; while she suffers under the watchful gaze of the advertiser.

8.5 The verbal layer of feminine representation in magazine content

Data revealed that the selected magazines (the Polish *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Twoj Styl* and the South African *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Fairlady*) represented a model of modern femininity (in the verbal layer) which is connected with participation in social and political life and liberation from traditional feminine roles. For instance, in those magazines the

heroines in articles are examples of professionally active and self-sufficient women, who realise themselves successfully in the public sphere (as previously discussed in Section 7.3.7). This aspect is reflected in the data, since the analysis revealed (in the research findings in Section 7.3.7.1) that, although young women do not usually refer to themselves as feminists, they have similar opinions to those held by feminists. They value independence, as they want to realise their own model of life, as apart from the traditionally comprehended feminine roles.

In addition, the literature supports findings (as seen in Chapter 2), in terms of women's stereotypical representations in the selected magazines articles (as seen in Section 7.3.7.1), rather than focus on professional roles in order to break the obligatory stereotypes. This is due to the fact that this way of representing women propagates the new model of femininity – that of professionally active and educated women, whose ambitions reach beyond the boundaries of family life. Such a model articulates that publishers recognise their readers as 'aspirational', for example aspiring to be mature, independent, richer and thinner. However, in almost every article analysed in the selected magazines (the Polish *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Twoj Styl* and the South African *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Fairlady*) the traditional aspects of femininity are still present. The analysis of those articles indicated that women have found it impossible to break free completely from the traditional feminine roles. Such a finding, in turn, articulates that women feel ambiguous about their role in society and their personal roles, as is clearly illustrated in Section 7.1.4.

However, as discussed before, the converse of this liberated representation is also present, namely the imprisonment (obliteration) of women in the 'ideal body' (as portrayed in Section 7.3.7.3), testifying to the extent to which female representation is a contested domain. The majority of women represented in these magazines practise independent professions, such

as politicians or social activists, while, in 'real' life, only the minority of women operate in the realm of social activity or politics, as seen in Sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.3 (Krolikowska, 2004; Lowe-Morna, 2001). As the findings and literature converge, it becomes clear that women's representation in advertisements and magazine content is not only a contested domain, but a domain driven by oppositional discourses and power struggles. This argument was reinforced after interviewing art director and graphic designer from the print media industry, who illustrated that such contestation is driven by the particular point of view of the magazine's editorial team, which occupies a powerful position from which they can shape the cult of femininity. This is ultimately done for financial gain, since in those magazines, the promotional agenda of advertisers occupy enough space so as to influence the character of femininity by promoting various products in such a way as to convince women to engage in disciplining their bodies.

8.5.1 The verbal layer of feminine representation in magazine content

The verbal layer was analysed in Section 7.3.7.3, which showed that magazines subscribe to the ubiquitous 'terror of beauty' (Baker, 1984). However, in all selected magazines (the Polish *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Twoj Styl* and the South African *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Fairlady*) the number of articles describing the negative consequences of the oppressive picture of a feminine body are very limited. Such limited commentary on the subject is comprehensive, since it contradicts the consumerist ideology upheld in these magazines, which espouses the presentation of both thin and beautiful models in advertisements and the praising of the newest achievements in the cosmetics industry. Women not only have to deal with the dichotomous situation of not striving towards an ideal appearance, as presented in the articles and possibly in the editorial content, but also are faced with several pages of advertised beauty products, cosmetic advice columns and fashion, usually displayed on anorectic models. For example, articles like "Bodies like souls" (in PL

Elle March 2006:77), “Beautiful by nature” (PL *Elle* November 2005:138), or “Fighting with your food?” (featured in SA *Elle* September 2005:36), advise how to avoid the negative consequences of the ‘terror of beauty’, while other articles encourage women to discipline and improve their bodies by means of the application of advertised products.

8.5.2 The obliteration of women from representation in the verbal layer

Seen in the light of the above-mentioned arguments, the second aspect of the modern femininity model, which shows women’s obliteration regarding to their obsessive body image, underscores the ambivalence of women’s liberation when evaluated in terms of contemporary perspectives of the body. Since people are presently more often perceived through the prism of their bodies, their identity is communicated through the role of the body. This bodily identity communication includes through the various professional roles that women fulfil in society, such as doctors or lawyers, or in various sensual roles, such as models and actresses (Woodward, 2003). Appearance thus becomes the basic determining criterion of other people’s opinion. Since beauty is not neutrally gendered, it becomes attributed to women. It defines them, thus constituting one of the main areas of social construction and the support of gender difference (Melosik, 1996).

Although men also often take care of their appearance and surrender to the ‘terror of beauty’, as some male participants in the South African Focus Group admitted, women concentrate more than men on the attractiveness of their bodies and are more dissatisfied with certain aspects of their appearance, such as when perceiving themselves as fatter and heavier than they are in reality. For example, as the data presented in Section 7.1.5 indicated, although the majority of Polish participants (38%) and South African participants (35%) do not feel obsessed by their bodies, they would, nevertheless, like to change something about them. This preoccupation with improving the body has its roots, to a degree, in the real-life consequences

that a beautiful body invokes. It seems that women are both judged and defined by the current model of beauty (Kelly, 2000; Woodward, 2003), a situation which impacts on all spheres of a women's life. In addition, participants in the South African Focus Group asserted that women naturally perceived themselves in terms of the current model of beauty portrayed in women's magazines. In this way, external appearance becomes central to one's self-concept and self-image.

Valid knowledge about the body exists, in every culture, and there are social pressures on the individual to accept this knowledge and to incarnate it in their bodies. Melosik (1996:66) states that "valid knowledge" has a "normative and disciplining character". Nowadays, the disciplining of the body does not necessarily require physical strength and violence, (as it did in the past) but subtler forms of discipline. Engaging in the normative practices of consuming both magazine content (articles) and products (advertisements), emerged as an internationally preferred way of disciplining the female body. The data made it clear that the reasons why women read (consume) magazines are not easily defined (as illustrated in Section 7.1.1). This argument is supported by Schultz (in Hermes, 1995:23) that although reading practices are part of everyday routines, when reading magazines: "they are not often reflected upon, and therefore do not have conscious meanings". Such lack of conscious meaning explains the difficulty of participants trying to define why they read the magazines in question. In both Poland and South Africa, participants' explanations of why they read magazines and tabloids included arguments such as that their reading formed part of the evening relaxation routine, "to pass time while on a long drive in a bus or train", or purely to alleviate boredom or habit.

In addition, data indicated that reading feminine periodicals provides women not only with a relaxing activity, but "simultaneously keeps them updated with trends and

novelties regarding cosmetics and the fashion market. Another perceived advantage in reading magazines is that store locations are supplied, where advertised goods can be purchased. Magazines were found to inspire change in one's image or surroundings. In the Polish Focus Group, participants who took care of their appearance argued that reading magazines occasionally helped them to make the right decisions regarding the purchasing of clothes and cosmetics. Thus, in both South Africa and Poland, such a consumerist leitmotif surfaced in the data, although in Figure 7.3 in Chapter 7, the majority of Polish participants (32%) and 40% of South African women stated that they were 'unsure' of whether they were influenced by advertising to the degree of purchasing the advertised products. However, the influence of magazines can be seen in the fact that half of the participants in both Poland and South Africa shared similar opinions about choosing a thin model-like figure (as featured in category 'F', in Figure 7.26) closely related to an ideal women's shape, rather than a slim one. Such choice indicates that magazines attempt to theorise the link between women's individuality and their patterns of lifestyle and consumption, resulting in the influencing of women's perception. This argument is borne out by Rose (2002:12) who states that "one never looks just at one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves".

8.5.2.1 Women's magazines and identity construction

Participants indicated that magazine content should relate to their interests and hobbies. Woodward suggests that this is the case as magazines are used indirectly in identity construction, which requires continued renewal (Woodward, 2003). For example, a *Cosmopolitan* reader may fantasise about being an ideal partner, since the magazine focuses on the discussion of relationships (SA *Cosmopolitan*, March 2006). Being a housewife (or a teenager) also involves certain semi-expert pieces of information that can be found in *Fairlady* (May 2006) or *Twoj Styl* (Jan 2006), such as cooking, health care or knitting patterns, which serve to maintain the identity of a cultured person. The desire to read gossip

about well-known people and celebrities is another argument for buying such magazines, since 30% of the respondents in Poland and 38% in South Africa justified their purchasing the magazines in this way. The need to share in celebrities' lives may relate to the existence of an imagined community (Hermes, 1995). This is due to the fact that magazines serve to enlarge the reader's private world, by 'helping' the reader to bring celebrities into his or her circle of friends and acquaintances, which fulfils the subconscious need for belonging and solidarity.

Although, as seen in Section 7.1.4, in both countries the majority of Polish and South African participants claimed that their body-images were not influenced by those magazines, their contradictory responses indicated the contrary, that is, that "the pleasure of consumption and that of the fantasy of possibilities of infinite consumption is central to the success of the magazine form and we simply cannot afford to reject it" (Ballaster, in Baehr & Gray, 1996:92). For example, in both countries, as the majority of women admitted, women want to be beautiful and admired, and therefore media, particularly advertising, fulfill their needs in choosing the appropriate product or weight-loss diet. Such a lack of understanding regarding the degree of influence exerted by the media is reflected in the words of a Polish participant, who said: "We don't analyse and penetrate media; they are part of us,"

8.5.2.2 The illusory pleasure of consumption

In both South Africa and Poland, participants described reading as a secondary activity requiring little involvement (see Section 7.1). In line with the data reflected in Figure 7.21 in Section 7.1.6, the majority of Polish women (44%) and South African women (55%) stated that they purchased magazines only occasionally and read them with fascination during their periods of leisure. Although it is through readers' perceptions that magazines become meaningful, the pleasure experienced is highly structured, offering women "little opportunity of escape from the limited social spaces they inhabited" (Winship, in Gough-Yates, 2003:52). This is because the pleasure of consumption is an illusion, since "we don't choose what is

available for us to choose from in the first place” (Williamson, in Baehr & Gray, 1996:94). Thus, often participants do not realise that magazine advice on how to become thin, youthful, and beautiful, uses a model that is closely related to the current desirable ideal of femininity. Although, in Section 7.1.5, the majority of female participants in both countries, claimed that most magazines have a *negative* influence on them, in relation to Figures 7 and 8, as dealt with in Section 7.1.2, their responses state that their self-perception, after viewing models in magazines, has *not* changed and that they are *not* influenced by the advertisements contained therein.

Participants’ responses were also found to be contradictory in relation to another statement, in which the overwhelming majority of all participants answered that magazines often inspire them to change something about their body image or to inform themselves about the advertised products. In addition, although in both countries, one-third of participants said that they were not interested in advertised products due to their high cost, they did admit that they still loved to buy magazines and be updated about the prevailing fashion trends. As can be seen, there seems to be a contradiction between what they feel the influence is on themselves, compared to what the effect is on others.

Women are left with few realistic choices, because there seems to be only one known way of becoming a modern woman; by disciplining the body through conforming to various consumer practices. These consumer practises, as seen previously, favours representing the human body as a collection of faceless fragments, a representation which dehumanises women by limiting their identity to the physical layer. Such representation also re-enforces the notion that beauty *can* be purchased in the form of lipsticks, creams or shampoos. The data shows that women want to be beautiful and, therefore, many women fall into this trap without noticing that behind these charming proposals stands a great industry of advertising and marketing, driving the needs of more and more groups of women. Thus, it can be argued

that women purchasing feminine magazines are simultaneously modern and liberated from traditional feminine roles, as well as being imprisoned in her own body through her submission to the prescriptive practices employed for disciplining the body.

8.6 Obliteration of women as represented in the visual layer

In line with the presentation of research findings in Section 7.3.8, the data clearly revealed that women are defined in terms of their physical appearance, rather than in terms of their abilities. Lowe-Morna (2001:28) claims that “if they are not being portrayed as sexual objects, they are most often shown as victims of violence and homemakers”. As a result, women are seldom portrayed in non-traditional roles, such as as experts, politicians or business leaders. As noted in Figure 7.50 in Section 7.3.8, the women depicted in terms of categories such as those of ‘dependency’, ‘neutral’, ‘intimacy’, ‘sport’, and ‘carrier-orientated’ constitute a minority, with scores varying between 6% and 1%. It also seems that advertisers have been polarising their symbols more towards status, sex, appearance and individualism, which constitute a liberated woman, albeit one imprisoned in her body.

When gearing advertising at women, advertisers traditionally use female models. As the literature indicates, such a strategy is rooted in the congruency theory, “assuming that some type of congruence or match-up in characteristics between the advertisement message and the viewer should be present” (Kamins, 1990 in Dallmann, 2001:116; Kanungo & Pang, 1973). Thus, in advertising often the choice of people depends on the philosophical approach adopted for a particular advertising campaign. For example, the data of the comparative analysis of advertisements in the selected magazines showed that, in only every third issue, two or maybe three advertisements featuring images of men appear. The overwhelming presentation of women over men can be explained by the fact that advertisers generally

believe that the primary inclination of most female viewers is to identify with a female model (Messaris, 1997).

This identification can take a positive or negative form. For instance, some participants in the Polish Focus Group 1 stated that in advertisements women generally do not appear to be interesting, because they wear so much make-up that they become unnatural and therefore unattractive. One of the aforementioned participants stated that “in advertisements the heroines are typical anorectics: tall, flat, thin and naked and on whom the clothes just hang”. Other participants in the same Polish Focus Group 1 admitted that they expect a woman promoting a product to be “pretty in order to attract one’s attention to the product”. Similarly, in the South African Focus Group 1 a participant stated: “when looking at advertisements with attractive models, we are more willing to believe that the given product is efficient and indispensable and consequently make a purchase”. The participants’ data clearly reflected that physically attractive people who appear in advertisements are perceived as gifted. The literature advances that the reader is inclined to pay more attention to such individuals and will show a willingness to identify with them, which may in turn also influence self-perception in various ways (Hatfield & Sprecher, in Dolinski, 2003).

In both countries, the majority of participants in each focus group affirmed that the ways in which women are represented in the media does not relate to everyday reality. According to a summary of their responses, in real life women have to work, take care of the family, cook and clean in such a way as to fulfil the role of a housewife, who, at the end of the day, lacks sufficient time to nurture herself, or because she feels tired. However, there are various opinions about women’s portrayal in the print media. For example, in contrast to the South African focus group participants (of whom 45% affirmed that women are represented in stereotypical ways in advertisements), only 23% of the Polish focus group participants stated

that they thought that women are represented in stereotypical ways, while the rest (38%) stated that they were unsure (see Figure 7.6 in Section 7.1.3).

As shown in Section 7.1.6, the vast majority of all Polish participants agreed that *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines closely represent the cultural ideal of women's shape in their country; in relation to which one Polish participant (PL3) stated: "there are lots of women who are well groomed, elegant with nice make-up, that look after themselves. Therefore, I would say that women depicted in those magazines in some way resemble women in reality." Another participant in the Polish Focus Group noticed that "in today's world, women's lives are not that different from the advertised ones in magazines".

Although, in advertising, these types of women are depicted as perfect, behind their smile there lurks the image of a self-conscious and miserable woman, who cannot help but respond to inducements to buy, which are couched in slogans marked by an exclamatory or declarative style, such as "buy!", or "because you're worth it" (as discussed in Chapter 4). As the data show, women's magazines continue to concentrate on the traditional view of women's interests, emphasising appeals made on behalf of home, beauty and family, with only an occasional reference to the needs of working women (Andersen, 1983; Golebiewska, 2003; Tuchman *et al.*, 1978; Wolf, 1990). Participants claimed that, although women's role in the economy and job market has changed, women's representation in women's magazines has remained the same. For example, in terms of women's representation, Polish women indicated that, since the 1990s, when Western style advertising was first featured, women's stereotypical representation had been reinforced. South African white women noticed that, although women have become more independent over the years, leading to culturally diverse models more often appearing in women's magazines, the media still depict women in stereotypical ways. South African coloured women supported the views previously expressed

that in the media women have become increasingly pictured as scantily clad or naked. Only a few South African black women commented that, in terms of their cultural group, women's representation has changed, claiming that there are now more black women featured in women's magazines than there were in the past, but still not enough in the mainstream publications namely *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Fairlady*.

In addition, although the data revealed that woman's representation in the selected magazines is exaggerated (as discussed in Chapter 2 and Section 7.6.3.1), the analysis indicated that the representation of women is similar in both countries in the local magazines, namely the *Fairlady* in South Africa and *Twoj Styl* in Poland, as well as in the internationally recognised magazines, namely the *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*. In the following section, an analysis of the degree of high- and low-context appeals reveals the reasons behind such similarity in response.

8.7 The individualist and collectivist context in Polish and South African advertising approaches

Previous studies have suggested that in advertising and marketing communication, the differences between high- and low-context communication systems are very important (Callow & Schiffman, 2004; De Mooij, 2001; Dolinski, 2003; Gudykunst & Tommey, 1988; Jandt, 1998). The content analysis data in Section 7.3.1, revealed that no noticeable difference exists between the degree of low-context advertisements in the South African and Polish editions of *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*, meaning that global marketers employ similar approaches in their product marketing. As a previous study suggested, such similarity in approach results from the fact that "people from low-context cultures in contrast to people from collectivist high-context cultures are less capable of deciphering highly complex visual messages" (Callow & Schiffman, 2004:13). As a result, as discussed in Section 3.8.1, "reliance on more

explicit visual messages has the advantage of creating some conformity of meaning among audiences from around the world” (Callow & Schiffman, 2004:13). However, in order to research why, in both South Africa and Poland, selected magazines predominantly make low-context appeals, each advertisement was grouped into the categories of consumer non-durables (such as coffee, soap, toothpaste, perfumes, and cosmetics) and consumer durables (such as cars, furniture, electronics, and banking or insurance services), according to Cutler and Javalgi’s model (Cutler & Javalgi, in Dallmann, 2001).

As represented in Figures 7.27 to 7.36 in Section 7.3.1, in both South Africa and Poland, advertising in women’s magazines has a personalised character. The content analysis data clearly indicate that, internationally, the women’s market is considered as homogeneous, marked by certain universal characteristics. Regarding practices relating to the body, such a consideration means that the desire to look beautiful and to be appreciated is shared by all cultures (De Mooij, 2001). For example, Murdock has developed a list of “*cultural universals*”, which are found in each culture (Murdock, in de Mooij, 2001:54). Such cultural universals include age-grading, athletic sports, bodily adornment, cleanliness training, cooking, dream interpretation, dancing, family feasting, gift-giving, joking, etiquette, religious ritual, community organisation, weather control, sexual restrictions and status differentiation (De Mooij, 2001). Global advertisers and marketers know that there are certain traits present in all cultures. Therefore, as the content analysis data reflected, it is important to both the global advertising and the marketing industry to target market segments that are homogeneous in terms of “cultural universals, which play an important role in marketing products and services” (De Mooij, 2001:54).

However, as discussed in Section 7.3.1, the second assumption, which stated that *Fairlady* would not predominate with low-context advertised appeals as much as the South

African editions of *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*, was only partly supported. Such a finding may suggest that South African advertisers are faced with the challenge of creating advertisements to cater for the needs of a highly heterogeneous and individualistic society. Therefore, the advertising content in the South African *Fairlady* magazine predominates with low-context advertisements, since “more explicit visual messages have the advantage of creating some conformity of meaning among audiences from around the world” (Callow & Schiffman, 2004:13).

In contrast, the Polish results of the second assumption did not support the theme that the Polish *Twoj Styl* magazine would predominate with high-context advertised appeals, since Polish society is more collectivist, as is represented in Figure 7.29. These results show that, in women’s magazines, the advertisers strongly emphasise the personalised format of advertised appeals. Furthermore, such results confirm the findings of another study conducted by Leiss *et al.* (1990 in Dallmann, 2001) regarding Canadian magazine advertising, which indicated “that products targeted at women such as personal-care products are predominantly designed in a personalized format”. In terms of such findings, the female model and the product are linked by juxtaposition, based on patterns of use and consumption. Therefore, in women’s magazines, advertising content often seeks to elicit desires or aims that may be subliminally present in all women. In addition, the expansion of uniform cultural patterns and homogenous market segments favours the application of global strategies. Therefore, the next part of this chapter deals with the factors contributing to the standardisation or individualisation of marketing strategies.

8.8 Results of standardised and individualised advertising approaches

The first comparative analysis was undertaken in relation to the 24 South African and 24 Polish issues of *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines, dating from May 2005 to May 2006. The second comparison was made between the six issues of the South African *Fairlady* and the six issues of the Polish *Twoj Styl* magazines, dating from December 2005 to May 2006. Such an analysis was undertaken in order to identify the degree of standardisation or individualisation of advertisements in those magazines. The comparative analysis included both the culture-specific advertising conventions reflected in the advertising design, such as the depiction of a local address or information about the product, and the international characteristics of advertising, such as the use of well-known models, worldwide brands and brand image.

Furthermore, the results of the content analysis determined the degree of standardisation and localisation of advertisements in magazines targeted at women in two different cultures, a high-context culture and a low-context culture. In this regard, the assumption was made that the globally distributed magazines, namely both the Polish and South African *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*, would predominantly feature standardised advertising content, leaving the culturally relevant magazines (*Fairlady* and *Twoj Styl* respectively) in their wake, since the “standardization of advertising is possible where the product serves the same needs across cultures such as beauty, love, and fear” (Sommers & Kernan, in Seitz, 1998:2).

From the content analysis of the standardised and individualised advertising approaches, it is concluded that the international marketing strategies predominantly apply both standardisation and individualisation to particular elements of their marketing mix, as indicated in Figures 7.37 to 7.42 in Section 7.3.2. As the previous studies suggest, such a

difference in approach results from the fact that, on an international scale, a full standardisation of marketing strategies or their individualisation (consisting of a total adaptation to local conditions) is not possible to realise, due to the prevailing technological conditions and limited finances of the enterprises concerned (Pietrasienski, 2005). Furthermore, the results of this analysis partly confirmed the assumption which stated that in both countries the *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines would dominate when it came to standardised advertising content (with scores ranging between 20% to 58% in South Africa and between 10% to 30% in Poland) over the culturally relevant magazines *Fairlady* (ranging in score from 10% to 19%) and *Twoj Styl* (ranging in score from 14% to 25%).

In addition, regarding the degree of standardisation, the content analysis data showed that no significant differences existed between *Fairlady* and *Twoj Styl* magazines. For example, as represented in Figures 8.2 and 8.3, in both countries, except for the linguistic differences and the difference in advertising slogan, the structure of *L'Oreal* advertisements consists of the same elements, such as the composition, colours, typeface and use of model. Such differences are due to the fact that an advertised image is perceived differently by the respective consumer in Poland and South Africa, and therefore requires modification of particular advertised elements, such as the typeface, in order to accommodate the differences in the languages concerned.



Figure 8.2 *L'Oreal* advertisement in *Twoj Styl*, June 2006



Figure 8.3 *L'Oreal* advertisement in *Fairlady*, December 2005

The results of the comparative advertisement analysis indicate a diverse degree of standardisation and individualisation of the particular advertising design elements, such as the language, the advertising slogan or additional locally relevant information about the product, as represented in Figures 8.4 and 8.5. In the majority of cases in international advertising policy, the partial use of both standardisation and individualisation is recognised (Callow & Schiffman, 2004; Dolinski, 2003; Pietrasienski, 2005). For example, the results of the content analysis data support the assumption that, in magazines, the local approach is undertaken for culturally-based products, such as fashion and national brands, as argued by Dunn (in Seitz, 1998).



Figure 8.4 MaxFactor advertisement in *Twoj Styl*, April 2006



Figure 8.5 MaxFactor advertisement in *Fairlady*, March 2006

Furthermore, the results indicate that perfume products often are more strongly standardised than are cosmetics. This means that products of globally recognised cosmetic brands often have additional local elements, such as information relating to the product or address, as is represented in Figures 8.3 (where the place of purchase, such as *Clicks* in South Africa, is shown). In contrast, advertisements of perfumes and fashionable worldwide brands of clothing remain highly standardised, since “the people all over the world have the same

tastes and desires, and they are remarkably alike regarding, for example, love, beauty and fear” (Lynch, in Seitz, 1998). Such a finding indicates that, in the international market, approximate profiling of recipients’ segments exists, especially in the case of the women’s market. However, the perception of women’s bodies varies between participants who come from different cultural backgrounds. Comparing the participants’ data gathered in Section 7.7.5 regarding whether women’s magazines negatively influence women’s self-perception, for South African coloured and black women it was seen as difficult to associate with the magazine content, because of its direct appeal to Western standards of beauty. The participants’ data gathered suggests that, although magazines assume a shared experience among women in terms of taking care of the body, they promote Western standards of beauty that are difficult to achieve for black women. The following data shows, women’s magazines are similarly constructed in terms of the content, feature sections and visual design, since the women’s market is recognised as an international market segment.

8.8.1 Similarities and differences between the South African and Polish *Elle* regarding a cultural/local approach

The data gathered revealed that, apart from the quality of content that should be re-orientated in relation to cultural context, the South African and Polish *Elle* standardise their structural content in a prescribed way, because many foreign magazine publishers have offices and representatives in their country of distribution. However, an American publisher cannot license an entire magazine abroad, so that such rights are directed to either small or large magazine publishers. In addition, for the advertisers, the international editions offer excellent opportunities of reaching foreign audiences (Mogel, 1998).

Findings revealed that in both the South African and Polish editions of the magazine, apart from the visual content, the ideology of content is constructed in the same way. Such a

construction strengthens the argument that global marketers employ similar approaches in targeting universal characteristics of the female consumer.

8.9 The perception of women's bodies by participants coming from different cultural backgrounds

As the participants' responses discussed in Section 7.7.1 suggest, women read certain magazines because of their focus on appearance, which is inseparably connected with consumer attitudes towards the body. Also, as is presented in Figures 7.20 and 7.21 in Section 7.1.7, both *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* are mostly popular among white South African women, whereas over 80% of coloured and black women do not purchase such magazines, preferring to read magazines that take their own cultural background into consideration. Thus, for women of colour, the specified magazines tend to focus on white women's bodies that represent the beauty standards of the dominant culture. Similarly, a few black women acknowledged that the media promote white beauty standards by targeting mostly white women. As another black South African Participant (52) stated: "they represent the unnatural beauty of African women, but the natural beauty of the Western women. They are not looking at Africa. Who are they targeting? White hoochies?"

The participants' data clearly reveals that the perception of ideal women's bodies varies between participants who come from different cultural backgrounds. For example, the perceptions of Polish and South African white women are similar regarding the cultural ideal of women's shape in their specific cultural group. According to a South African Participant (3) in her cultural white group, "skinny with an hourglass shape is generally preferred as the ideal of women's physical shape". Similarly, some participants in the Polish Focus Group 1 claimed that being tall, thin, blonde, and leggy with nice hair constitutes the ideal women's physical shape, which magazines such as *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* represent. However, in

contrast to Polish women, South African white women living in a culturally diverse country were more aware of the fact that such magazines target only white women. According to a South African Participant (1): “they do a pretty good job of representing what South African women would like to be like, in the context of being well looked after, groomed and well dressed, but that’s about it” (SA P1).

In contrast, the responses of South African coloured women articulated the perception that more curvaceous bodies are preferred, and that *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* do not represent the ideal cultural shape of women in South Africa. In the opinion of a South African Participant (FG 2): “*Elle* and *Cosmo* in South Africa do not represent the ideal women’s shape, but the shape for a woman who lives in the USA or Europe.” Also, their responses, such as that there is no specific shape or that women’s physical shape should not be defined by the mainstream standards advertised in women’s magazines, indicated that, for women of colour, it is difficult to associate with the content of the aforementioned magazines, because they directly appeal to Western white standards of beauty, as the majority were reported to claim in Sub-section 7.1.6. Similarly, South African black women also claimed that the magazines in point do not represent the cultural ideal of women’s shape in their cultural group, because they are simply too Western. Participant SA P7 maintained that usually black South African women feature “sizes bigger”,

Such a finding suggests that, despite status, class, wealth, and at times race differences, magazines assume a shared experience between women, in terms of lifestyle and consumption: “they construct social class differences subsequently denying the existence of structured class and race differences by offering resolutions on a personal level” (Baehr & Gray, 1996:94). In order to fit into the advertised standards of beauty, it was found that Western influences in advertising regarding the presentation of ‘perfect’ body images in

magazines contributed to the fact that black Westernised South African women may be “at risk for the development of body shape and weight concerns” (Haynes, 1995). For example, in relation to the data presented in Figure 7.25, women in both countries, but especially culturally diverse South African women, indicated that a slim or curvaceous, but still slim, figure is closely related to an ideal women’s figure.

8.9.1 The body as a cultural medium

These findings and data, however, do not support those of an earlier study conducted by Petersen from 1986 to 1989, in which he stated that women represented in South African magazine advertising are free from Westernised stereotypical representation, so that they are *not* as susceptible to body shape and weight concerns (Petersen, 1986–1989). Regarding the participants’ responses, as recorded in Sub-sections 7.1.7 and 7.1.9, the data clearly indicated that a discourse of culture still exists in selected magazines. In line with this perspective, it is evident that the body is seen in advertising as the medium of culture (Bordo, in Woodward, 2003). Many different feminist theories represent various perspectives of body discourse (Baehr & Gray, 1996; Golebiewska, 2003; Wolf, 1990; Woodward, 2003).

However, most often, the body as the medium of culture is determined as text in which social and cultural patterns are imprinted. The things that we eat and the way in which we dress, as well as everyday rituals concerned with body treatments change in relation to the social conditions, as conceived by definite cultures or dominant mainstreams in the media, alter and shape the concept of the body (Woodward, 2003). From the responses obtained, it can clearly be concluded that the body is shaped by cultural norms of ideology, time management and the scheduling of everyday practices. Bodies are thus coached and shaped in terms of current desirable forms of identity, sexuality, masculinity and femininity (Wolf, 1990).

8.10 The promotion of advertised beauty in women's magazines

The participants' data revealed that, presently, femininity practised through the discourse of body makes women particularly submissive and susceptible to control. Such positioning is due to the consumerist culture directing one's attention to the ideal appearance of the body, as indicated in the analysed women's magazines. A characteristic feature of the ideal feminine ideal appearance constitutes the possession of a thin body.

The data also revealed the awareness of an over-representation of thin women in the media, which, in turn, reinforces the conclusion that being 'physically attractive' and 'sexually desirable' means one thing only, and that is that being a thin and young individual endows a particular status (as seen in Sub-section 7.3.8). Ultimately, the restrictions imposed by the media regarding the norms set for appearance served to enlarge the number of women dissatisfied with their body image and perceiving it as not the ideal. For example, in both South Africa and Poland, some participants, after viewing women's magazines, had mixed feelings regarding their body image. As one of the Polish participants stated: "one will never be as perfect as media and culture demand. Thus, the more unsuitable and inadequate women's bodies are, the more they will try to improve and adapt them to generally constructed requirements. As is revealed in Sub-section 7.3.7.3, such attempts at improvement and adaptation are because "women's magazines present women with a mirror image of idealized femininity, and women experience themselves from outside as well as from within: looking at themselves and being looked at" (Edholm, 1992 in Woodward, 2003:276).

Magazines aim to integrate women in terms of their idealised mirror images and the world constructed around their notion of feminine identity. This aim leads to a situation where, according to McCracken (in Baehr & Gray, 1996:100). "hidden beneath the glamorous ideals are subtexts that play on anxieties and encourage feelings of inadequacy, while

promising pleasure and the acceptance and love of others if we purchase”. Thus, the data from this study support the idea that women, as consumers, “envy not only the glamorous model in an advertisement, but herself as she will be in future after having purchased the advertised product” (Berger, in Baehr & Gray, 1996:99). The data, as discussed in Sub-section 7.7.5, illustrated, how, in some ways, women are pressurised to embody the image of advertised physical beauty. When participants were asked what woman should do to avoid eating disorders the majority of woman in both South Africa and Poland did not take the question personally, but rather advised what *other* women should do. This clearly indicated the ambiguity that women feel regarding their body image, self-perception and role in society.

If a woman should however decide to apply all of the advice that she hears through the media, she would not have enough time to do anything apart from care for her own body. For example, as some participants in the Polish Focus Group explained, her day would then consist of morning gymnastics, weight control, calculation of calories, the preparation of food according to the requirements of an optimum diet, make-up, and visits to beauty salons, a gym and pool.

8.11 The denial of the phenomenon of ‘natural’ beauty

The following contradiction was discerned in the responses discussed in Sub-section 7.1.7, in terms of which women asserted an awareness that they have always been identified with nature, though, in a consumerist culture, they are forced into denying the ‘natural’ look of their own bodies. A higher proportion of Polish women (43%) vehemently denied that ‘natural’ beauty is represented in the magazines under discussion, whereas in South Africa only 34% found such an element lacking, while the majority (38%) expressed uncertainty as to whether the magazine content in question represented ‘natural’ beauty, as can be observed in Figure 7.24. Such a finding can be explained by the fact that South African cultural

diversity for varying interpretations of what constitutes female beauty. For example, according to South African white participants, although “those magazines might use girls with natural beauty but then only those who conform to the mainstream idea of natural beauty”, they are still airbrushed and Photoshopped (SA FG 1). The majority of South African coloured women supported the view that in the magazines in question women cannot be represented naturally, since they are featured in artificial studio poses, wearing too much make-up. Also the majority of South African black women pointed out that the overuse of make-up and the use of artificial hair testify to the fact that ‘natural’ beauty is not represented in such magazines. However, such a point of view also indicated that, in order to conform to current standards of beauty, some black women impose white female characteristics, such as long straight hair, onto their ‘natural’ look, which they seek in this way to deny.

The data showed that the majority of participants claimed that “natural beauty is beauty without make-up”, hair extensions and possibly any other beauty interventions that correct the body in order that it may match the requirements of ideally smooth skin, since women’s advertised skin should be clean, smooth and ‘silky’. Also, in spite of the fact that, in both Poland and South Africa, two-thirds of the older participants in the relevant focus groups stated that “the sense of beauty and aesthetics is an individual approach” and that “an important meaning lies in the mental qualities of one’s mind and self-acceptance regardless of the appearance”, they still embraced artificial notions of beauty as can be seen in Section 7.1.8. Two-thirds of Polish participants acknowledged that external appearance and presence is very important, because, on first contact, one’s appearance constitutes 55% about the way one will be perceived thereafter. Therefore, both character *and* the way in which one dresses and takes care of one’s appearance are essential.

Such acknowledgement suggests that current beauty requirements often cause respondents not to pay attention to the ‘terror’ to which the female body is subjected. For

example, although high heels may cause back problems and feet deformation, women apply such 'violence' to their own bodies, while being conditioned by advertising to perceive such 'torments' as completely 'natural'. Some women are, in this way, subliminally forced into continual denial of their natural body image. In a consumerist culture, a feminine body is, in short, represented as a purely physical phenomenon. The images of ideal advertised feminine bodies held up for emulation by women cause them to try and compete with those advertised standards. In order to conform to existing patterns, they tend to suppress their undervalued (often ridiculed) bodily experiences. For example, we live in a culture where menstrual blood is portrayed as blue. The fact that a woman bleeds once a month is negated, as, in advertisements, litres of blue liquid are poured onto thin sanitary towels in an effort to show how the smallest sign of "those embarrassing days" can be hidden. Although, according to the responses I gleaned, any appearance of the 'natural' body is omitted from magazines, femininity and bodily experiences are defined, persecuted and controlled according to the predominant cultural patterns and general images of women and their bodies.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

The aims of the study were to explore the ways in which advertising design and content in selected women's magazines represent the image of contemporary women in South Africa and Poland, by proposing lifestyles and tastes that influence women's attitudes towards their self-perception and body image. The grounded theory generated from the data is referred to as the theory of disciplining the body. In this study, it describes the ideologically manipulative role played by the print media, particularly by women's magazines, which manifest in a prescriptive construction of femininity.

In my investigation the following research questions were asked:

9.1 To what degree and in which ways have internationally distributed magazines, such as *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*, adapted their marketing strategies to the South African and Polish local markets?

9.2 In what ways does advertising design communication in *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* propose lifestyles and tastes that may influence the attitudes held by sample groups of women towards their self-perception and their roles in the respective societies?

9.3 Are there cultural differences and similarities in women's representation in the local, culturally relevant magazines (*Fairlady* and *Twoj Styl*) in South Africa and Poland and in the international editions of *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* in those respective countries?

9.1 Factors applied in international advertising strategies and the influence of cultural factors on consumer behaviour

In answering the first research question, data revealed that, due to the fact that those specified magazines are targeted at satisfying the concerns of women, they have an approximate content. As a result, in both countries those magazines largely predominate in personalised, low-context advertising appeals. The data clearly indicated that, internationally, the women's market is considered as homogeneous, displaying 'universal characteristics'. In addition, the data gleaned by way of this study showed that the selected magazines do not noticeably differ in their degree of high- and low-context advertising content. As was discussed in Chapter 3, such lack of difference is due to the use of explicit communication having the advantage of creating some conformity of meaning among culturally diverse audiences.

Moreover, on an international scale, a full standardisation of marketing strategies or their individualisation (involving a full adaptation to local conditions) is impossible to realise, due to financial constraints. The international marketing strategies predominantly apply both standardisation and individualisation of particular elements to the marketing mix. The results of the comparative advertisement analysis indicate a diverse degree of standardisation and individualisation of particular advertising design elements, such as language, advertising slogans or additional local information about a product. Furthermore, in both countries, the *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines largely featured standardised advertising content, with the local, culturally relevant *Fairlady* and *Twoj Styl* predominantly featuring individualised advertising content.

The comparison of these magazines clearly shows that general interest women's magazines have a similar content. The research findings indicated that whether it was in the

form of an advertised image or in the form of a magazine cover modification, particular graphic design elements, such as the typeface or colour, are required for different languages. Therefore, in both Poland and South Africa, local magazine designers added their unique cultural context to the visual elements portrayed. In this way, the same structurally ordered visual elements came to be applied slightly differently. Apart from the visual aspects, in both the South African and Polish magazines in question, the ideology of content is recognised as being similarly constructed. Although the globally distributed magazines surveyed do have a standardised structure, the editorial content is reoriented in relation to a specific cultural context, suggesting that global marketers employ similar approaches in reference to product promotion.

9.2 Cultural differences and similarities in women's representation in local and international magazines

In response to the second question, the data showed that, cross-culturally approximate trends may be observed within advertising aimed at women. In both countries, the results appeared to be remarkably similar. Again, no noticeable difference was discerned between women's representation in the local, culturally relevant magazines and in the international editions of *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* in both countries. The female market is, therefore, considered as homogeneous, possessing 'universal characteristics'. The changing role of women was highlighted in order to obtain an objective understanding of the repeated patterns of women's subordinated representation in the mass media. Findings revealed that, across cultures, women are still being defined in terms of their physical attractiveness. Ultimately, such advertising relates to modern gender stereotyping, according to which women are represented in terms of their status, appearance, individualism, and youth. While such representation, on the one hand, is a reflection of the modern, liberated and independent woman, on the other hand, it is a reflection of a woman imprisoned in her own body, one who

reflects an ideal of passive femininity, a model of femininity popularity in existence since the Victorian era.

Subsequently, in the selected magazines (the Polish *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Twoj Styl* and the South African *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Fairlady*) an analysis conducted of the verbal layer (as represented in Chapter 4) indicated that the stereotypical portrayal of women appearing in the visual layer of magazines contradicts their portrayal in the verbal layer. In the verbal layer heroines of interviews and articles claim to fulfil themselves in both the public sphere and in their professional roles. As the data revealed, in the majority of cases, women's magazines feature contradictory points of view, with the contents of magazines not demanding to be read in any particular order. Baehr and Gray (1996) claimed that the fragmentary nature of magazine content is well suited to women's everyday experience in modern society, in terms of the distractions imposed by the need for women to fulfil many different identities and roles.

All the selected magazines were found to predominantly feature articles concerned with women and feminine matters. The comparative content analysis of all the magazines showed that frequently a series of articles followed a standardised structure and content consisting of the description of various events that had had a crucial impact on women. For example, one such series concerned the struggles women having to deal with rape and other forms of violence perpetrated against them. Another series of articles represented a 'cycle' of self-improvement, with articles featuring certain body-image agendas or various beauty advice columns on how to attain the personification of the contemporary ideal of feminine beauty. In addition, the content analysis of such articles indicated they could be classified into three main categories: the universal, dealing with feminine problems and health; the aesthetic, dealing with physical appearance; and the real, dealing with touching stories of struggling

women. Such diverse and often contradictory points of views and subjects indicated that, in women's magazines, one of the leading discourses is often the discourse of feminism in which, on the one hand, the verbal layer of the magazine (in terms of its editorial content, articles and text) attends to the negative consequences of the 'terror of beauty', while, on the other hand, the portrayal of women in the visual layer regards such issues more positively. For example, the models usually featured in advertisements are portrayed as young, beautiful, and thin, with their sometimes being so thin as to appear unhealthy. For the average reader, a comparison with such a representation of beauty will tend to lead to feelings of frustration, as well as to the need to emulate the look of the models represented in such glossy magazines. Consequently, both the number of advertisements and their intensity in relation to the improvement of appearance tend to create the conviction that the advertised cosmetics are indispensable, and therefore, every woman who wants to prescribe to such an accepted ideal of beauty should apply them. A woman's body in its natural state is not able to match the requirements of this advertised ideal of beauty, resulting in the need for it continually to be controlled and corrected.

9.3 Proposed lifestyles influencing women's attitudes

In answering the third research question, the data revealed that magazines that function as a form of mass communication present verbal and visual messages that are rich in symbolic content. The findings of this study revealed that magazines are designed and redesigned in terms of their content in order to gain the attention of their readership, whose interests and needs they seek to satisfy. In order to be effective, magazines rely on the verbal and visual symbolic use of colour, photography and striking design layouts, aimed at attracting the reader's attention. Thus, magazines are structured and designed to stimulate particular reactions. In this way, magazine content is symbolically structured so as to convey

defined meanings, which, in turn, either directly or indirectly manipulate the opinions of their readers, resulting in decisions being made in regard to specific purchases.

Moreover, the content of such indirectly manipulative communication is transmitted with the use of pictures and words, by means of their grammatical forms, syntactic structures and connotative meanings. With some imagination and skill in controlling the meaning of context and visual elements, magazines are able to create the desire to emulate the visions portrayed in advertisements aimed at the consumers. For this reason, they employ various styles, linguistic devices and conversational features to create an illusion of informality and friendliness. For example, one of the reasons for employing a conversational style is to balance the relationship between the reader and the editorial team. Therefore, the communication patterns reflected in the context of dialogue strengthen the sense of unity, by imbuing such a context with the sense of regarding the reader as a friend, and possibly influencing their perception as consumers.

Thus, in persuasive advertising, information is linguistically and grammatically described by means of purposely-structured nouns, adverbs, adjectives, verbs, numbers, and the connotative meanings of words, with their various juxtapositions. However, communication is not the only function of a verbal language code. Among verbally structured languages, pictorial communication, by means of metaphorically ordered visual elements, also fulfils a cognitive function that may influence the viewer and trigger the purchase of a product. Therefore, magazine advertising is seldom associated with announcements fulfilling a mainly informative function which merely show the attributes of a product. The popular media, as part of the mass communication system, have the capacity to impact on individuals who 'consume' media products.

9.3.1 The disciplined body: limiting women's role and identity to the physical layer

Women's magazines systematically promote ideals of femininity resulting from the disciplining of the female body, according to which women's objectified sexuality, fragmentation, thinness, youthfulness, health and consumption patterns are constructed. By representing the female body as a collection of faceless fragments, women are reduced to limiting their identity and role to the physical layer. Such limitation is illustrated by the fact that beauty, and, by extension, happiness, *can* be purchased in the form of lipsticks, creams or shampoos. Women who purchase feminine magazines may, accordingly, unwittingly subscribe to the assumptions made in the prevailing discourse of the body, while perceiving themselves as modern and free of the need to fulfil traditional feminine roles.

In both South Africa and Poland, the majority of women consulted stated that they were not influenced by advertisements and that they did not compare themselves to models. However, the same number of participants in the study revealed (in a triangulation of questions) that, after viewing women's magazines, they have mixed feelings regarding their own body image. Such confusion indicates that in both countries the rigidity of women's representation causes women respondents to perceive a gap between women in the advertised and those in the 'real' world, which forces them into continual denial of their own bodies and, in turn, to compete with those globally advertised standards of the ideal 'look'. Thus, women's magazines, through theorising the link between women's individuality and their patterns of lifestyle and consumption, have the capacity to influence women's self perceptions and their self-image.

Although, as the data indicates, women do read women's magazines in order to be updated about cosmetics and fashion trends, they recorded feeling very ambiguous towards their roles in society and in denial of their state of 'natural' beauty. In both South Africa and

Poland, such magazines strive to encourage participants to purchase new products, the majority of participants ironically being 'unsure' as to whether they were being influenced to any degree to purchase the advertised products, suggesting that in both South Africa and Poland the participants in the study did not usually realise to what degree the media influenced them. Such lack of realisation is due to the fact, that the media is not analysed because it is part of women. Such an approach points to a high degree of internalisation of advertised messages. However, a contradiction seems to exist between what participants felt the influence was on themselves, compared with that which they perceived on other women. Such a contradiction is the result of the complexity of modern life requiring people to assume many different identities. Such a requirement, in turn, reveals that, because of the fact that people are differently positioned by social expectations, they behave differently in each context.

Moreover, global marketers recognise the women's market as being homogeneous, with their assuming the sharing of experience between women, resulting in their employing similar marketing approaches in targeting culturally diverse women. However, for those coming from racially different backgrounds, the perceptions of women's bodies varies. The study revealed that especially black and coloured Westernised South African women feel rejected and invisible in terms of their representation in women's magazines. Such data articulates that, although the form has changed, the content of stereotypical representation has remained the same. Women's representation in the media and their role in society is a contested domain, in their own opinion and perceptions, as well as according to men.

9.4 Women's liberation in, and obliteration from, representative magazine content

From the data generated during the course of this study, a modern model of femininity has emerged. The modern model of femininity has two sides. On the one hand, it

entails the liberation of women from being confined to merely filling the traditional roles of mothers, wives and lovers, consequently allowing them access to the public sphere, namely politics and many other professional fields of work. On the other hand, the modern model of femininity represents an oppressive image of the feminine body, which amounts to the 'obliteration' of the feminine body, since it imprisons the female persona yet again in an 'ideal body'.

Thus, the apparent liberation of female participants merely means that women have escaped from one form of subordination, consisting of their domestic routine, to another, consisting of incarceration in terms of unrealistic body ideals and restricted possibilities. Thus, the study showed that the mass media have largely created a desirable image of the feminine body, which is represented as being thin, beautiful, young and athletic. Make-up, exercise and diet regimes are presented as only some of the ways of disciplining, and thus improving, the body. Today, an ideal woman is not only a good mother and wife, but also someone who is occupationally successful, financially independent, and, most importantly, physically attractive.

The imposition of such requirements on modern women predominate in the analysed women's magazines, which portray both sides of the modern model of femininity. In all selected women's magazines the ambivalence of liberation underlying the model appears as a contradiction between the verbal and visual layer. The analysis revealed that the verbal layer of women's magazines propagates the image of a model of modern femininity related to the concept of liberation from a traditional feminine role, whereas the visual layer propagates an image related to a new form of subordination of the feminine body: the disciplined ideal body.

The findings revealed that susceptibility and response to media influences are partly determined by gender difference. Such difference means that the traditional gender hierarchies of the past limited and, at present, still continue to limit women's representation in the media, as well as their opportunities in society.

The data illustrated that magazines encourage women to modify their behaviour in order firstly to prioritise their bodies and, secondly, to prioritise the needs of males, which subsequently created a closed circle for the cult of the body. As the findings and literature converged, it became clear that women's representation in advertisements and magazine content is not only a contested domain, but a domain driven by oppositional discourses and power struggles. It is only when these constituent parts of advertising design are analysed and the influence they exert over women is contextualised, that issues of self-perception can be addressed in future to ameliorate women's role in society.

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Appendix 1

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

For detailed information contact:

SUPERVISOR: Ms Alettia Vorster Chisin

Lecturer: Surface Design & Technology

Tel: 021 460 3456

E-mail: achisin@cput.ac.za

Cape Peninsula University of Technology

PO BOX 652 Cape Town 8000

Tel. 27 21 460 3911

Fax. 27 21 460 3217

Student Researcher: Katarzyna Rytel; Cell no.0739408710; E-mail:098760@wp.pl

1. Study Title: A comparative study between South Africa and Poland: the influence of advertising design in the print media on the self-perception of South African and Polish women.

2. Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this research, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. You are welcome to ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

3. Purpose of the research

This study seeks to explore the relationship between women's physical- and self-image in everyday contexts and the various ways in which advertising and magazines' content construct (particularly in *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle* and a third set of culturally relevant magazines- selected from each country during fieldwork research) femininity within a multi-cultural context, such as the South African one and a collective cultural context, such as the Polish one. Therefore this research investigates the relationship between magazines' content and the culturally diverse women they are targeting. This study thus focuses on the ways in which advertising design and the content of the print media represent the image of contemporary women in South Africa and Poland by proposing style and emotion that influence women's attitudes towards their physical- and self-image.

4. Expected duration of Subjects' participation: In Poland – November 2005 through to February 2006. In South Africa – April 2006 through to July 2006.

5. Research Procedures: The primary procedures will be open-ended and structured questionnaires, personal interviews with subjects, and observation of subjects' behaviours. These data-collection methods will provide in-depth information of the perceived influence of magazines' advertising content on women in an everyday context, both from a male and a female perspective. All interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed.

6. Risk and discomforts to Subjects: Subjects will not be at physical or psychological risk and should experience no discomfort resulting from the research procedures.

7. Confidentiality Procedures: All data generated in the course of this research will be locked in a secure location at the researcher's residence. The identities of the subjects will not be disclosed to any unauthorized persons. Any references to the identities of the subjects that would compromise their anonymity will be removed prior to the preparation of research reports and publications.

8. Compensation for the participation in the research: No compensation will be provided to subjects for their participation.

9. Who to contact for answers to pertinent questions about the research and the research Subjects' rights: The subjects will receive a copy of this consent form.

10. SUBJECTS: Participation is voluntary. Refusal to participate will not involve any penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I understand that I may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I, _____, agree to participate in the research study under the direction of Katarzyna Rytel – 204106958, (MTech Student in Surface Design at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology in Cape Town).

DATE: _____

SUBJECTS' SIGNATURES: _____

INVESTIGATOR: I have explained and defined in detail the research procedure in which the subject has consented to participate.

DATE: _____

Ms KB Rytel
PO Box 12735
Die Boord
Stellenbosch
7613

I, Katarzyna Rytel – 204106958, currently doing my Master’s degree in Design at Cape Peninsula University of Technology in Cape Town, would like to apply to get permission to conduct an interview among students in order to widen my research.

1. Statement of research problem

All around the world the thought patterns of culturally diverse women may be influenced by women’s magazines. This study focuses on the ways in which advertising design in women’s magazines and the content of the print media represent the image of contemporary women in South Africa and Poland by proposing lifestyles and tastes that influence women’s attitudes towards their self-perception and body-image. This influence manifests in real-life consequences, which are either positive or negative, and which may, in turn, influence women’s role in society. Therefore this research investigates the relationship between magazines’ advertising design and the influence thereof on the culturally diverse women that they are targeting.

For detailed information please contact:

SUPERVISOR: Ms Alettia Vorster Chisin (MEd)
Lecturer: Surface Design & Technology
Tel: 021 460 3456
E-mail: ChisinA@cput.ac.za

Cape Peninsula University of Technology
PO BOX 652 Cape Town 8000
Tel. 27 21 460 3911
Fax. 27 21 460 3217

Student Researcher: Katarzyna Rytel; Cell no.0739408710; E-mail:098760@wp.pl

Appendix 3

Script guidance

1. Each woman will be shown a particular magazine's issues (suitable to research groups, whether *Elle* or *Cosmopolitan* magazine).

1. Statement of research problem

1.1 As you can see, in front of you on the table are placed magazines; South African and Polish editions of (*Elle* and) *Cosmopolitan* magazines. Before we start having a nice chat, I would like you to have a look at these magazines. I know you won't really have a time to read through but if possible find differences and similarities in them. For example, visual, magazine content, advertising context, if one consist out of more or less advertisements, controversial, sophisticated, interesting, exiting and so on. In general, talking and looking through magazines' content.

Why do you buy magazines?

What do you think about this magazine? What it gives you? What is in it there for you? What type of girl they represent?

We are surrounded by mass media -, advertisements, magazines everywhere and they may influence they way we act and what choices we make. I would like you to tell me how do you read magazines? Do you pay attention to advertising pages?

2. Slides: I will show you slides of specific advertised messages within following categories: advices, perfumes, cosmetics, diets and clothing taken from (*Elle* and) South African and Polish editions of *Cosmopolitan* magazines; and afterwards I will ask you few questions.

Spontaneous reaction: What do you think about these adverts? These adverts propose... what? And what not...? (For example, what emotion, lifestyle, message, how do they portray women (and why)?

What do you think about these South African and Polish magazine's advertising content? Are they designed in the same way? Do they differ visually? Can you distinguish any visual differences between them?

Do you pay attention to advertising pages?

Yes _____ No _____

Spontaneous reaction: To what elements do you pay attention while viewing advert?

How many and what kind of advertisements do(have) you remember from the slide show? (For example, Dior, Clinique)

What elements of advertisements do you remember from the slides' presentation? (For example, slogan, cover line, emotion, color).

Are you aware of advertising manipulation in it?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you think they may influence women's attitudes?

Yes _____ No _____

In what degree they influence you? From 1 to 10, please choose a number.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

In what ways they may and may not influence you? In some ways does it make you jealous, sad or happy? From 1 to 10, please choose a number.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Do you have negative or positive feelings about yourself after viewing magazines? From 1 to 10, please choose a number.

Positive feelings:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Negative feelings:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How does advertising in magazines impact on your body image? From 1 to 10, please choose a number.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3 Now, I will give you three different samples of advertised images that surrounds a specific advertised message within following categories: advices, perfumes, cosmetics, diets and clothing taken from (*Elle* and) *Cosmopolitan* magazines.

Each of you will be requested to comment on the ways in which women are portrayed in them, as well as to discuss positive and negative elements that may or may not influence your self-perception and body image.

I would like you to open your mind and react creatively and spontaneously by saying first ideas that you think of while viewing these particular samples.

Positive factors -

Negative factors -

What feelings do you have about yourself after viewing magazines?

Positive

Negative

Do they represent women in stereotypical ways, how?

What women are beautiful?

What is natural beauty?

Culturally, what is the ideal women's shape in your country?

Appendix 4

Script guidance

1. Statement of research problem

All around the world the thought patterns of culturally diverse women may be influenced by women's magazines. This study focuses on the ways in which advertising design in women's magazines and the content of the print media represent the image of contemporary women in South Africa and Poland by proposing lifestyles and tastes that influence women's attitudes towards their self-perception and body-image. This influence manifests in real-life consequences, which are either positive or negative, and which may, in turn, influence women's role in society. Therefore this research investigates the relationship between magazines' advertising design and the influence thereof on the culturally diverse women that they are targeting.

Why do you buy magazines?

What do you think about this magazine? What it gives you? What is in it there for you? What type of girl they represent?

We are surrounded by mass media -, advertisements, magazines everywhere and they may influence they way we act and what choices we make. I would like you to tell me how do you read magazines? Do you pay attention to advertising pages?

Are you aware of advertising manipulation in it?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you think they may influence women's attitudes?

Yes _____ No _____

In what degree they influence you? From 1 to 10, please choose a number.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

In what ways they may and may not influence you? In some ways does it make you jealous, sad or happy? From 1 to 10, please choose a number.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Do you have negative or positive feelings about yourself after viewing magazines? From 1 to 10, please choose a number.

Positive feelings:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Negative feelings:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How does advertising in magazines impact on your body image? From 1 to 10, please choose a number.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Do they represent women in stereotypical ways, how?

What women are beautiful?

What is natural beauty?

Culturally, what is the ideal women's shape in your country?

Appendix 5: Questionnaire conducted with South African women

Questionnaire

Profession:

** please tick the appropriate box*

Age:

21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-50	older

Culturally diverse group:

Black	White	Coloured

1. Please state, which magazines do you usually buy?

2. Do you buy *Cosmopolitan* magazine?

yes	no	sometimes

3. Do you buy *Elle* magazine?

yes	no	sometimes

4. How frequently do you buy magazines?

Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Don't know

5. How many magazines do you buy monthly?

0 - 1	1-2	Sometimes more

6. Why do you buy magazines? Please explain shortly.

7. Do you read the cover lines on magazines before you decide which one to buy?

yes	no	sometimes

8. What is your favourite magazine, and why? Please explain shortly.

9. While viewing magazine, do you pay attention to advertising pages concerned with perfumes, cosmetics or diets?

yes	no	sometimes

10. In magazines, do advertisements (within following categories: advice, perfume, cosmetics, diets and fashion) arouse your interest to the degree that you would consider purchasing the products? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating the strongest interest and 1 indicating hardly any interest.

1	2	3	4	5

11. Would you like to live like the "perfect" women represented in some advertisements who are seemingly without big worries? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating strongly yes and 1 indicating strongly no.

1	2	3	4	5

12. What elements catch your attention while viewing advertisements?

13. Do you think that women in advertisements are represented in stereotypical ways? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating strongly yes and 1 indicating strongly no.

1	2	3	4	5

Please explain shortly in what ways.

14. Are you aware of the fact that advertisements might be designed in a psychological way? For instance, without you realizing they may influence you to purchase a certain product. From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating strongly yes and 1 indicating strongly no.

1	2	3	4	5

15. After viewing models in magazines, does it influence the way you perceive yourself? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating strongly yes and 1 indicating strongly no.

1	2	3	4	5

16. To what degree does the content and advertising in magazines influence you? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating the strongest influence and 1 indicating hardly an influence.

1	2	3	4	5

17. Do you have negative or positive feelings about yourself regarding body image after viewing magazines? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating the strongest positive feelings and 1 the strongest negative feelings.

1	2	3	4	5

18. In which ways do magazines influence your attitude towards your body- or self-image? In some ways does it inspire you to change something about yourself, inform or trigger you to shop, does it make you feel happy, jealous or sad about yourself, and so on? Please explain shortly.

19. Do you compare yourself to women in advertisements and come up short? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating strongly yes and 1 indicating strongly no.

1	2	3	4	5

20. Do you think that magazines have an influence on women's eating habits? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating strongly yes and 1 indicating strongly no.

1	2	3	4	5

21. What in your opinion, can women do to avoid a negative body image and eating disorders?

22. How do you picture your body image? Please underline the suitable word.

Healthy	Good	excellent	Could be better	Don't care

23. What factors influence the way you feel about yourself? These factors can include more than one of the following:

Myself	Family	Friends	Media	Partner

24. Do you worry or feel obsessed about your body not being small, thin or good enough? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating strongly yes and 1 indicating strongly no.

1	2	3	4	5

25. Have you ever disliked your body? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating strongly yes and 1 indicating strongly no.

1	2	3	4	5

26. Would you like to change something about your body image? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating strongly yes and 1 indicating strongly no.

1	2	3	4	5

27. Have you ever been on a diet to lose weight?

yes	no

If your answer is YES please tick the appropriate box.

More than 2 times	Less than 10 times	Hard to say

28. Culturally, what is the ideal of women's physical shape and size in your country or more specifically in your cultural group?

29. Do you think that magazines such as *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* represent the cultural ideal of women's shape in your country accurately? Please explain your opinion shortly.

30. Do magazines' content and advertisements represent the "natural beauty" of women? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating strongly yes and 1 indicating strongly no. Please explain your point of view shortly.

1	2	3	4	5

Please explain your opinion shortly, indicating what "natural beauty" means to you.

31. Are there on the South African market magazines that may have a negative influence on your attitude towards your body and self-image? Please write down the names of such magazines, and state why they influence you negatively.

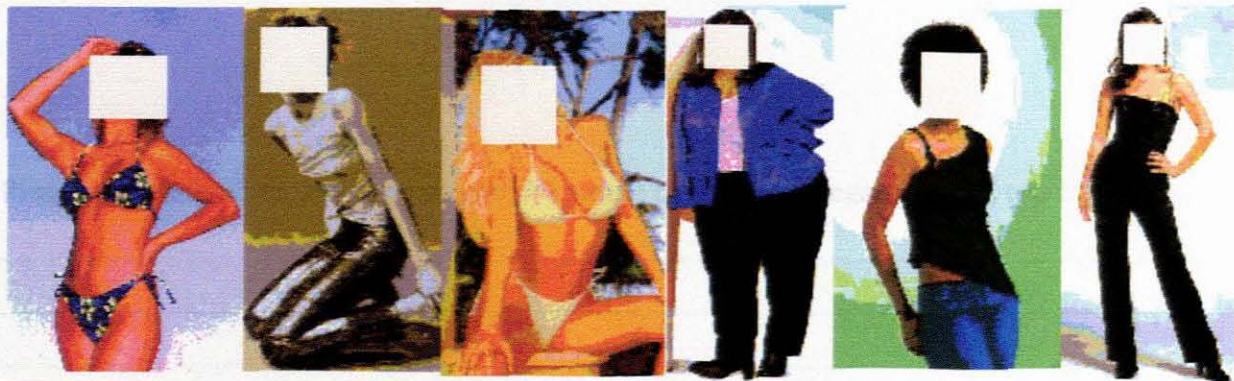
32. Are there on the South African market magazines that may have a positive influence on your attitude towards your body and self-image? Please write down the names of such magazines, and indicate why.

33. According to you, beautiful women are:

34. According to you, naturally beautiful women are:

35. Have women's role in society and the stereotypical way of portraying women in magazines changed since South Africa became a democratic country? What differences have you experienced?

36. In your opinion, which one of the following figures are closely related to an ideal woman's figure?



a) _____

b) _____

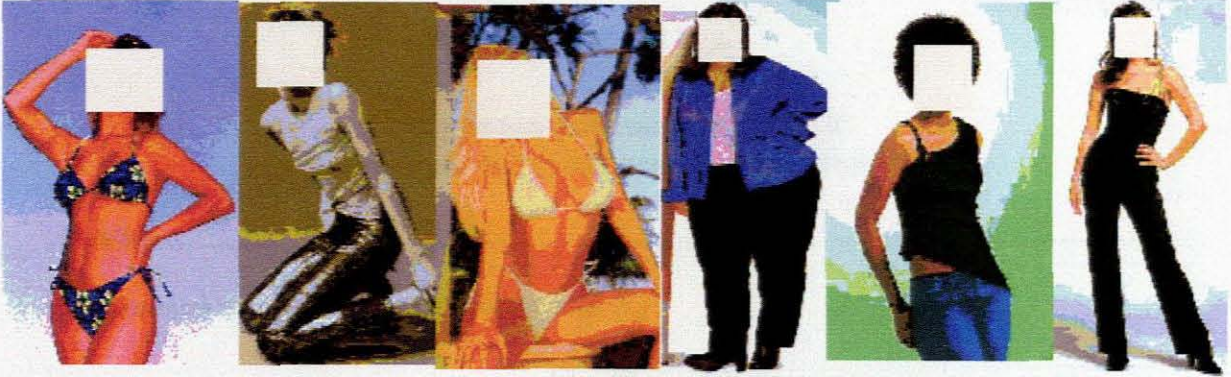
c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

37. In your opinion, which one of the following figures would be chosen by man?



a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

Are you willing and would you like to participate in my focus group or personal interview regarding the questionnaire topic?

yes	no

If your answer is yes, please tick the appropriate box.

- Focus group
- Personal interview

Please write down your phone number or e-mail so that I can contact you.

Tel. E-mail

Thank you very much, for participating in my questionnaire.

Please write down any other comments you would like to make regarding this topic.

ANKIETA

dla potencjalnych uczestniczek
w grupie badawczej lub personalnych wywiadach.

Zawód:

* w wolnych rubrykach proszę postawić znak X

Wiek:

21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-50	więcej

Liczba dzieci:

0	1	2	3	4	więcej

1. Proszę podać czasopisma, które Pani zazwyczaj kupuje?

2. Czy Pani kupuje czasopismo - *Cosmopolitan*?

tak	nie	czasami

3. Czy Pani kupuje czasopismo *Elle*?

tak	nie	czasami

4. Jak często Pani kupuje czasopisma?

co tydzień	co miesiąc	sporadycznie	nie wiem

5. Ile czasopism kupuje Pani miesięcznie?

0 - 1	1-2	czasami więcej

6. Co skłania Panią do kupna czasopisma?

7. Czy przed podjęciem decyzji o kupnie czasopisma czyta Pani napisy na tytułowej stronie?

tak	nie	czasami

8. Które z czasopism jest Pani ulubionym? Proszę krótko wyjaśnić.

9. Czy przeglądając czasopismo zwraca Pani uwagę na reklamy dotyczące np.: perfum, kosmetyków, diety i mody?

tak	nie	czasami

10. Czy treść reklam pomaga Pani w podjęciu decyzji związanej z nabyciem produktu? Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1 wskazuje najslabsze zainteresowanie 5 - ogromne zainteresowanie).

1	2	3	4	5

11. Jak bardzo pragnie Pani upodobnić swoje życie do idealnego świata, w którym żyją bohaterki z reklam kobiet? Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1 wskazuje najslabsze pragnienie ... 5 - wskazuje najsilniejsze pragnienie).

1	2	3	4	5

12. Które elementy w reklamach najczęściej przykuwają Pani uwagę?

13. Czy Pani zdaniem kobiety w reklamach przedstawiane są stereotypowo. Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1 wskazuje zdecydowanie nie5 – zdecydowanie tak).

1	2	3	4	5

Proszę krótko uzasadnić swoją opinię na powyższy temat.

14. Czy jest Pani świadoma tego, że reklamy mogą być zaprojektowane tak, aby poprzez podświadomość wpłynąć na Pani decyzję związaną z kupnem danego produktu? Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1- wskazuje zdecydowanie nie5 – zdecydowanie tak).

1	2	3	4	5

15. Czy zdjęcia modelek widziane w czasopismach wpływają na Pani samoocenę? Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1- wskazuje zdecydowanie nie5 – zdecydowanie tak).

1	2	3	4	5

16. Jak silny wpływ na Panią wywierają reklamy i czasopisma? Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1- wskazuje najłagodniejszy wpływ5 – najsilniejszy wpływ).

1	2	3	4	5

17. Czy treść czasopism i reklam wywołują w Pani pozytywne czy negatywne odczucia dotyczące wewnętrznej samooceny i wyglądu? Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1- wskazuje zdecydowanie negatywne odczucia5 – zdecydowanie pozytywne odczucia).

1	2	3	4	5

18. Czy czasopisma inspirują Panią by coś zmienić w swoim wyglądzie (czy informują, zachęcają do zakupów, sprawiają, że jest Pani o coś zazdrosna, smutna czy radosna)?

19. Czy Pani porównuje siebie do kobiet z reklam? Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1- wskazuje zdecydowanie nie5 – zdecydowanie tak).

1	2	3	4	5

20. Czy Pani zdaniem czasopisma i preferowany przez nie ideał piękna kobiety wpływają na zmiany w sposobie odżywiania czytelniczek? Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1- wskazuje zdecydowanie nie5 – zdecydowanie tak).

1	2	3	4	5

21. Co Pani zdaniem kobieta może zrobić, aby uniknąć negatywnej samooceny i problemów związanych z prawidłowym odżywianiem się?

22. Jak Pani postrzega samą siebie? Proszę zaznaczyć odpowiednie słowo.

sexy	dobrze	wspaniale	nienajlepiej	nie dbam o to

23. Proszę zaznaczyć, które z wymienionych poniżej czynników wpływają na Pani samoocenę?

ja sama	rodzina	przyjaciele	media

24. Czy Pani się martwi lub ma obsesję na punkcie swojego wyglądu? (np. jest Pani za niska, za wysoka, sylwetka odbiega od lansowanego ideału piękna). Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1- wskazuje zdecydowanie nie5 – zdecydowanie tak).

1	2	3	4	5

25. Czy kiedykolwiek nie lubiła Pani swojego ciała? Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1 wskazuje zdecydowanie nie5 – zdecydowanie tak).

1	2	3	4	5

26. Czy chciałaby Pani zmienić coś w swoim wyglądzie? Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1- wskazuje zdecydowanie nie5 – zdecydowanie tak).

1	2	3	4	5

27. Czy kiedykolwiek była Pani na diecie by zrzucić zbędne kilogramy?

tak	nie

Jeśli Pani odpowiedź brzmi: TAK, proszę zaznaczyć właściwe pole:

ponad 2 razy	mniej niż 10 razy	trudno powiedzieć

28. Ile czasu Pani poświęca na zrobienie makijażu przed wyjściem do pracy / szkoły?

mniej niż 15 minut	ok. 30 minut	ponad 30 minut

29. Czy orientuje się Pani jaki jest ogólnie akceptowany idealny wygląd kobiety w Pani kraju?

30. Czy Pani zdaniem czasopisma *Elle* i *Cosmopolitan* prezentują idealny obraz współczesnej kobiety?

31. Czy sylwetki kobiet przedstawianych w czasopismach i reklamach reprezentują ich „naturalne piękno”? Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1- wskazuje zdecydowanie nie5 – zdecydowanie tak).

1	2	3	4	5

Proszę krótko uzasadnić swoje zdanie.

32. Czy na polskim rynku są czasopisma mogące negatywnie wpłynąć na Pani samoocenę, wygląd zewnętrzny? Proszę wymienić nazwy tych czasopism i krótko uzasadnić swoją wypowiedź.

33. Czy na polskim rynku są czasopisma wpływające pozytywnie na Pani samoocenę, wygląd zewnętrzny? Proszę wymienić nazwy tych czasopism i krótko uzasadnić swoją wypowiedź.

34. Pani zdaniem, kobiety piękne to:

35. Która z poniższych sylwetek jest najbardziej zbliżona do idealnej sylwetki kobiety?



a) _____

b) _____

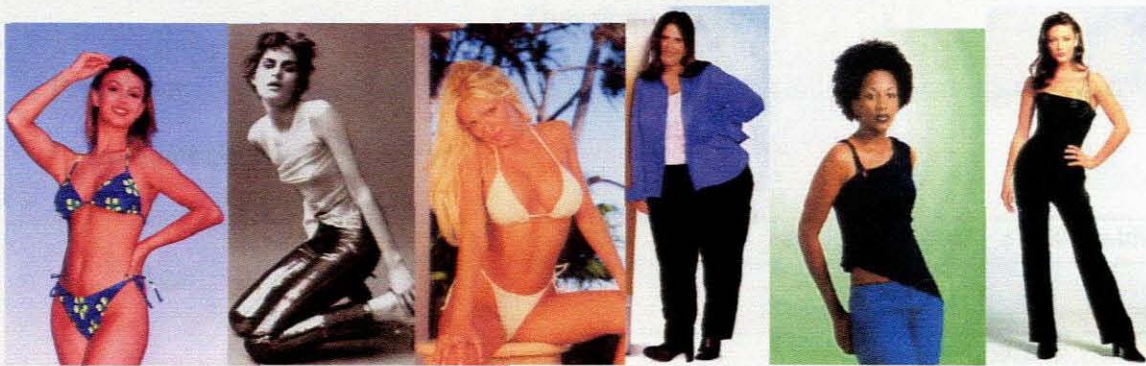
c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

36. Jak Pani myśli, którą z poniższych sylwetek wybrałby mężczyzna?



a) _____ b) _____ c) _____ d) _____ e) _____ f) _____

Czy wyraża Pani zgodę na:

✓ przeprowadzenie z Panią personalnego wywiadu?

tak	nie

✓ uczestnictwo w grupie badawczej?

tak	nie

Jeśli odpowiedź brzmi: „tak”, proszę podać numer telefonu lub E-mail, bym mogła się z Panią skontaktować –

Tel.

E-mail

Serdecznie dziękuję za wzięcie udziału w mojej ankiecie!

Questionnaire

Profession:.....

** please tick the appropriate box*

Age:

21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-50	older

1. In your opinion, to what degree, does a magazine's content and advertising messages influence women? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating the strongest influence and 1 indicating hardly an influence.

1	2	3	4	5

2. To what degree do women's magazines and advertising messages influence women's body image positively or negatively? From 1 to 5, please choose a number, with 5 indicating the strongest positive feelings and 1 the strongest negative feelings.

1	2	3	4	5

3. Culturally, what is the „ideal“ women's physical shape and size in your country, or more specifically in your cultural group?

4. Do magazines influence your perception of women's ideal body image and size? Please explain shortly in what ways.

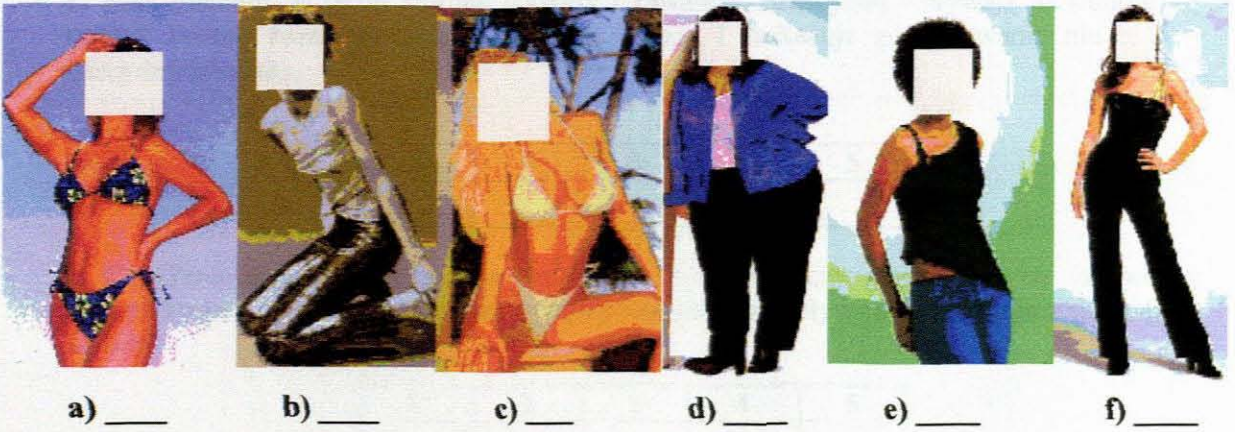
5. Do you think that a women's role is influenced or even determined by representation in the media and magazines?

6. Do you think that women in advertisements are represented in stereotypical ways?

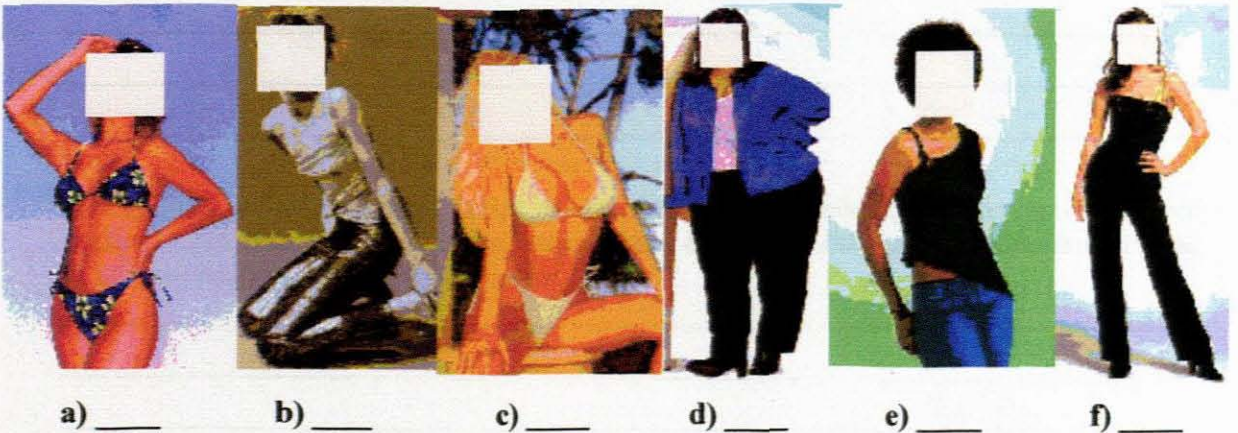
yes	no

If your answer is yes or no, please explain shortly your point of view.

7. In your opinion, which one of the following figures are closely related to an ideal woman's figure?



9. In your opinion which of the following figures would be chosen by woman?



Thank you very much for participating in my questionnaire.

Appendix 6b: Questionnaire conducted with Polish males

Kasia Rytel
Ul. Wittiga 5/27
03-188 Warszawa
Tel. 0603 68 49 49

Ankieta dotycząca reklam i czasopism dla 30 mężczyzn

Zawód:

** w wolnych rubrykach proszę postawić znak X*

Wiek:

21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-50	więcej

Liczba dzieci:

0	1	2	3	4	więcej

1. Pana zdaniem, w jakim stopniu reklamy i zawartość czasopism wpływają na samoocenę kobiet? Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę, (gdzie 1 wskazuje zdecydowanie nie5 – zdecydowanie tak).

1	2	3	4	5

2. Czy Pana zdaniem czasopisma wpływają negatywnie czy pozytywnie na samoocenę kobiet? Proszę zaznaczyć właściwą cyfrę (1- najslabszy wpływ, a 5 wskazuje najsilniejszy wpływ).

1	2	3	4	5

3. Jaki jest „idealny” zewnętrzny wygląd kobiety w Pana kraju (pod względem kulturowym)? Proszę w kilku zdaniach napisać Pańską opinię.

4. Czy Pana zdaniem, istnieją jakieś zauważalne różnice pomiędzy bohaterkami lokalnych reklam i czasopism a zagranicznymi magazynami takimi jak *Elle* czy *Cosmopolitan*? Proszę w kilku zdaniach wyjaśnić Pańską opinię.

5. W jaki sposób mas media wpływają na Pana percepcję postrzegania „idealnego” wyglądu i rozmiaru kobiet? Proszę w kilku zdaniach wyjaśnić Pańską opinię.

6. Czy Pana zdaniem kobiety w reklamach są reprezentowane w stereotypowy sposób?

tak	nie

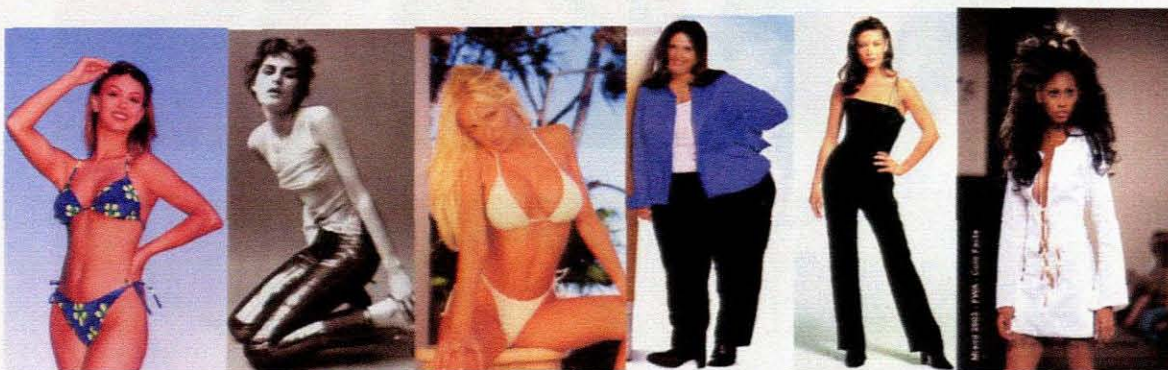
Jeśli Pana odpowiedź jest „tak” lub „nie”, proszę krótko wyjaśnić Pana opinie na ten temat.

7. Pana zdaniem, która z poniższych sylwetek jest najbardziej zbliżona do idealnej sylwetki kobiety?



a) _____ b) _____ c) _____ d) _____ e) _____ f) _____

9. Proszę wskazać, którą z poniższych sylwetek kobieta uważałaby za idealną?



a) _____ b) _____ c) _____ d) _____ e) _____ f) _____

Serdecznie dziękuję za udział w mojej ankiecie!

Appendix 8: Examples of front covers of specified magazines

Examples of front covers of South African *Cosmopolitan* magazine:

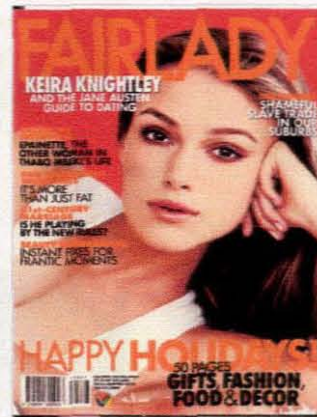
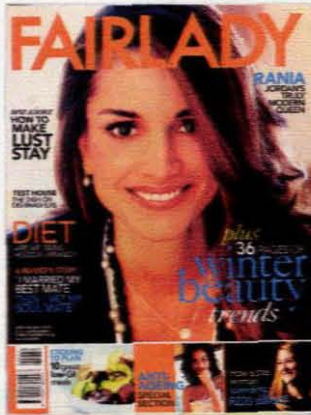


Examples of front covers of Polish *Cosmopolitan* magazine:



Appendix 9: Examples of front covers of specified magazines

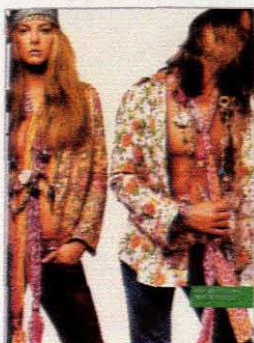
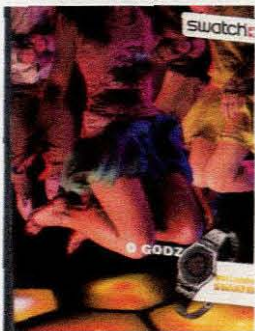
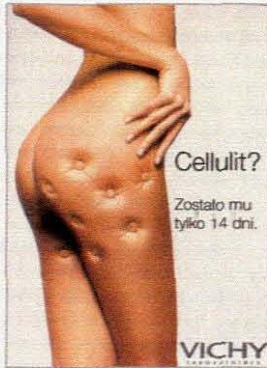
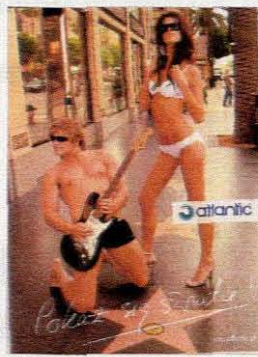
Examples of front covers of South African *Fairlady* magazine:



Examples of front covers of South African *Twoj Styl* magazine:



Appendix 10: Examples of recent communication design cleanly executed.



Appendix 11: An example of editorial letter

South African *Elle* May 2005.

ED'S LETTER



WINTER WARMERS

None of us like the idea of winter. That is, until the winter fashions hit the stores. There's nothing like the sight of rows and rows of sexy boots in the shop windows to fill me with enthusiasm for shorter days, cold nights, and gluhwein!

I had an early taste of winter this year, visiting Paris at the end of February to see the, wait for it, 2005/6 winter collections. The average temperature in the world's most fashionable city was 0°, and

I froze. Still, it was worth it, to see what Paris is wearing this winter – and what we're all going to be wearing next winter.

In a nutshell, fashion will continue to be pretty and conservative, but much less figure-hugging than it is this season. More interesting than the fashion on the catwalks was seeing what the fashionable people attending the shows were wearing. If you were anywhere near a Belgian designer's show (Dries van Noten and the crowd), the beautiful women were in head-to-toe black, dark-framed spectacles, and a long plait down their backs. As you may have noticed, fur is huge, and in snowy Paris no-one seemed afraid to take out their fur coats, including US Vogue editor Anna Wintour in a figure-hugging chinchilla-looking coat, and her side-kick André Leon Talley in a giant skunk-like one. Arriving at the Louis Vuitton show couldn't have been pleasant for this few, with a crowd protesting against Marc Jacobs' use of fur. Inside, Uma Thurman – dressed in jeans, boots (my personal favourite), and an off-white Jackie O-style coat – had the paparazzi in a frenzy. Jade Jagger faded into the background, believe it or not, dressed in a demure knee-length skirt, cardigan and round-toed pumps.

The essential fashion item for our winter seems to be the floor-length peasant skirt, seriously embellished with embroidery, beads and/or sequins, teamed with a wide belt, flat boots, big hair, and the biggest bag you can find. Hair is long, long, long. And taking over from the Sienna Miller look next winter, I predict classic '70s-style curls.

That's my pocket-size winter style guide. I'm sure you want more, and that's why ELLE is delighted to present you with our first ever extra-large 2005 Winter Style Guide, free with this issue of your fashion bible. We hope you agree that it's gorgeous and tells you everything you need to know to plan your winter wardrobe. Please let us know what you think, because by Spring, our guide's going to be even bigger and better.

Happy shopping!

jacqueline

ELLE

EDITOR Jacqueline Myburgh-Chenail (jacqueline@jpl.co.za)
EDITOR'S PA Happiness Mayambato (happiness@jpl.co.za)
ASSISTANT EDITOR/BEAUTY EDITOR Ingrid Wood (ingridw@jpl.co.za)
MANAGING EDITOR Tiki Beerensat (tiki@jpl.co.za)

ART
ART DIRECTOR Michelle Wilson (michelle@jpl.co.za)
SENIOR DESIGNER Monique de Wit (monique@jpl.co.za)

FASHION
FASHION DIRECTOR Jackie Burger (jackie@johnnicom.co.za)
ASSISTANT FASHION EDITOR Janes Rosenblatt, Cape Town (janes@johnnicom.co.za)
FASHION ASSISTANT Karin O'Neil, Johannesburg (karin@jpl.co.za)

FEATURES
FEATURES EDITOR Nicola Peir (nicola@jpl.co.za)
COPY EDITOR Vuyo Lubeko (vuyo@jpl.co.za)
FEATURES WRITER Zoliswa Kumbalo (zoliswa@jpl.co.za)
FEATURES ASSISTANT Tiana Alving (tiana@jpl.co.za)

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT Charlotte Della (Paris)

For queries, contact advertising@jpl.co.za
For editorial submissions, contact editorial@jpl.co.za

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

PUBLISHER Mike Tsoing
FINANCIAL MANAGER Anon Bates
CREDIT MANAGER Gerald Engobrecht
CIRCULATIONS MANAGER Alan Coover
BUSINESS MANAGER Sally Hudson
SALES MANAGER Jean-Marc Richards
CLIENT SERVICE EXECUTIVES Keston Kazings (Johannesburg) (011) 280 5467
Christelle Brait (Johannesburg) (011) 280 5450
Annelie Katz (Cape Town) (021) 462 1023
ADVERTORIAL SALES EXECUTIVE Itzha Poloko (011) 485 3378
SALES MANAGER (CLASSIFIEDS) Gwen Payne (Cape Town) (021) 462 1023
CLASSIFIEDS Francois Groenewald (021) 462 1023
PRODUCTION CO-ORDINATION MANAGER Natalie Stephen
MARKETING & PROMOTIONS MANAGER Tshogo Kgasoane
MARKETING ASSISTANTS Tiffany Vindake

ELLE'S SUBSCRIPTION SECTION 0800 123 200 or
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Editorial & advertising inquiries: ELLE SA, PO Box 182, Pinegowrie, Randburg 2123, (011) 280 5488 (editorial), (011) 280 5681 (advertising), 280 3405 (marketing) fax (011) 280 5490, e-mail elle@jpl.co.za
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Appendix 12: An example of the conversational style employed in editorial content.

South African Elle, June 2005:16

FIRST ACCESSORIES



Chunky knit scarf, R260, Endless Spirit at Lunar



Textured scarf, R190, Jo Barkett



Multicolour textured scarf, R340, Paperdoll



Striped scarf, R189, Lissa Leandro



Striped beanie, R169, Accessorize



Knit beanie, R95, Lulu Belle



Knit beanie, R89, Jo Barkett

KNITTED CHARMS

It's never quite winter until you've wrapped something warm and luxurious around your body. And nothing cements the arrival of winter quite like chunky, cozy knits. Luxurious knits make you feel good, keep you warm, and make for alluring additions to your look. And one of winter's key accessories is the long scarf. So whether you're a chart-topping musician wanting to protect your vocal chords (yes, Kylie) or a runway queen in an opulent trench coat worn over leather pants (Naomi), nothing goes as well with everything like a long knit scarf. Look out for extra-long styles, in interesting textures, colours and a variation on knits. Bohemian-inspired, the knitted accessory trend extends to head gear too. And if you're feeling cold or having a bad hair day this winter, a knitted beanie could do the trick. In a variety of colours, matched or mismatched, the look is homespun, eclectic and, above all, warm. Words by Tidi Benbenisti. Styled by Sharon Becker

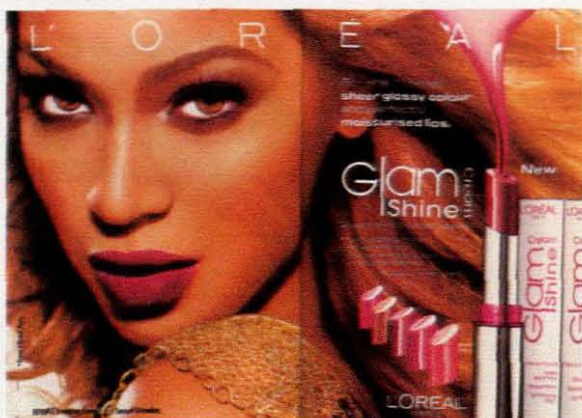
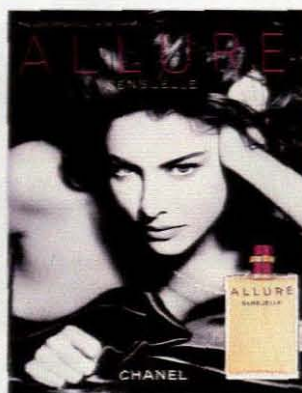
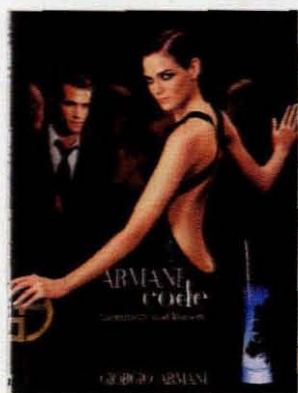
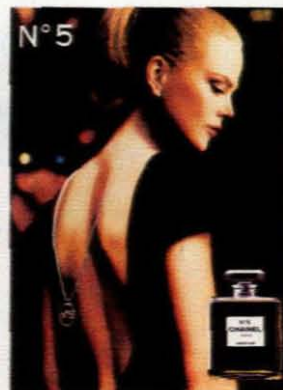


Textured stripe scarf, R150, Tessa Designs at YDE

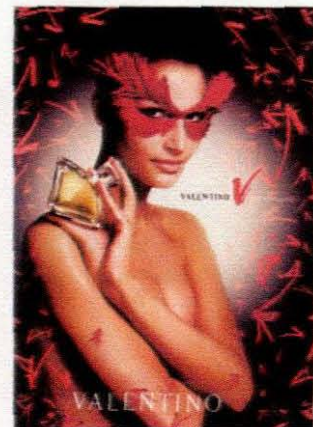
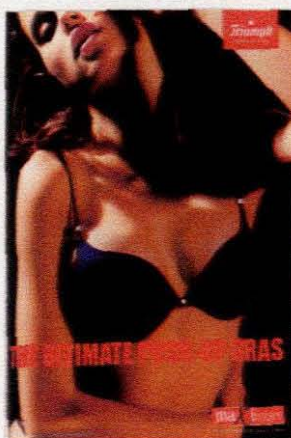
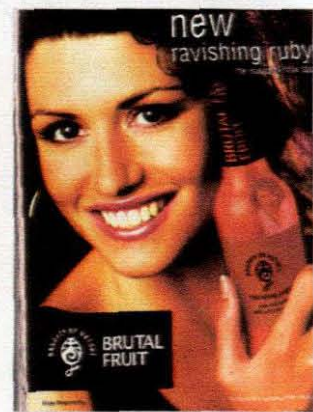
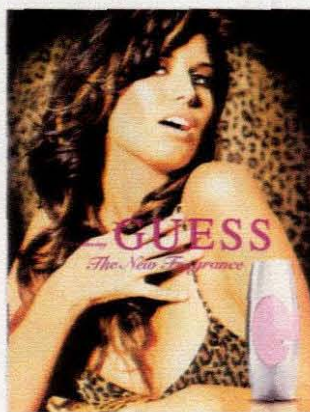
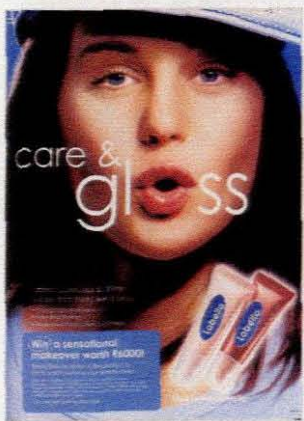
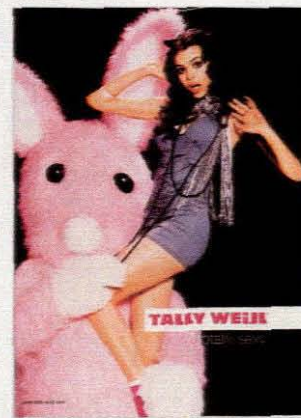
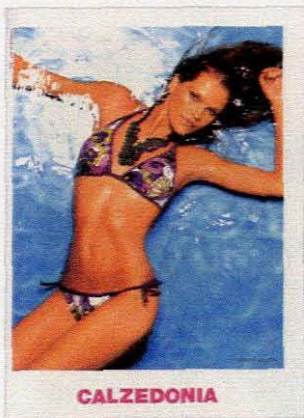
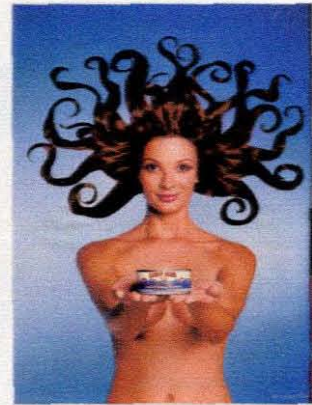
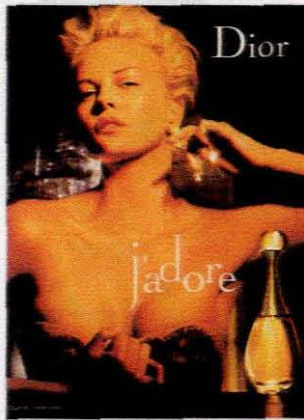


Chunky knit scarf, R119.95, Billabong

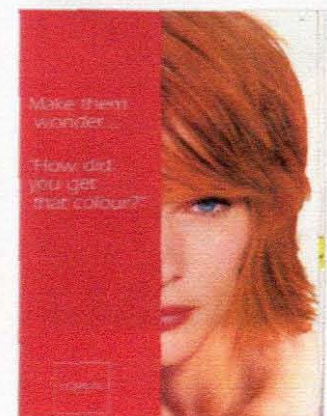
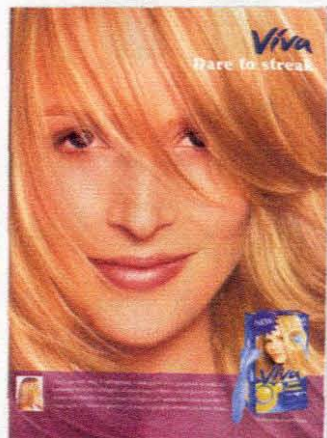
Appendix 13: Women represented in terms of status in specified magazines



Appendix 14: Women represented as sex objects in specified magazines.



Appendix 15: Women represented in terms of appearance in specified magazines



Appendix 16: Women represented in terms of individualism in specified magazines

