

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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This research addresses the relationship between television programming and body image. It specifically investigates what the Music Television network's (MTV) dance show, "The Grind," communicates about female body image. Two studies were conducted. Study one used seven coders from a western United States high school to record female body images using E. Collins (1991) seven female figure drawings. From the 2,367 female body images recorded, the dominant female image portrayed on "The Grind" emphasizes thinness. The research discovered that female images were slightly thinner than the perceived average female. Furthermore, the perceived White female images were slightly thinner than the Black or Hispanic perceived body images. Compatibility of the body image figures developed by E. Collins were also recorded. The study revealed the scale to be somewhat compatible, but not a perfect fit for White, Black, and Hispanic female images.

The second study showed an episode of "The Grind" to twenty three students in a high school sociology class and had the students respond to a pre and post-show questionnaire. The students felt more body image conscious after watching "The Grind." Females felt less attractive, less self assured, and less in shape after watching "The Grind." No males desired to lose weight before or after watching the

show. Fifty eight percent of females desired to lose weight before watching the show and one female changed to not wanting to lose weight after watching "The Grind." The responses to the open-ended questions in study two related to sexual dancing, body image, attractiveness, and music. Overall students responded that the message "The Grind" sends to teenagers is that you have to be "in shape" and "look good."

While this study had examined female body images, it relates to a larger issue of the messages MTV and music video programming sends and the meanings viewers create. This research provides application for use for teachers, parents, and teenagers. Further research relating to body image and the media is recommended.

"The Grind:" MTV and Female Body Image

by

Jill E. Layport

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"The Grind:" MTV and Female Body Image

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Liposuction, artificial breasts, diet pills, slim fast, nutra-system, weight watchers, aerobics, non-fat foods, lingerie as outer clothing, tight jeans, lycra, modeling, advertisements... where does it end? American culture is preoccupied with the "perfect" body. But where do we see this "perfect" look, and who decides what the perfect body is? Are the media persuading society to view a particular body image as perfect, or is society influencing the media? Either way, the images displayed through the media push beauty and health ideas onto the consumer.

What is considered a beautiful body? For males and females, the image could be that of an actor or professional athlete. For example, a beautiful male could look like Anthony Banderas, Brad Pitt, Sylvester Stallone, or Michael Jordan. A beautiful female could look like Christi Brinkley, Cindy Crawford, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, or Elle McPherson. Men can be tall, short, thin, or muscular, but for females, the hair and skin color can change, but the desired body shape remains tall and thin (Turnquist, 1992). Furthermore, the ideal female body shape is thinner than the average female and most women will never be able to obtain the "look" even after surgery, diets, and exercise.

The ideal female body image in American society is becoming thinner (Garner, et al., 1980, 1987; Lundholm & Littrell, 1986; Gordon, 1989; Myers & Biocca, 1989; Silverstein, et al., 1986; Wiseman, et al., 1992). In females, thinness is attributed to success, independence and self-control (Wooley & Wooley, 1986; Steiner - Adair, 1989).

Attractiveness and desired thinness for females is first learned during childhood and reinforced through adolescence (Eisele, et al., 1986). Females learn that appearance and beauty are important (Mazur, 1986; Striegel - Moore, et al., 1986). The high prevalence of body dissatisfaction and the potentially harmful weight-loss practices of female students "underscore the potential influences of social norms that equate thinness with attractiveness and social approval" (JAMA, 1991, p. 2812).

Social norms such as clothing style and physical appearance are influenced by many factors, among them, television. Television media viewers are exposed to a very high number of attractiveness based messages on television (Downs & Harrison, 1985). Television viewers, especially children, tend to accept what appears on television as real; in turn, attractiveness messages may go unchallenged by the audience (Downs & Harrison, 1985).

Since the beginning of television, shows have been directed at general groups of people such as families, adults, and children. During the 1980s, television became more cable-oriented and entire stations targeted specific groups of people. In 1981, television added the first music video station, Music Television (MTV), which sought teenagers and young adults as viewers (Zimmerman, 1984; Baxter, et al., 1985; Doherty, 1987; Brown & Campbell, 1986). Today, top forty, rock, rap, and feature shows are all played on MTV. The music videos serve as advertisements to sell albums, promote artists, and to entertain (Doherty, 1987; Fry & Fry, 1987). The videos "play to the adolescent's search for identity and an improvised community" (Aufdenheide, 1986, p. 118).

Do television programs emphasize a particular body image? This paper addresses this question. It reports the results of a research project that investigates the relationship of MTV's feature show "The Grind" and female body image. The research occurs in two parts: part one recorded the female images in relation to size, ethnicity, and compatibility. The second component recorded questionnaire responses of teenagers before and after watching an episode of "The Grind." To support the importance of the research, literature on body image disorders, health, and societal pressures will be discussed.

Importance of the Study

Studying female body image in the 1990s is important for health reasons. As seen with the dramatic increase in eating disorders since the 1970s, too many females are depriving themselves of nutrients in order to maintain a thinner shape (Garfinkel, et al., 1987; Lundholm & Littrell, 1986; Gordon, 1989). "Eleven million women and one million men in the United States suffer from eating disorders" - with self-induced bingeing or vomiting, purging with laxatives, or excessive exercise (Dunn, 1992, p. 74). Trying to achieve the tight, thin, healthy body of the 80s and 90s can be deadly. Some research has found the death rate as high as 5 to 20 percent among patients with Anorexia Nervosa or Bulimia Nervosa (Garfinkel, et al., 1987).

Personal body image satisfaction for women often stems from influences experienced in late adolescence and early adulthood (Eisele, et al., 1986; American Psychiatric Association, 1987). Some researchers have argued that the cultural conditioning starts earlier, in preadolescence (Collins, 1991; Worsnop, 1992). However, most research

targets college age and high school students and has found that personal body image satisfaction is much lower in females than males (Cohn & Alder, 1992; Paxon, et al., 1991; Rozin & Fallon, 1988).

The increase of eating disorders needs to be comprehended in cultural and social terms (Gordon, 1989). Peer and societal pressures are influential in an individual's perception of what body shape is desirable. Garner, et al. (1984) notes that the increase of disordered eating could be due to the sociocultural pressure on women to diet in response to the current ideal female shape. Unfortunately, many young women will not be able to reach what society or peers view as perfect. Their own genes predispose them to have a heavier body weight (Striegel-Moore, 1986; Nemeth, 1994). Dr. Paul Garfinkel, an eating disorders expert in Toronto, Canada contends that if society can become less preoccupied with how women look, the disorders may be less prevalent (Nemeth, 1994).

Men also have pressures to have a "perfect" body shape and can be seen as objects for desire. Stockbridge (1990) asserts that men have become more vain in recent years. Male cosmetics and fashion trends have increased in the last decade. Also, the number of men with eating disorders and having cosmetic surgery has increased (Heiman, 1993). However, the pressure to be attractive and have a "perfect" body still is predominantly focused on the female (Stockbridge, 1990; Mazur, 1986).

Female bodies are constructed differently in relation to frame size, metabolism, and genetic factors. "People today are far more critical of themselves for not attaining the right weight and look" (Rodin, 1992, p. 57). To reach the level of thinness that is portrayed as "perfect" in our society, many females would have to starve themselves and deprive their

bodies of crucial nutrients. Furthermore, many females are "crippled by the tragic degree of self-consciousness that limits other aspects of their lives--friendships, careers, even families" (Rodin, 1992, p. 60). For many females, reaching desired thinness means losing their normal menstrual functioning (Garner, et al., 1980; JAMA, 1991). Garner, et al. (1980) state that the current desired attractiveness may be "gravitating toward a weight which is in biological opposition to normal reproductive activity" (p. 490). Some further complications include depression, dental erosion, delayed gastric emptying, decrease in bone density, and impaired cognitive processing (Garfinkel, et al., 1987; Worsnop, 1992).

Caucasian teenagers define the perfect body as 5' 7" and 100 to 110 pounds (Ingrassia, 1995). However, the average adult female has an endomorphic shape averaging 5'4" and 144 pounds (Turnquist, 1992). This look is quite different than the average magazine model's ectomorphic shape. The model's shape is viewed as closer to the "perfect" female body shape. Yet, women in careers such as modeling and dancing appear to be at greater risk for eating disorders (Garfinkel, et al., 1987). Characteristics that have been associated with eating disorders, include being oriented towards performance, perfectionistic achievement, and pleasing others (Gordon, 1989; Eisele, et al., 1986). Teenagers are influenced by the slender, good-looking people they see in ads, films, and television programs, and seem particularly susceptible to bulimia or anorexia (Stephens, 1994).

The media influence the perception of the ideal body. Millions of dollars are spent annually on cosmetics, physical fitness, and weight reduction advertising (Downs & Harrison, 1985; Rosen et al., 1991). Women may feel inadequate in believing that much work must be done

“before the body matches up to the standard shown in advertisements” (Joyrick, 1988, p. 66). Females viewed on television are younger and thinner than men on popular television. Furthermore, females on television were thinner than the viewer, constituting a subtle social pressure towards slimming (Perdue & Silverstein, 1985).

Children and young adults are impressionable. Children tend to accept what appears on television as real (Down & Harrison, 1985). Brown and Schulze (1990) assert that young people learn “appropriate” and “inappropriate” sexual expression by talking and experimenting with peers, watching adults, and observing mass media. According to Bandura’s social learning theory, viewers will learn and possibly imitate behaviors seen rewarded in television portrayals (Brown & Campbell, 1986).

MTV targets the adolescence and early adulthood audience (Baxter, et al., 1985; Zimmerman, 1984; Rubey, 1991). Research has found the target age group to be 12 to 34 years old, with many viewers in the high school age group of 14 to 18 (Brown & Campbell, 1986; Doherty, 1987; Rubey, 1991). Adolescents watch MTV for information about the social world (Sun & Lull, 1986).

MTV has been influential in boosting record sales and introducing new groups (Schlattman, 1991). As well as influencing buying behavior, music videos can create an unhealthy perception of human sexuality in the minds of some teenagers (Kellam, 1989). C. Hansen & R. Hansen (1990) argue that sexual and violent content in music videos is “unwholesome” for young people. MTV deserves further study for its potential media influence on young adults.

Outline of the Study

This research addresses the relationship between television programming and body image. It specifically investigates what the Music Television network's (MTV) dance show, "The Grind," communicates about female body image. In reporting this study, chapter two presents a review of pertinent literature. Chapter three provides a description of the research method and chapter four is devoted to the research results. The final chapter presents the key findings, limitations of the study, implications for future research, reflections of the author, and ways in which this research can be applied.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

A review of the literature surrounding the subject of body image and MTV provides a contextual foundation for this study. The primary purpose is to present research directly related to female body image and Music Television (MTV). The secondary purpose is to present related research that aids in the understanding of female body image perception in its broader social and communicative context.

The first section of the literature review is devoted to body image research. This section is broken down to five areas: a) historical view of thinness, b) models and beauty pageants, c) body satisfaction, d) cultural differences, e) sex-role stereotyping. The second section of the literature review is devoted to mass media research with two focus areas; advertising and consumer behavior and television. The final section is devoted to Music Television (MTV). This section is broken down to eight areas: a) sexuality, b) sexuality and violence, c) ethnic diversity, d) fantasy and postmodernism, e) impact on young adults, f) MTV feature shows, g) MTV and body image, h) MTV's "The Grind" and female body image.

Body Image

Historical View of Thinness

Throughout North American history, the ideal size and shape for females' bodies has changed (Bennett & Gurin, 1982; Garner, et al.,

1984; Mazur, 1986; Singh, 1993). One decade the athletic body was desired and in the next a frail body. Paintings from around the year 1800 display females as more round and curvaceous, with emphasis on the reproductive features (Bennett & Gurin, 1982; Brouwer, 1990). Then the corset became popular, focusing on the small waist (Bennette & Gurin, 1982). The 1900 Sears Catalog showed only small waisted corsets that accentuated the bust (Mazur, 1986). About 1910, when there was a decrease in food availability, the ideal image changed again. The larger shape became more desirable, once more, implying wealth and higher class (Brouwer, 1990). In 1923 the Sears catalog showed only curveless outfits that suppressed the hips, moving to a tubular shape (Muzar, 1986). However, whatever a specific time period views as desirable, most women will never fit it (Bennett & Gurin, 1982).

In western societies, the narrow waist and full hips has been a consistent feature for female attractiveness, whereas other bodily features such as "bustline, overall body weight, or physique, have been assigned various degrees of importance over the years" (Singh, 1993, p. 296). Bennett and Gurin (1982) found that "a slender body ideal has prevailed throughout the 20th century" (Gordon, 1989, p. 44). Yet, in the 1950s, Marilyn Monroe's full figure was sexy and desirable. The 1950s also was a time when women's clothing became more revealing. In the 1960s, Twiggy and model Jean Shrimpton brought the more "tubular" shape (Gordon, 1989; Nemeth, 1994). During this time and through the 70s' mini-skirts, half-tops, and expressing oneself, influenced the appearance of a "perfect" female body shape.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the ideal female body shape standard has moved toward a thinner size. The ideal is for females to have a totally

flat figure, except for large breasts, which is physiologically impossible to obtain (Nemeth, 1994). Many studies have examined the female body image being thinner over time relative to the general population.

Insurance companies' ideal weight standards for women have shown a steady decrease (Myers & Biocca, 1990). Yet in a study conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics, an estimated 27 percent of women and 24 percent of men in America are overweight (Rosen, et al., 1991).

Models and Beauty Pageants

The "ideal" female body shape can be viewed in magazine models and women who are in beauty pageants. It is pertinent to observe the trend of thinness and what the American culture views as attractive over the last couple of decades. Body shape changes in models, beauty pageant winners and Playboy centerfolds aid in the understanding of the current "ideal" female body shape.

Garner, et al. (1980) found that Playboy centerfolds' mean weight was significantly less than the corresponding population means. The weights were compared to the national norms from the 1959 Society of Actuaries. Absolute weight did not decline, due to height increase, however, "a regression analysis showed that the percent of average weight for age and height decreased significantly over 20 years" (p. 485). Furthermore, the study found that bust and hip measurements decreased, but waist size became larger, reinforcing the move toward a thin "tubular" female shape.

From 1959 to 1979, the average percentage of average weight of all Miss America Pageant contestants declined in weight by .28 pounds per year for the contestants. In 1959 the average height and weight was 5

foot 8 inches and 132 pounds. From 1959 to 1969, pageant winners did not weigh significantly less than the average contestant. However, from 1970 to 1979, the winners weighed significantly less than other contestants (Garner, et al., 1980). The average participant in 1979 was 5 foot 8 inches tall and weighed 117 pounds.

Wiseman, et al. (1992) continued the Garner, et al. (1980) study of Miss America contestants and Playboy magazine centerfolds. From 1979-1988 body weight was 13-19% below expected weight for that age group. A decrease in body size was still occurring among Miss America contestants from 1979-1988 and Playboy centerfolds body size plateaued at a very low level.

Models as well as Miss America contestants do not fit the average female body shape. In 1993, even **People Weekly** magazine addressed in two separate publications the issue of model's pressure to be thin. The tubular "boyish" look with short hair is back in style. The average model weighed 8 percent less than the average woman in the late 1960s. However, in the 1990s, the average model weighs 23 percent below the women's average, supporting the notion that the desirable female shape is getting thinner (Turnquist, 1992). Body weight below 15% of expected norms are defined by the DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association, 1994) as one of the criteria for anorexia nervosa. Many of the body image "ideals" could be classified as having one of the major symptoms of an eating disorder (Wiseman, et al., 1992).

Garner, et al. (1980) calculated the number of articles about dieting and weight loss for each year from 1959 to 1978 in six popular women's magazines. From 1959 to 1969, the mean number of diet articles was 17.1. This number jumped to 29.6 from 1969 to 1978.

Wiseman, et al. (1992) also found a dramatic increase in the number of diet, exercise, and diet/exercise articles between 1959-1988. Garner, et al. (1980) argue that this displays the increased importance of dieting and thinness.

Body Satisfaction

Fallon and Rozin (1985) asked college men and women, without thinking about it too much, to pick the body shape that "approximated their current figure," is what "they would like to look like," and "that they thought would be most attractive to the opposite sex" (p. 103). They showed participants Stunkard, Sorenson, and Schulsinger's (1983) nine increasingly heavy shapes for men and women. The first was thinnest; the ninth was plumpest. Fallon & Rozin found that men were satisfied with their looks. Men selected the ideal body number as four, and they identified their own body number as four. Men also believed that women would be most attracted to a number four. Actually, women desired men to be a little thinner. Women's results were quite different. They identified their bodies as slightly thinner than number four and felt that men were most attracted to a number three. However, they desired to be thinner than that. Ironically, men were actually attracted to women larger than a number three (Fallon & Rozin, 1985, p. 104).

Cohn and Alder (1992) conducted a similar study with 87 college women and 118 college men. The female silhouette drawings were the same images used in the Fallon and Rozin (1985) study. The body image women selected as most attractive to men was significantly thinner than the female silhouette men actually chose to be most attractive. In addition, 69% of women regarded the three thinnest silhouettes as most

attractive to men, but only 25% of men selected these figures as most attractive to them.

In the Cohn and Alder (1992) study, not one female selected an ideal figure that was heavier than her own body shape. The study also supported the prediction that the female silhouette selected as most attractive to other females was significantly thinner than the silhouette that women actually selected as most desirable. Furthermore, men misjudged the body preference of other males and over estimated the extent which other men perceived large physiques as ideal and desirable. From this study, the standard of attractiveness that is believed and accepted by women and men is not the perceived norm. This may make "women especially self-conscious and may generate additional pressure to lose weight" (Cohn & Alder, 1992, p. 77).

Collins (1991) adapted the Stunkard, Sorenson, and Schulsinger (1983) pictorial instrument and studied the perceptions of body figure in a survey of 1118 preadolescent children averaging 7.97 years of age. The seven point scale was formulated for preadolescent body shapes as well as adults. The body image instruments were reviewed, pilot-tested, and examined for test-retest validity and criterion-related validity. This study was based on the premise that children begin to develop gender-based stereotypes of attractiveness early in life.

Collins discovered that preadolescent females selected Ideal Self as significantly thinner than Self, as well as thinner than males' selection of Ideal Self and Ideal Girl. This occurred across all levels of weight, age, race, and school/community setting among females. Females also selected a thinner Ideal Adult figure than males. The study found Collins' results were similar to the findings of the Fallon and Rozin

(1985) and Cohn and Alder (1992) studies, in that females preferred to be thinner than the image considered most attractive by males.

In a study of 1,123 university students, Sciacca, et al. (1991) revealed that 40 percent of women viewed themselves as overweight, whereas 24 percent of men viewed themselves as so. Males were significantly more satisfied with their bodies than women. Women view a thinner body shape as more attractive and desirable, and that being overweight can negatively affect their relationships with men. Stake and Lauer (1987) studied 44 women and 40 men and revealed that overweight women were negatively affected in their relationships with men. However, being overweight for men had little effect on men's relationships with women. Likewise, they discovered that average-weight and overweight women showed more concern regarding their body size than either average or overweight men. In relation to fashion, women were also much more likely to have selected clothes to make them look thinner, and men were much more likely to have not thought about weight at all.

The desire to be thin in females does not begin in college, but is built through childhood and adolescence (Eisele et al., 1986). Heunemann, Shapiro, Hampton, and Mitchell (1966) found that close to 70 percent of high school females wanted to lose weight and were unhappy with their bodies (Garner et al., 1980). Furthermore, Hawkins, Turell, and Jackson (1983) determined that before the age of 13, 80 percent of girls reported that they had already been on a weight-loss diet, as compared to 10 percent of boys.

For young females, thinness is an important dimension in physical attractiveness (Myers & Biocca, 1990). Paxton, et al. (1991) studied body

satisfaction of 341 high school females and 221 males. The research revealed that males were significantly more satisfied with their bodies and females were more dissatisfied. However, both the males and females' weight distributions were around the expected norm. Eisele, et al. (1986) also supported the notion that thinness is a part of attractiveness in a study of females' ages 12 to 14. The study discovered 78 percent preferred weight loss, and only 14 percent were satisfied with their weight. However, in using the National Center of Health Statistics (1973), 28 percent of the females were underweight, 53 percent were ideal, and 19 percent were over weight. This dissatisfaction can lead to the attempt to lose weight (Eisele, et al., 1986).

Body satisfaction differs among men, women, and people with eating disorders (Sciacca, et al. 1991). Thompson (1991) furthered the body satisfaction research by separating the subjects into eating-disturbed versus asymptomatic groups by using the Smith & Thelen (1984) Bulimia test. He found eating-disturbed subjects saw themselves as larger than their own ideal and larger than their own rating of a figure attractive to men. They were also more dissatisfied with their general appearance, and rated how others saw them as larger than the asymptomatic subjects. Both groups' ideal figures were smaller than the figures which subjects thought or felt they resembled.

Bell, et al. (1986) also used body silhouettes to investigate the disturbances in body image perception of anorexic and obese groups. Anorexics tended to overestimate body size and obese participants underestimated body size. There was distortion in both eating disordered groups, which was not apparent in control groups. Williams et al. (1993) found that people with eating disorders judge their current body

size to be larger and ideal size to be thinner relative to control groups. Likewise, 53 percent of women and 20 percent of men reported experiencing discomfort due to excess weight. Yet, only 17 percent of women and 20 percent of men were determined as excess of normal body weight. The standard of attractiveness that is believed and accepted by women and men in American culture is not the perceived norm.

Ethnicity

Dissatisfaction with body size differs culturally. Black women seem less preoccupied with dieting and somewhat more tolerant of being overweight than white women. Kumanyika and Guilford-Davenport (1993) discovered that overweight black women may be weight conscious, but the “absence of strong negative social pressure combined with a relatively positive body image may limit the extend to which weight loss efforts are sustained” (p. 416).

Black youth are significantly less likely to consider themselves overweight than white and Hispanic students (JAMA, 1991). Cohn and Alder’s (1992) study of preadolescents found that blacks recorded significantly heavier figure selections for ideal figures than whites. In a study at the University of Arizona, researchers discovered that 90 percent of white junior-high and high-school girls expressed dissatisfaction with their weight, while “70 percent of black teens were satisfied with the bodies” (Ingrassia, 1995, p. 66). When students were asked to describe how women age, two thirds of black teens said they get more beautiful, while white girls said their mothers may have been beautiful back in their youth (Ingrassia, 1995).

In 1993, Rosen and colleagues study used silhouettes of female body images to research African-American and white male preference of female body shape. The questionnaire asked about their thinnest acceptable, ideal, and largest acceptable figure to date, as a girlfriend, sexual partner, wife, mother, teacher, employer, grandmother, sister, and female friend. The study discovered that African-American males always chose a larger ideal female silhouette and were not as tolerant as whites of very thin figures (Rosen et al, 1993). This may also account for racial differences in females' body dissatisfaction.

At an early age, females learn that appearance and beauty are important. "Young girls learn that being attractive is intricately interwoven with pleasing and serving others," asserts Striegel-Moore et al. (1986), and "in turn, will secure their love" (p. 249). Caucasian girls see beauty tied with youth and black girls view that they get more beautiful as they age. Females' body dissatisfaction differs between whites and blacks, but an emphasis on female beauty is apparent in both races.

Sex-role Stereotyping

A central feature in the female sex-role stereotype is the enhancement and preservation of one's beauty (Striegel-Moore, et al., 1986). Sex-roles can be defined as "social guidelines for sex appropriate appearance, interests, skills, behaviors, and self-perceptions" (Tuchman, 1978, p. 3). Stereotypes present "individuals with a more limited range of acceptable appearance, feelings, and behaviors than guidelines do" (Tuchman, 1978, p. 5). Sex-role stereotypes are set portrayals, however, they are more stringent than guidelines. Being thin is perceived as part

of female beauty and, by the 1980s it had become symbolic of strength, independence, achievement, mastery, and attractiveness (S. Wooley & W. Wooley, 1986).

Steiner-Adair (1989) asserts that females are growing up to be more like their fathers than their mothers. Instead of striving for predominantly female occupations such as housewife, secretary, teacher or nurse, females are pressured and encouraged to be "strong" and strive to be lawyers and doctors. These may be viewed as two contrasting roles, one the professional career woman who has a more independent (and slender) status, that embodies the respect and power associated with the independent assertive adult male while the other is "the fat, flabby adult female who in her caring for others and assuming a traditional female career and/or a nurturing role, is powerless, devalued and passively dependent" (Steiner-Adair, 1989, p. 161).

The "Super Woman" is generally associated with a tall thin body (not round or curvy), and a high level of independent achievement related to having a super-female personality (Steiner-Adair, 1989). Thinness indicates a self-control, a mastery of one's own body, beyond that of a normal woman (Steiner-Adair, 1989).

Gordon (1989) has asserted that thinness carries highly conflicting strands of contemporary female ideals. These include "...achievement, intellectual aspiration and competence, and yet sexual attractiveness, submissiveness, and nurturance" (p. 48). Silverstein and Perdue (1988) discovered that body dissatisfaction among women is associated with female physical attractiveness and concerns about success and failure. This is accompanied by the desire for a noncurvacious body associated with dieting and bingeing. Furthermore, when the desire for a

noncurvacious body is also associated with purging and underweight, the emphasis turns to the importance of professional success and intelligence.

Paxton and Sculthorpe (1991) observed a positive correlation between distorted eating and the extent which women believed they possessed negative feminine characteristics; for instance, they were needful of attention, weak, and self-critical. There was also a greater discrepancy in scores in subjects and eating disturbances between self and ideal masculine positive characteristics, such as competitiveness, confidence, and forcefulness.

Even with the increasing sex-role options for women, there is still the pressure for the female to maintain her beauty; and thinness is perceived to be part of that beauty (S. Wooley & W. Wooley, 1986). Research suggest women do experience more negative social consequences for being overweight than do men (Stake & Lauer, 1987, p. 39). "In recent years, the beauty ideal for women has moved toward an increasingly thin standard, which has become more uniform and has been more widely distributed due to the advent of mass media" (Striegel-Moore, et al., 1986, p. 256).

Throughout history, the North American ideal female has become thinner. Over the years, models and beauty pageant winners weights have steadily declined, emphasizing the desirable "thin" look. The change in female sex-roles and body image dissatisfaction emphasizes the stress body image puts on the female. The thin female body images are primarily seen in the movies, magazines, and television.

MASS MEDIA

Advertising and Consumer Behavior

Of all the industrial achievements of the 20th century that influence how we feel about our bodies, none has had more profound effect than the rise of the mass media (Rodin, 1992, p. 57).

Businesses spent over 37 billion dollars in 1991 in advertising, making it one of the largest industries in the United States (Shapiro, et al., 1993). Consumers are the principal target of advertising sale campaigns. Even though advertising provides information about products, stimulates competition, and pays most of magazine, newspaper, radio, and television cost, it can have potential negative effects on the consumer. The information contained in advertising often misleads consumers, and because it costs to advertise, the cost adds to the price the consumer pays. Advertisements encourage attractiveness and often depict the "ideal" look for men and women.

Literally billions of dollars are spent annually on cosmetics, physical fitness, and weight reduction advertising (Downs & Harrison, 1985; Rosen, et al., 1991). Americans spend more on "beauty and fitness than they do on social services and education" (Rodin, 1992, p. 58). Not only is the selling of beauty products profitable, advertising agencies have found that consumers are more attentive to ads with people who are attractive, as opposed to those who are unattractive (Asker & Meyers, 1987). According to Downs & Harrison (1985) attractive people are credited with positive attributes while unattractive people are assigned negative attributes.

Females are assumed to be the perfect consumers (Joyrich, 1988). The women's role is to "purchase in order to enhance her own status as valued item" (Joyrich, 1988, p. 144). The focus is on self-image, and she is tied to the image both as the "subject and the object of consumerism at once" (p. 145). Women may feel inadequacy in believing that much work must be done "before the body matches up to the standard shown in advertisements" (Joyrich, 1988, p. 66). This can then lead to a sense of physical self-disgust (Joyrich, 1988). Stephens et al. (1994) suggest that the young women's mental and physical health "may be dramatically and negatively impacted by the use of models in advertisements that meet the cultural norm for attractiveness/thinness, a stereotype that most women are unable to attain" (p. 149). Mattel's Barbie doll has also been blamed for giving girls unrealistic ideas about the female figure. If Barbie was an actual woman, she would have a 36' bust, 18' waist, and 33' hips (Worsnop, 1992).

Gould (1987) studied gender differences in advertising response and self-consciousness variables. He found that females scored high in relation to advertising recall, favorite commercials, public-self-consciousness, and anxiety. Young women tended to be more publicly self-conscious and concerned about being socially acceptable in society, with thinness as a major image.

Root (1984) found that magazine advertisements promote female attractiveness. Magazines are "full of glossy and provocative advertising photographs of women's bodies, faces, and parts of bodies" (p. 65). Many images encourage women to look at other women's bodies. The women are dependent on how they look, not what they do, whereas men in advertising are shown doing active, outdoor activities (Root, 1984). Root

further states, “but unlike advertisements directed at men, this is not power over people and things, but the power of becoming a perfect sight, the ultimate to-be-looked-at woman” (Root, 1984, p. 66.).

Although movies and magazines are a powerful media, there are “several strong reasons to believe that television is the single most influential socializer of attractiveness stereotypes” (Downs & Harrison, 1983, p. 2). The average American home has a television turned on approximately six to seven hours a day (Down & Harrison, 1985; Tuchman, 1978). “To say television is the dominant medium in American life is a vast understatement” (Tuchman, 1978, p. 9).

Television

Television viewers are exposed to a very high number of attractiveness-based messages on television (Downs & Harrison, 1985). Alder and Fagber (1980) found that children and adults are confronted with over 5,260 attractiveness messages per year, in which 1,850 of these messages dealt directly with beauty (Downs & Harrison, 1985). Television also displays a different view of attractiveness for women than for men. “Television teaches girls a singular feminine ideal of thinness, beauty, and youth set against a world in which men are more competent and also more diverse in appearance” (Striegel-Moore et al., 1986, p. 249).

Television viewers, especially children, tend to accept what appears on television as real; in turn attractiveness messages may also go unchallenged by the audience (Down & Harrison, 1985). Television commercials often show an ideal state that implies that the viewer has not attained this state. The commercial then usually offers a magical

object that connects the viewer to the desired state (Grow, 1988).

However, the advertisements usually promote despair by implying the product will deliver the ideal, when it cannot (Grow, 1988). "No one can look as good as the picture or video image of a fashion model--not even the models themselves, whose looks are for the camera. In real life, many models are said to look startlingly skinny" (Grow, 1988, p. 3).

The emphasis of thinness on television is apparent. Weights and ages of women and men on television were studied and compared by Perdue and Silverstein (1985). One hundred and thirty nine male characters and 82 female characters were rated for weight and age on 33 popular television shows. They found that women were younger and thinner than men on popular television. Furthermore, females on television are thinner than the viewer, constituting a subtle social pressure toward slimming (Perdue & Silverstein, 1985). Myer and Biocca (1990) have state that this ideal body image is much thinner than the average objective body shape of the population.

There are some larger women in television, such as Oprah Winfrey, Delta Burke, and Roseanne Barr. However, even with Roseanne's success as an actress, she is not the image that other females want to look like. Despite Oprah's achievements as a talk show host, producer, and actress, she still regards her weight loss as "the single greatest accomplishment" of her life (Rosen, et al., 1991, p. 84). Former Designing Women's Delta Burke's weight gain of 40 pounds was even worked into an episode titled "They Shoot Fat Women, Don't They?" (Rosen, 1991). All three women have been favorites in the tabloids about their weight.

Two successful television women that have mainstream body images include Ellen Brett Butler and Candice Bergen. However, these two women are not models for young women, but appeal to the middle aged television fans. Shows that appeal to young women, such as 90210, Melrose Place, and Friends have female characters that are thinner than the average female.

Myers and Biocca (1990) studied the role of programming and commercials on women's body image overestimation. They found that young females tend to overestimate their body size. However, the presence of body image advertising made the subjects feel thinner than normal. This study found short-term exposure can temporarily alter a viewer's self-image and suggested that long term effects needed investigation.

Television teaches what the acceptable appearance is for females. By targeting shows to specific age groups, television can show the fashionable look for a student in New York or a Newscaster in Los Angeles. The specialization of cable networks allows programmers and advertisers to target a specific demographic group (Cleland, 1995). One cable network that is geared toward young adults and projects attractiveness messages is Music Television.

Music Television (MTV)

On August 1, 1981, Music Television (MTV) started as a 24 hour cable television station that plays music videos (Doherty, 1987). MTV is targeted toward teenagers and young adults. Robert Pittman, one of the forefathers of MTV, told the **Washington Post** "At MTV, we don't shoot

for the 14-year-olds--we own them. We will reach 90 percent of them in any given household" (Denisoff & Romanowski, 1990, p. 5). In 1984, 85 percent of MTV's audience was estimated to be between the ages of 14 and 34 (Zimmerman, 1984; Baxter, 1985). Other researchers have referred to the target age group starting at the age 12 (Doherty, 1987; Brown & Campbell, 1986; Rubey 1991).

MTV's target audience has historically been geared towards the male adolescent. The record companies who produce the videos, and MTV, "adopted imagery designed fundamentally around the discourse of male adolescence" (Lewis, 1990, p. 90). The images have relied heavily on the "male leisure practice" (Lewis, 1990, p. 91).

In 1984, MTV was available to more than 22 million people (Sherman & Dominick, 1986) and this number jumped to over 60 million by 1995 (Levinson, 1995). Moreover, MTV has six international affiliates, producing 28 percent of the networks' revenues (Levinson, 1995). Between 200 and 500 other TV shows also feature music videos (Brown & Campbell, 1986; Burns, 1989). Music videos are often shown before movies, in store windows, and as half hour and hour long series. Music videos combine the impact of television with the sounds and messages of popular music that are designed to appeal to adolescent audiences (Greeson & Williams, 1986).

Music videos serve as advertisements to sell albums and promote artists (Doherty, 1987). The videos entertain as well as promote, but the main force is consumption (D. Fry & V. Fry, 1987; Kaplan, 1987). Actually, everything on MTV is a commercial--advertising spots, news, station identifications, interviews, and especially music video clips (Kinder, 1984). MTV not only sells the music, it sponsor's goods, and

MTV itself, it psychologically sells “the image, the ‘look’, the style” (Kaplan, 1987). MTV has also had a profound impact on TV commercials, which continues to evolve. In advertising, MTV style is a description used for quick-cut paced commercials. The “once-frenzied” style is calming down while still maintaining a quick-cut pace (Cleland, 1995, p. 51).

MTV has been influential in boosting record sales and introducing new groups (Schlattman, 1991). The impact may not be all that clear, but it has “become an intricate, and sometimes vital part of the process of breaking new acts” (Schlattman, 1991, p. 20). And with the four minute texts, the viewer expects to be satisfied by the next video, being exposed to a variety of images in the mean time (Rubey, 1991). The visual images contain more information “than radio or the written word” (Rubey, 1991, p. 877). While MTV and music video impacts are not definitive, a number of studies indicate that music video content can influence viewers.

Recent studies reveal that viewers can recognize and evaluate content in music videos (Walker & Bender, 1994). Miller and Millar (1992) studied high school student’s perception of music videos and discovered that students comprehend themes, such as violence, in videos. Viewers see and hear messages and construct meaning of music videos (Walker & Bender, 1994). Rubin and colleagues (1986) presented a single video of either the complete music video or music only to a group of subjects. The respondents offered different meanings between the music-audio and music-video groups.

It is important to understand that audiences’ produce interpretations of texts, like MTV. There is the possibility that the

“interpretation will be determined by the cultural logic of consumer capitalism and reinforce racism, sexism, and passivity” (Rubey, 1991, p. 878). In a national radio broadcast, Lee Atwater (1985) referred to MTV as the “radical media development” that embodies music and video media, making a powerful form of social influence (Greeson & Williams, 1986, p. 178).

D. Fry and V. Fry (1987) state that audiences predictably interpret texts based on their stored social knowledge. Kalof (1993) also found that there are multiple interpretations of MTV texts. The reading of a text is “an interactive, interpretive process of viewers who make sense of the text according to their gender identity and their experiences as gendered individuals” (p. 645). Studies on MTV have been conducted on such content areas as sexuality and violence, ethnicity, female representation, fantasy and postmodernism, MTV's impact on young adults, and MTV feature shows. These topics assist in the understanding of the importance of looking at female body image on MTV.

Sexuality

Sexuality is important to understanding the impact of body image because body shape and perception are a fundamental part of sexual desire. Even before the excitement of MTV, music and sexuality in the media have caused concerns. Most research on sexuality in music has examined the portrayal of women and sexual acts. Frith and McRobbie (1987) explored the dominance of males in the music business and charged men with responsibility of the “creation and construction of suitable female images” (p. 374). In addition, images of women have been built into the foundations of pop rock; its production,

consumption, and its musical structures. Greeson and Williams (1986) found that almost 50 percent of the videos studied referred to sexual themes in either lyrics or visual scenes. Brown and Schulze (1990) have asserted that young people learn “appropriate” and “inappropriate” sexual expression by talking and experimenting with peers, watching adults, and observing mass media.

In the age of music combined with visual imagery, there has been increased discussion of male dominance in music presentation.

Sherman and Dominick (1986) found that men outnumbered women by two to one in music videos. Also, MTV was the “sexiest” network in comparison to “Friday Night Videos” and “Night Tracks.” Junyk (1989) stated that when women appear in videos by male artists they are often used as props, or sex objects for domination and violence.

Sherman and Dominick (1986) determined that sexual intimacy appeared in more than three-quarters of the music videos on MTV. Furthermore, half of all women who appeared in the music videos were dressed provocatively. Music videos’ sexually suggestive themes and the use of violence are often marketing devices. However, the end result is often the portrayal of females in a degrading and offensive way (Kort, 1986; Greeson & Williams, 1986).

Kubey and Larson (1990) proposed that the type of suggestive, sexual imagery presented in many videos may be threatening to girls, especially ones who are “coming to terms with their own sexuality” (p. 126). Kellam (1989) states:

...we can certainly conclude that some music videos can create unhealthy perceptions of human sexuality in the minds of some teenagers, especially if those teenagers have no positive sexual values and role models with which to balance media images (p. 16).

One criticism of sexism on MTV is that the videos provide few role models for young women and present negative stereotypes to the viewer. A newsletter editor for video rock nightclubs refers to females as either "sex kittens" or "secretarial types who take off their glasses" (Sherman & Dominick, 1986, p. 80). A study of sex-role stereotypes in music videos concludes that over 90 percent of soldiers, security and police personnel, photographers, athletes, scientists, politicians, and business executives were male and over 80 percent of hair stylists, dancers, fashion models, and telephone operators were female (Seidman, 1992). Females were also seen to be more affectionate, dependent, nurturing, and fearful than males.

Vincent, Davis, and Boruszkowski (1987) likewise observed that 9.2 percent of the videos suggested nudity, 10.1 percent used women in undergarments and 38.7 percent used seductive clothing. They used videos by singer David Lee Roth as an example of females used as "decorative objects." His version of "California Girls" and "Hot for teacher" are perfect examples, and the video "A Little Ain't Enough," gave a new meaning to a "workout." The video displays about ten females lined up on stair masters in thong leotards. Vincent (1989) re-examined the study and stated "these videos can too easily provide young people with questionable behavior models" (p. 160).

In the early 1990s, videos from Dr. Dre, Aerosmith, and Prince all show females in seductive clothing and as decorative objects. However, men are also used as sex objects in sexually suggestive videos on MTV.

The groups TLC and Salt-n-Peppa use sexually expressive themes in their videos. The men and women dressed in minimal clothing are either dancing ("What a Man" and "Shoop"), playing strip poker ("Red Light Special"), or are shirtless on a beach. However, the use of males as sex objects is limited, and predominantly by black female artists.

In the middle 1990s, female artists have promoted the strong, sexually expressive female that has a super fit or thin body image. Janet Jackson videos' "If," "Escapade," and "Runaway," all show thin women who appear to be in excellent shape with washboard stomachs. Maria Carey is also very thin, as is Madonna. TLC and Salt-n-Peppa's videos show mostly African American thin and average built females, but all are in apparently great physical shape.

Davis (1991) asserts that video producers know that sex sells; the images are never innocent and never accidental. The performer Madonna has stretched many limits of sexuality. Her videos range from a "peep show" to lying unclothed on a bed, with a chain around her neck in her video "Express Yourself." Her "masturbation scene" in the video "Like a Virgin" was controversial. The video "Justify My Love" was banned by MTV. Brown and Schulze (1990) found that male fans tended to use the term "Madonna's body" more often than "Madonna" in stating what they like about the videos. This was not present in female responses. Two females responded to the question of how "open" the video made them feel with "Fat" (p. 99). No males felt that Madonna's body reflected upon their own.

Unovitch (1993) asserts that the female body being a masochistic object is practically required by the rules of etiquette or fashion in video. She comments that the book The Beauty Myth by Naomi Wolf displays

an extreme view of females viewed as objects. Women should be able to see the females in videos as exaggerated. Unovitch states that "like it or not, women's bodies are (and have been for centuries) so intensely visually fetishized that there's not much they can do that doesn't look like a male fantasy" (p. 70).

Sexuality and Violence

Some of the literature connecting sexuality and violence is pertinent to body image, because it speaks to the influence that video images have on youth. The 1994 National Coalition on Television Violence argued that sexual and violent content in music videos is "unwholesome" for young people (C. Hansen & R. Hansen, 1990). Women Against Pornography, a group, state that videos are even "more sexist, pornographic, and violent than conventional television fare" (Brown & Campbell, 1990, p. 95). The American Academy of Pediatrics has voiced a similar opinion (Strasburger, 1988; Hansen & Hansen, 1990). However, the actual influence of sexuality and violence in videos is not clear.

Much of the criticism toward music television and sex and violence in videos has been toward the depiction of females. Videos may be pleasurable to watch while fostering attitudes toward women that are based on male adolescent fantasies (Davis, 1991). Rubey (1991) asserts that the most sexist, sadomasochistic images of women have appeared in heavy metal videos. Heavy metal videos suggest that "good" women "function as silent absences or powerless victims" (Rubey, 1991, p. 882). When women are shown as powerful and sexual, they end up becoming "seductive betrayers" (Rubey, 1991, p. 882).

Sommers-Flanagan, et al. (1993) analyzed 40 MTV videos at 30 second intervals by four trained raters using a consensus model. They discovered that men engaged in significantly more aggressive and dominant behavior while women engaged in more implicit sexual and subservient behavior after viewing videos. Raters also perceived that women were more frequently viewed as objects of explicit, implicit, and aggressive sexual advances.

C. Hansen and R. Hansen (1990) looked at the effects of both sexual imagery and violence on 179 male and 196 female undergraduate students. They remarked that as the level of sexy videos increased, the viewers felt happier and more sexual, increasing the appeal. However, violent imagery decreased appeal, and sexual imagery and violence combined also had less appeal.

Ethnic Diversity

Ethnic diversity is an important variable when considering body image perception and television. As noted earlier, African Americans ideal shape is larger than the white female ideal shape (Rosen, 1993). Diversity, though, has not always been evident in MTV programming. During the first four years that MTV was aired, criticism centered not only on sexual and violent content, but on the lack of ethnic diversity shown in videos. Rick James filed a suit against MTV for not programming one of his videos, claiming that it was due to his race (Peterson-Lewis & Chennault, 1986). Baxter, et al. (1985) observed that white adult males appeared in 96 percent of videos. Brown and Campbell (1986) found that 83 percent of people aired on MTV were white male adults while 11 percent were female singers and nonwhites were only 5

percent. However, this has changed partly due to black artists being attractive to MTV's target audience of "10 to 25 years old who can afford to subscribe to pay television stations such as MTV and to buy records, albums, tapes and videos" (Peterson-Lewis & Chennault, 1986, p. 108).

The change to a more ethnically diverse selection of videos also occurred due to pressure from CBS records to air Michael Jackson's video "Billie Jean" (Rubey, 1991, p. 887). Research had shown that "rock & roll" was what people wanted, so MTV had not played much else, but people still wanted to see other videos, forcing MTV to broaden their video selections. The video "Walk this Way" by Aerosmith and Run DMC helped introduce rap to the heavy metal audiences, typically the young adult male (Rubey, 1991). "U Can't Touch This" by MC Hammer was the best video of the year in 1990, but there was still a high number of heavy metal videos played on the "Dial MTV" top twenty countdown, and heavy metal primarily appeals to young white males (Rubey, 1991).

Videos may be interpreted differently according to viewer ethnicity. Madonna's video "Papa Don't Preach" was viewed differently by African Americans and Caucasians. White viewers saw the issue in the video as a pregnant teen pondering what she should do. Black viewers saw the video as a father daughter relationship with "baby" as being the boyfriend (Rubey, 1991, p. 875).

Successful features such as "Yo MTV Raps" and "Jams" are geared toward a young, urban African-American audiences. Some artists have combined rock and soul to become popular. At the top of the charts in the early 1990s, performers such as Baby Face, Janet Jackson, TLC, Salt-n-Peppa, Maria Carey, and Paula Abdul have appealed to an

ethnically diverse audience. However, Asian, Hispanics, and Native Americans are still under-represented in MTV's music videos.

Easley and Rabinovitz (1989) stated that the Hispanic population in the United States has increased by 20 percent since 1982 to roughly 17.6 million. This number is expected to double by the year 2000, making Hispanics the largest ethnic group in the United States (Easley & Rabinovitz, 1989). Even though there is a Hispanic music television station called Spanish Language International (SIN), Hispanics rarely appear on MTV.

According to Bandura's social learning theory, viewers will learn and possibly imitate behaviors seen rewarded in television portrayals. However, Brown and Campbell (1986) express concern that the narrowing of television portrayals, such as exclusion of a particular group, results in the viewer accepting the image that may only be true on television. Similar to the exclusion of a particular ethnic group, if women are thinner and more attractive in television shows than the average female, people may accept this image as normal or more acceptable.

Fantasy and Postmodernism

Music television is more dream or fantasy oriented than other kinds of television or popular film by having the "story" and visual images keyed to the sound track (Burns 1989). Burns (1989) questions the long-term effect of fantasy-oriented activities, such as daydreaming, movie-going, listening to the radio, and watching MTV. He asserts that displaying dream or fantasy situations, can form a desire to participate in or be a part of the video images, which in most cases is unobtainable.

The fantasy of a perfect body image can be destructive to the female self esteem.

Females are recognized as erotic objects more than males are (Stockbridge, 1990). They are the image (Joyrich, 1988). Females are often passive and the object of the gaze. Males are typically the subject of the gaze, viewed as powerful and active (Stockbridge, 1990). However there are videos that break the image of females being passive. In MC Hammer's video "U Can't Touch This," the female dancers are sexy and attractive,

but the energy and skill of their dancing combined with the athleticism and fleshy muscularity of their bodies presents them as women enjoying and displaying their own bodies, not passive objects of a victimizing male gaze. (Rubey, 1991, p. 885)

Male rock stars can be seen in a sexual way, and the gaze can be female to male, but videos predominantly show the females as objects (Stockbridge, 1990). The portrayal of women in rock videos, as young, supple, and gorgeous, is part of a male adolescent dream world (Davis, 1991). The Robert Palmer video "Addicted To Love" depicts a dream image with all the females looking the same with perfect bodies. The females are only there to be looked at, they serve no other function (Stockbridge, 1990). The dream world could have the same function as the Freudian model's superego. Music videos can fill the gap of an individual by providing "an illusionary image of a perfect (and unobtainable) world or self that conforms perfectly to the demands of social order and the expectations of culturally-defined roles" (Harvey, 1990, p. 59). In both cases, an unrealistic perfection is constructed.

When making music videos, visual specialists often attempt to manipulate an illusion of reality or to resemble a reality that is understood by the viewers (Lewis, 1989, p. 89). In relation to body image, a person may see the people in the videos as having a fun, exciting time, and put these images in their dreams and fantasies (Peterson, 1987). Peterson (1987) suggests that the connection between how the person looks and dresses can possibly have an impact on what the individual views as desirable.

Kaplan asserts that music videos show characteristics of postmodernism by displaying “the desires, fantasies, and anxieties of young people growing up in a world in which all traditional categories are being blurred and all institutions questioned” (Kaplan, 1987, p. 5). Kaplan (1990) articulates her view of what a postmodern world would entail.

The postmodern universe, however, with its celebration of the look, surfaces, textures, the self-as-commodity produces an array of images/representations/simulacra that co-opts any possible critical position by the very incorporation of, what were previous dissenting images; this makes difficult the process of foregrounding or exposing gender issues that feminist film-makers have used (p. 154).

Kaplan (1990) asserts the need for closer examination of postmodernism's impact on women. Acland (1989) contends that music videos reduce the involvement of the audience's imagination in constructing, understanding, or interpreting the text. In such areas as aggressive behavior, sexual activity, and the stereotypes of men, women, and blacks, television can serve as an important socialization agent for children and adolescence (Brown & Campbell, 1986). Spencer and Barth (1992) asserts that MTV has liberated television itself from orthodox

meaning and is a reflection of a culture that no longer sees the relationship between cause and effect.

Impact on Young Adults

MTV's impact on young adults has also been studied. While a lot of music video work is focused on college student or general viewers, MTV's target age group is 12-34, with many of the viewers in the high school age group of 14-18. Kubey and Larson (1990) cite a 1988 Nielsen measure of an estimated 25 minute per day of MTV viewing for respondents in grades 7-12; Dieter and Heeter (1989) estimated a little over 30 minutes per day for 8th and 9th graders. However, Sun and Lull (1986) discovered that 80 percent of 9th-12th graders viewed MTV two hours daily. Their survey represented 603 students enrolled in a high school in San Jose, California.

Sun and Lull (1986) also revealed that adolescents most frequently gave the reason of watching MTV directly related to some aspect of music. They assert that in the two main groups of adolescents surveyed, Latinos and Whites, both watched MTV for information about the social world. However, studying the attitudinal impact of MTV is nearly impossible.

The recording of record buying can be documented, but actual behavior changes and attitudes are difficult to monitor. However, Rubin, et al. (1986) cited a Nielsen study which found that of 12 to 34 year olds, MTV had more of an impact than radio in relation to buying records.

The difficulty in studying the actual impact of the images on MTV may be due to people not seeing a text individually, but synthesizing prior experiences, knowledge, the present setting, and other associations.

Rubin, et al. (1986) asserted that “individuals form meaning by associating responses with various stimuli in the environment” (p. 354). Furthermore, most meaning comes from already internalized associations, not a result from direct experience. Perception is not a passive reception process. Individuals process information, impute relationships between symbols, other texts, activities and attitudes, and organizing and structuring stimuli (Rubin, 1986; Acland, 1989). Acland (1989) has observed that “a music video is only a single element of a larger text, one that must be reconciled with other elements to resolve ambiguities, so that a coherent understanding of the text is constructed” (p. 11).

MTV Feature Shows

In 1986-87 MTV started running half hour “shows” to target other markets, and to please advertisers. Shows such as “Remote Control,” “Monte Python’s Flying Circus,” and “Club MTV” were all part of this targeting (Rabinovitz, 1989). Currently, MTV’s programming features “The Grind,” “The Real World,” “Beavis & Butt-head,” “Singled out” and “My So Called Life.” Some of these shows, such as “Monte Python’s Flying Circus,” were aired only for a short period of time. However, other shows such as “The Real World” and “Beavis & Butt-head” have endured in the programming schedule for a number of years. MTV also has the MTV video awards and movie awards once a year, and the weekly top 20 video count down.

Some MTV shows have featured dancing, appearing as modern day versions of “American Bandstand.” MTV’s first dance show was “Club MTV” hosted by MTV’s only black V.J. (Video Jock), Julie Brown. The

show was a straight forward copy of the syndicated television show "Soul Train," but racially mixed, which first aired in the 1970s (Goodwin, 1992, p. 146). The show restructured and changed to "The Grind" in the 1990s and is now often combined with other similarly structured shows. The "MTV Beach House" programming includes veejay introductions of videos and tapings of shows like "Lip Service," "The Grind," and "MTV" Jams, which have all had 40 percent rating increases (Burgi, 1993, p. 15). Feature shows, targeting different audiences, have been successful for MTV.

The "MTV Beach House" is a carefully structured marketing strategy "designed to look like a party" (Burgi, 1993, p. 14). The "wild and wacky kids are told when to have fun, and they're supplied the tools for having fun" (Burgi, 1993, p. 15). Poolside waterguns, volleyball courts, and Frisbees out at the beach are all part of the marketing strategy. Guards turn away people at the door and stop people from smoking, "nothing is left to chance or accident" (Burgi, 1993, p. 15). However, to the viewer, the show seems to be a random group of young people spontaneously having fun.

MTV's Feature Shows and Body Image

Research has been done on females being viewed as objects on MTV, but no studies have been conducted on thinness of females and body image in music videos or feature shows. Certainly some videos have raised body image issues. Sir Mix-A-lot's 1992 video "Baby Got Back" displays African-American women in provocative clothing dancing to the music beats and lyrics saying "I like big butts I cannot lie." The video was not allowed to be aired before nine p.m.. His response was "If I had

done a song about Cindy Crawford, it would have been OK...the women who got pissed off were knock-kneed, bony women" (Farber, 1993, p. 82).

Signorielle et al. (1994) conducted a study on gender portrayals and stereotyping in a sample of MTV commercials. Advertisers have been drawn to MTV to have their products be associated with the youth culture. Results indicated that women were more likely than men to be portrayed as having very fit or beautiful bodies. Close to 75 percent of men were rated as having average bodies, while more than 75 percent of female characters were rated as having very fit or beautiful bodies. Females were rated as more attractive than males and females were more likely than male characters to be portrayed wearing skimpy or sexy clothing. These findings supported the idea that visual attention was highly emphasized for female characters. Signorielli et al. (1994) has asserted:

while we cannot say there is a causal relationship between commercial content and social problems like rape, eating disorders, and discrimination in the workplace, MTV commercials in no way contributes to the reduction of misconceptions about women and women's roles in society (p. 100).

As one of MTV's feature shows, "The Grind" presents young females and males dancing to many of the newest music videos. Like "American Bandstand" and "Soul Train" from previous generations, young adults watch "The Grind" to learn about dancing and to see the newest dance videos. No music video or body image research has focused on dance shows, such as "The Grind." As we consider issues of thinness, body satisfaction, body image, and media influences, examining viewer perceptions of targeted media programming may be useful.

Research Hypothesis & Research Questions

In light of research/literature in the areas of MTV and female body image, this study is examining two hypotheses and seven research questions.

H 1: Female body images recorded on MTV's feature show "The Grind" will be thinner than the average female.

Research indicates that females' desire to be thinner than what they perceive is average and what they perceive is most attractive to the opposite sex (Fallon & Rozin 1985, E. Collins 1991, Cohn & Alder 1992). This study will investigate whether or not the females viewed on two episodes of "The Grind" are thinner than the perceived average female.

H 2: Caucasian body images recorded on MTV's feature show "The Grind" will be thinner than African American or Hispanic body images.

Research suggests that African Americans are more satisfied with body image than Caucasians (Kumanyika & Guildford-Davenport 1993, Cohn & Alder 1992, Ingrassia, 1995). Furthermore, black youth are significantly less likely to consider themselves overweight than white and Hispanic students (JAMA, 1991). This study will help discover whether Caucasian body images are actually thinner than African American and Hispanic body images on "The Grind."

RQ 1: Is there a relationship between clothing style and body image?

Fashion magazines have emphasized that dark colors and loose fitting clothing are slimming. This study seeks to discover the relationship between clothing style and body image.

RQ 2: Are viewers more body image conscious after watching MTV's feature show "The Grind?"

Thinness on television is apparent and television viewers, especially children, tend to accept what appears on television as real (Down & Harrison 1985, Perdue & Silvertstein 1985). Gould (1987) discovered that females scored high in relation to public-self-consciousness and anxiety when observing gender differences in advertising response and self-consciousness variables. Silverstein & Perdue (1985) found that females on television were thinner than the viewer, constituting a subtle social pressure toward slimming. The second research question explores to what extent viewers become more body conscious after watching "The Grind."

RQ 3: How do viewers perceive and interpret "The Grind?"

- a. To what extent did the viewers like "The Grind?"**
- b. Did the show motivate viewers to participate in activities?**
- c. To what extent did viewers feel the show represents teenagers?**
- d. Why do viewers watch "The Grind?"**

RQ 4: What messages do viewers attribute to the Grind about: music, young people, physical appearance, clothing, dance, and ethnicity?

Television viewers tend to accept what appears on television as real. Few studies address viewers' perceptions of television shows. The majority of the literature focuses on videos in relation to sexuality and violence. No study has focused on the feature show "The Grind" or similar shows. This study explores teenagers' opinions on MTV's feature show "The Grind."

CHAPTER THREE

Method

This study is divided into two parts, both researching MTV's feature show "The Grind." MTV's half-hour show displays young adults dancing to the latest music videos, as well as featuring artists performing and showing some videos. The episodes of "The Grind" used in this research were broadcast and recorded on July 17, 1995 and January 5, 1996. "The Grind" was filmed throughout the summer on various beaches on the west and east coast and then in a New York studio the rest of the year. The July episode of MTV's "Beach House-The Grind" was filmed on location at a beach front hotel swimming pool in Miami, Florida. "The Grind" studio in New York was the site of the January episode. The research was conducted in two parts; both at a western state high school. One section used seven volunteers to code female body images, clothing style, and ethnicity on both episodes of "The Grind." The second part of the research invited a high school sociology class to watch one episode of "The Grind" and respond to a pre and post show questionnaire.

Study 1

Coders

Study one utilized seven student coders to evaluate female body images on "The Grind." The seven volunteers for the coding section were members of a school activity program or the general student body from a western state high school. Five coders were male and two were female.

Two coders were also members of the sociology class who participated in study two. The volunteers were not limited by gender or race. The students completed a demographic questionnaire that asked their gender, race, age, and number of hours a week they watch MTV. The questionnaire also asked open ended questions about "Why do students watch The Grind?" The questionnaire noted that there were no right or wrong answers to coding the female body images (see Appendix A).

Five males and two females volunteered for the study. Both females were Caucasian and ages 15 and 16. One male was 18 years old and Hispanic, one was 17 and Black, one was 17 and Pacific Islander, and two were 17 and Caucasian. Parent/guardian and participant approval were required and the students could withdraw from the research at any time without penalty. The project was approved by the high school principal.

Research Instrument

Coders filled out a form designed to assess body size, body size compatibility, clothing style, clothing style compatibility, and ethnicity. The coders independently scored body shape using the adult female figure drawing by E. Collins (1991), which was an adaptation of a body image scale originally developed by Stunkard, Sorenson, and Schulsinger (1983) (see Appendix B). The instrument provided seven female figures to illustrate body weight ranging from very thin (1) to obese (7). The Stunkard, Sorenson, and Schulsinger body image scale is the most widely used scale in body image research, but the Collins' illustrations were drawn in more detail, providing a more descriptive instrument.

After selecting the body image that was closest to the image on the screen, the coders rated compatibility. A score of one referred to the image not corresponding very well to the E. Collins' image selected. A score of five referred to the image looking exactly like the image selected on the E. Collins' scale. This was coded to help determine if females on MTV's feature show "The Grind," were shaped like average females. The compatibility was also developed to help assess the ethnic sensitivity of the body image scale.

The female images were also scored by clothing style on a nine point scale developed by the researcher, ranging from minimal clothing such as a two piece swimsuit (1) to a full, long sleeve pant suit (9) (see Appendix B). An eleven item scale was originally developed and then modified after a pilot test to nine clothing styles one might see among teenagers. Clothing compatibility was also assessed. A score of one indicated that the screen image selected was not very close to the clothing scale image. A score of five referred to the clothing style looking exactly like the image selected on the clothing scale.

Ethnic background was also assessed. The volunteers coded whether the image was Black, Hispanic, White or another ethnic group. Asian Americans, Native Americans and other ethnic groups were not given a specific category due to the small percentage of representation on American music television. The coders were also provided with a comments section. Writing comments was optional.

Pilot Test and Training

Two student volunteers, not involved in the final study, volunteered to code images after school two weeks prior to the study.

The volunteers were not limited by gender or race and were from the same western state high school. The two students were handed directions and coding forms, and then the directions were read by the researcher. The coders watched an episode of "The Grind" that was not used in the final study. The facilitator stopped the coding after fifty images were coded. The coders were asked questions about clarity of the directions, usability of the forms, and the two scales that were employed.

The pilot test coders were shown the nine point body image scale developed by Stunkard, Sorenson, and Schulsinger (1983) after using the adaptation by E. Collins (1991). The coders recommended using the E. Collins' scale, because it was more descriptive for this study. The images in the Collins study were pilot tested and drawn in accordance to the normative weight gain for Caucasian females. The coders were also shown an eleven point clothing style scale and recommended that the business suit and evening gown be included in the "other" category, resulting in a nine point scale.

Procedure

The students met from 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. on two consecutive Wednesdays in January to observe the female body images, clothing style, and ethnicity on "The Grind." The coders sat in chairs, behind a desk in a classroom with the television at the front of the room. The guidelines were reviewed before both sessions of coding and dinner was provided both days.

The volunteer coders watched "The Grind" as a group. Any member could raise a hand when he or she saw a recordable image. The video was then paused and the group determined if the image was recordable,

following the guideline that 75 percent of the body needed to be visible to assess body shape. Female images with male images, or in the background could be coded, as long as the coders agreed the image was recordable. Female images wearing baggy clothing were also assessed, even though specific shape was more difficult to define. Females on a dance floor, swimming, in a video, as a V.J. (Video Jock), or performing could be evaluated.

Study 2

Subjects

The second part of the research showed an episode of “The Grind” to members of a western high school sociology class. Of the twenty three student viewers, 11 were male and 12 were female. Their ages ranged from age 15 to 18. Seventeen students were Caucasian, one was Black, three were Hispanic, one was Asian, and one was Native American. The students were volunteers and remained anonymous as participants. An alternative lesson plan was provided for students choosing to not participate in the research. However, all students received parent approval and chose to participate. The study was also approved by the principal.

Research Instrument

Prior to watching the show, the students completed a demographic questionnaire that asked their gender, race, age, and number of hours a week they watch MTV (see Appendix C). The students completed a questionnaire that asked how they currently feel and what they currently would like to be doing. The mood questions were rated on a 7-point

Likert scale using opposite adjectives; such as sad and happy. The students had thirteen options to indicate what they felt like doing; such as "working out" or "going on a date" (see Appendix C). The assessment of mood was included to conceal that this was fundamentally a study researching body image. The mood questions allowed the students to see themselves as viewers and respond to viewer behavior, not while guessing the research intentions.

After watching the episode of "The Grind," the students then completed a second questionnaire that asked to same questions as the pre-questionnaire, plus additional questions. The students were asked to what degree they liked the music, locations, dancers, V.J.s, video selections, and clothing style. These items used a 7-point bipolar Likert scale ranging from Strong Dislike = 1 to Strongly Like = 7. The students were asked how well they thought "The Grind" represented the U.S. young people, Blacks, and Hispanics on a Likert Scale ranging from Very Poor = 1 to Extremely Well = 7. The questionnaire also contained open-ended questions about what messages the students felt "The Grind" sends about music, young people, physical appearance, clothing, dance, and ethnicity.

Procedure

The study was conducted on a Wednesday morning, during a third period Sociology class. The twenty three students turned in their parent approval forms and completed the pre-show questionnaire at the beginning of the class period. The students then watched the beach episode of "The Grind." The episode was randomly selected by the flip of a coin. After the show ended, the students completed the post-show

questionnaire. The students were allowed until the end of the class period to completed the questionnaire, and all students finished.

Data Analytic Procedures

Answers to most questions were analyzed quantitatively, using SPSS/PC software. Measures of central tendency and correlations were determined.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

This research examines what MTV's feature show "The Grind" communicates to teenagers about female body image. In addressing this issue, two studies were conducted. One involved seven volunteer high school students who coded female body images on two episodes of "The Grind." The second study asked a high school Sociology class to fill out a pretest questionnaire, watch an episode of "The Grind," and complete a multi-method post-show survey questionnaire (see Appendix C). Following the data collection procedures, various statistical analyses were conducted. The statistical procedures were run using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS/PC) program.

The discussion of results will be organized according to the two hypotheses and four research questions outlined at the end of chapter two.

H 1: Female body images recorded on MTV's feature show "The Grind" are thinner than the perceived average female.

In 1985 a study was published that examined the issue of ideal body image. Fallon & Rozin showed nine female body image drawings to 227 female and 248 male college students, and asked them to indicate what body image they considered ideal, what body image was attractive to the opposite sex, and their current body shape. Using a nine point scale similar to that employed in this study, Fallon & Rozin discovered that females ideal body image was close to 2.8. Furthermore, the female subjects rated a 2.9 as being most attractive to the opposite sex, while male participants actually preferred a female image around 3.2. But the

most important rating in Fallon and Rozin's study is 3.6, the rating that women college students assigned to their perceived body image. Fallon and Rozin's work offers a point of comparison for the body image ratings obtained in this investigation.

This study of female body images on "The Grind" used measures of central tendency to determine mean body image scale scores for the beach and studio episodes of "The Grind." The combined mean body image score for both episodes was 3.15. The mean values ($x = 3.15$) are less than the value for thinness that females perceive as average or their current body shape (3.6 in Fallon & Rozin, 1985). The female coders viewed the female images as being thinner than the male coders (female $x = 3.06$, male $x = 3.18$). In addition, the mean body image for the beach episode ($x = 3.05$) was thinner than the studio episode ($x = 3.26$). Table 4.1 reflects these results. No female image was selected as a number seven (very heavy), of the 2,367 cases coded. Very thin female images (score of 1 or 2) were more apparent in the beach episode than in the studio episode. Table 4.2 presents these results.

Mean values were calculated for the compatibility of the body image scale to the actual images coded. This was conducted to determine if the females viewed on "The Grind" were shaped similarly to the female figure drawings by E. Collins (1991) that were an adaptation of the body images used in the Fallon & Rozin study. Furthermore, this analysis helped determine if compatibility changes when a female is seen as thin or heavy. Images viewed on "The Grind" were reasonably compatible, but not fully compatible to the images on the coding sheet, regardless of size. The mean compatibility value ranged from 3.27 to 3.56. The lowest mean compatibility value was from the body image

Table 4.1 Measures of Central Tendency for Body Image Scale Score and Location

Location & Gender of coders	Mean (\bar{x})	Standard Deviation	Variance	Total # of Cases
Beach	3.05	.81	.66	1212
Studio	3.26	.71	.49	1154
Total Population	3.15	.76	.58	2367
Male	3.18	.72	.58	
Female	3.06	.74	.54	

Table 4.2 Body Image Scale and Location by Percentage

Body Image		Beach (%)	Studio (%)	Total Population (%)
<i>Very Thin</i>	1	1.1	.0	1.1
	2	9.5	4.3	43.8
	3	29.2	30.0	59.4
	4	9.0	11.7	20.7
	5	2.2	2.4	4.6
	6	.3	.1	.4
<i>Very Heavy</i> 7		.0	.0	.0

score of five 3.27 and the highest mean compatibility score was from the body image score of four 3.56.

Overall, the body image data confirm the hypothesis that females viewed on MTV's feature show "The Grind" are thinner than the average perceived female. The images viewed on MTV's feature show "The Grind" were thinner than the average perceived female, and were similar to what females desired to look like.

Support for this hypothesis must be viewed as tentative, though, for a number of reasons. First, Fallon and Rozin's perceived female body image average of 3.6 was on a nine point scale while this study uses a seven point scale. Even though the Fallon and Rozin's first seven images look very similar to the seven images in the Collin's study, they are not identical. Second, Fallon and Rozin's perceived female body image average was generated by female college students responding to a questionnaire. The 3.15 perceived body image average on MTV's "The Grind," was generated by female and male coders evaluating televised female body images. Lastly, given the differences in purpose and methodology of this investigation and Fallon and Rozin's study, it was not feasible to discover if there was a significant difference between the two results.

H 2: Caucasian body images recorded on MTV's feature show "The Grind" will be thinner than African American and Hispanic Body Images.

Measures of central tendency were calculated for body image and ethnicity. Caucasian (White) mean body image was 3.03, where as African American (Black) and Hispanics mean scores were both 3.33. Ethnicity labeled "other," including such groups as Asians and Native

Americans, had a mean score of 3.0, thinner than the other ethnic backgrounds. Table 4.3 presents these results.

Frequency of body image scale scores according to ethnicity was determined. The most common body image value was a three, with a score of one being very thin and a score of seven being very heavy. Figure number three represented 34.3%, 19.1%, and 2.2% of White, Black, and Hispanic female body images respectively. When separating the scores by percentage by ethnic group for thin and heavy body images, differences become apparent. The combined score of the thin recording of a one or two composed 20% of White scores, 8% of Black, and 4% of Hispanic scores. This shows that a larger percentage of Whites were perceived to be thinner than Blacks or Hispanics for their own ethnic group. When observing the results of a combined score of four, five, and six the percentages change (no image was scored as a seven). The combined score for whites was 21.8%, for Blacks 36%, and for Hispanics 31%. This shows that Black and Hispanic body images were perceived to be heavier than that of Whites. Table 4.4 reflects these results.

The results of these statistical analyses confirm the hypothesis that Caucasian body images recorded on MTV's feature show "The Grind" are thinner than African American and Hispanic body images.

RQ 1: Is there a relationship between clothing style and body image?

Measure of central tendency were calculated for clothing style and body image. The two categories with mean score variations were the "Swim Suit" and the "Hip Hop." The swim suit's mean body image score was 2.81, which is lower than the 3.15 average. On the other side, "Hip Hop's" mean score was a 3.79, higher than the norm. The other eight

Table 4.3 Measures of Central Tendency for Body Image Scale and Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Total # of Cases
White	3.03	.76	.57	1381
Black	3.33	.74	.55	763
Hispanic	3.33	.73	.53	164
Other	3.0	.58	.34	36
No Response	3.38	.86	.75	21
Total Population	3.15	.76	.58	2367

Table 4.4 Body Image Scale and Ethnicity by Percentage

Body Image	White (%)	% by Ethnic group	Black (%)	% by Ethnic group	Hispanic (%)	% by Ethnic group
<i>Very Thin</i>						
1	.8	1	.2	1	.0	0
2	10.9	19	2.2	7	.3	4
3	34.3	59	19.1	59	4.4	65
4	10.3	18	8.4	26	1.6	24
5	1.8	3	2.2	7	.5	7
6	.2	.8	.1	3	.0	0
<i>Very Heavy</i>						
7	.0	0	.0	0	.0	0
Total Population	58.3		32.2		6.8	

categories ranged from a 3.13 (Cat Suit) to a 3.35 (T-Shirt and Shorts). Table 4.5 includes these results. This suggests that there is a relationship with clothing style and body image. Female images wearing a swim suit, which is very revealing, tended to be viewed as thinner. Female images wearing the “Hip Hop” look, which is baggy and oversized, tended to be viewed as heavier.

Clothing style was also separated by percentage by ethnicity. Eighteen percent of Whites wore a swim suit where as 12% of Blacks and 7% of Hispanics wore a swim suit. More Blacks and Hispanics wore a mini-dress than Whites. Only 9% of Whites wore a mini-dress while 17% of Blacks and 18% of Hispanics wore a mini-dress. More Blacks wore a t-shirt and shorts and “Hip Hop” than either Whites or Hispanics. Table 4.6 offers these results, indicating that there are some clothing styles worn more frequently by different ethnic groups.

RQ 2: Are viewers more body image conscious after watching MTV's feature show “The Grind?”

Mean values were calculated by gender for body image consciousness factors (e.g., skinny/fat) that were inbedded in a set of “how you feel” items. Subjects responded to these items before and after viewing an episode of “The Grind.” To consider the change in body image consciousness, students were asked if they felt skinny (1) or fat (7). Before watching the show, males felt neither skinny nor fat with a score of 3.45. After watching the episode, males felt somewhat fatter with a score of 3.82. Females felt more toward the heavy side before and after the show (score of $x=5.08$ and $x=4.92$), but actually felt slightly thinner after the show. Feeling flabby or in shape was also assessed. Males felt fairly in shape before the show ($x=5.18$) and felt less in shape after

Table 4.5 Measures of Central Tendency for Body Image and Clothing Style.

Clothing Style	Mean	Standard Deviation	Total # of Cases
Swim Suit	2.81	.89	353
Half-top and Hot Pants	3.13	.75	735
Mini Dress	3.22	.68	307
T-shirt and Shorts	3.35	.74	170
Half-top and Baggy Jeans	3.16	.69	476
Cat Suit	3.13	.67	67
Hip Hop	3.79	.80	100
Long Shirt, Stretch Pants	3.29	.66	28
Suit, Blazer, Slacks	3.21	.53	38
Other	3.17	.61	96
Total Population	3.15	.77	2370

Table 4.6 Clothing Style and Ethnicity by Percentage.

Clothing Style	White (%)	% by Ethnic group	Black (%)	% by Ethnic group	Hispanic (%)	% by Ethnic group
Swim Suit	10.3	18	3.9	12	.5	7
Half-top and Hot Pants	19.2	33	9.0	28	2.2	33
Mini Dress	5.4	9	5.6	17	1.2	18
T-shirt and Shorts	3.2	5	3.1	10	.5	7
Half-top and Baggy Jeans	12.8	22	5.2	16	1.7	25
Cat Suit	1.1	2	1.5	5	.2	3
Hip Hop	1.6	3	2.2	7	.2	3
Long Shirt, Stretch Pants	.5	.001	.5	2	.1	1
Suit, Blazer, Slacks	.7	.001	.7	2	.1	1
Other	3.5	6	.5	2	.0	0

watching “The Grind” ($x=4.81$). Females also felt flabbier after watching the episode. Females before the show scored a 4.16 and after the show scored a 3.75.

Self consciousness and being self assured were scored as well as homely and attractive to aid in the understanding of whether “The Grind” made students feel more body image conscious after watching the show. Males felt slightly attractive and the scores did not change after watching “The Grind.” Females felt slightly attractive ($x=4.08$) before the show, and felt less attractive after the show ($x=3.58$). Both males and females felt more self conscious after watching “The Grind.” Males changed from a score of 5.18 to 4.81 and females changed from a 4.33 to a 3.5. Table 4.7 displays these results.

Overall, females felt more body image self-conscious than males before watching “The Grind” and after. However, in relation to the desire to lose weight, females felt less desire after watching the show than before. The show did seem to make students slightly more self conscious. Even though there was some modest change, given the closeness of mean scores and small sample size, statistical significance tests were not conducted.

RQ 3: How do viewers perceive and interpret “The Grind?”

a. To what extent did viewers like “The Grind?”

Measures of central tendency were calculated by gender to discover how well the students liked the show. A score of one reflected that the students strongly disliked the show, and a score of seven reflected that the students strongly liked the show. Females enjoyed the music more than males, but both groups were close to neutral in opinion. Females’

Table 4.7 Measures of Central Tendency for “How You Feel” by Gender for Before (Pre-show) and After (Post-show).

How You Feel	Male		Female		Total	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Sad/Happy	4.63	4.82	5.25	4.66	4.96	4.74
Passive/ Aggressive	4.00	3.36	3.58	3.66	3.78	3.52
Skinny/Fat	3.45	3.82	5.08	4.92	4.30	4.39
Homely/ Attractive	4.73	4.73	4.08	3.58	4.39	4.12
Sleepy/ Awake	3.64	3.00	4.17	4.25	3.91	3.65
Self Conscious/ Self Assured	5.18	4.81	4.33	3.5	4.74	4.13
Flabby/ In Shape	5.27	4.80	4.16	3.75	4.70	4.26

mean score was a 4.00 where as the males' mean score was 3.18. Both males and females mildly liked the location of the show (Miami Beach, Florida) with a combined mean score of 4.13.

Males liked the dancing on "The Grind" with a mean score of 4.55 and females were more neutral ($x=3.75$). The students overall felt neutral to slightly negative about the V.J.s (Video Jocks) with a mean score of 3.57. The students also felt neutral to slightly negative about the videos ($x=3.74$), but the females liked the videos more than the males ($x=3.36$ to $x=4.08$). Overall, the students neither strongly liked or disliked "The Grind."

b. Did the show motivate viewers to do activities?

Activities were separated by gender by percentage to assess whether "The Grind" motivated students to do any activities. Thirteen activities were listed that students could respond to. Male opinions changed in six categories from the pre-show questionnaire to the post-show questionnaire. Females opinions changed in nine categories, displaying that female were more influenced by the show than males. Table 4.8 presents the results of all 13 items. This discussion presents the changes worth noting that relate to body image.

One hundred percent of males did not want to lose weight and their opinion did not change after watching "The Grind." Fifty eight percent of females wanted to lose weight before the show and one female who wanted to lose weight before the show did not want to after watching the episode. In relation to working out, both groups changed some with 9.1% of males wanting to that did not before, and 9.1% not wanting to that did before. One female who wanted to workout before

Table 4.8 Change in Activity Interest by Gender by Percentage.

Activity	Male				Female			
	No	Change Yes	No to Yes	Yes to No	No	Change Yes	No to Yes	Yes to No
Dance	90.9	9.1	0	0	50.0	33.3	8.3	8.3
Sport	27.3	72.7	0	0	25.0	50.0	25.0	0
Lose Weight	100.0	0	0	0	25.0	58.3	0	16.7
Dance Lessons	100.0	0	0	0	58.3	16.7	16.7	8.3
Shop	63.6	18.2	0	18.2	33.3	58.3	8.3	0
Sing	90.9	9.1	0	0	66.7	25.0	0	8.3
Date	54.5	45.5	0	0	41.7	58.3	0	0
Intimate	45.5	27.3	27.3	0	58.3	41.7	0	0
Workout	45.5	36.4	9.1	9.1	25.0	58.3	0	16.7
Vacation	27.3	72.7	0	0	16.7	75.0	0	8.3
Hair Cut	63.6	18.2	9.1	9.1	83.3	16.7	0	0
Other	45.5	27.3	18.2	9.1	66.7	0	25.5	8.3
Nothing	63.6	9.1	27.3	0	83.3	16.7	0	0

the episode, did not want to after. “The Grind” did not motivate female viewers to want to lose weight or exercise. Table 4.8 presents these results.

c. To what extent did viewers feel the show represents teenagers?

Measures of central tendency were calculated for representation by gender to assess the students’ opinion on how MTV’s feature show “The Grind” represented the United States. A score of one referred to the group being represented poorly and a score of seven referred to the group being represented very well. Both males and females did not think the show exemplified the U.S. population very well ($x=3.04$). However, this was not a strong opinion. Furthermore, the students did not feel that Blacks were represented well ($x=3.39$). However, females thought Blacks were portrayed ($x=3.58$) better than males thought they were ($x=3.1$). Both groups thought Hispanics were poorly presented on “The Grind” with a mean score of 2.26. Overall, students mildly did not feel the show represented U.S. teenagers well.

d. Why do viewers watch “The Grind?”

The question “Why do you think teenagers watch The Grind?” was asked as an open ended question on the coder and student information questionnaires (see Appendix A). The question was asked to learn about the student’s perception of the show “The Grind.” The responses were separated into six general categories; sexual content, dance moves, clothing style, music, no opinion, and negative response (see Figure 4.1). Ten responses, four male and six female, stated that students watch “The Grind” for the dance moves and to watch people dance. Nine responses, five male and four female, were sexual in content such as “To see the

Figure 4.1 **RQ 3 d: Why do you think teenagers watch "The Grind?"**

Male and Female Responses	# of Responses	Gender		Examples of Responses
		M	F	
Sexual Content	9	5	4	The bodies; To see the "chicks;" To just check out the cute guys/girls that are sexy; To see hot people.
Dance Moves	10	4	6	To watch new ways of dancing; To see how other people dance and have fun; To watch people dance.
Clothing Style	3	1	2	To see the difference fashions and decide on clothing styles that they like; See new styles of clothing; For the clothes.
Music	6	2	4	To listen to music; They like the music; Hear the music.
Neutral or no opinion	7	4	3	I don't know: No good reason, honestly; To watch the people of the show.
Negative	2	1	1	No, well no-one I associate with does; Because most of the kids are little trendys who think it cool, but I think it sucks and its stupid.

chicks” or “To just check out the cute guys/girls that are sexy.” The third largest category had no opinion with seven students responding with answers such as “I dont’ know” and “No good reason, honestly.”

Six students, four female and two male, thought teenagers watched “The Grind” for the music and three thought it was to see the clothing styles. One male and one female student responded to the questions negatively. One student stated that teenagers watch “The Grind” “Because most of the kids are little trendys who think it cool, but I think it sucks and its stupid.” The gender of the coder and student appeared to not be a factor in the responses to the question “Why do you thing teenagers watch “The Grind.”

RQ 4: What messages do viewers attribute to “The Grind” about: music, young people, physical appearance, clothing, dance, and ethnicity?

The sociology class responded to six open-ended questions on the post show questionnaire (see Appendix C). The responses to the questions were separated into general categories by the researcher. Students were not limited to one response per question, so some results reflect multiple responses.

Music

The student responses in relation to music fell into four general categories; “hip hop and rap,” “dance,” “its not good,” and “they play popular music.” Eight students, four male and four female, responded that “The Grind’s” music sends the message that hip hop and rap are good, better liked, and frequently listened to. Three students stated that the message related to dance and that the music should be danced to. Both negative responses came from male students stating that popular

music “stinks.” Lastly, four females and two males stated that the message is about playing popular music (see Figure 4.2).

Young People

Four trends surfaced about the message “The Grind” sends regarding young people, three of which related to appearance. Nine student responses focused on young people being in really good shape, six of which came from male students and three from female students. Three of the four responses relating to young people being thin were from females. The three students who responded to “The Grind’s” message about young people needing to “look a certain way” came from females. Six students, four female and two male, thought the message was that young people “like to party” (see Figure 4.2). Overall, females responded to this question with more detail than the male students.

Physical Appearance

The responses focused on physical appearance related to being in good shape and being thin. Females commented more frequently and in more detail than males did in this category. Thirteen students, six male and seven female, remarked that being in shape was important, while eight students stated that people should be thin. Of these eight, six were female and two were male, indicating that female viewers were more aware of thinness than males. Seven students, four female and three male, felt the message sent about physical appearance was that people needed to be attractive. Two female students thought people should be “buff;” “guys need to have muscles, girls need to be slim and fully figured.” Three students, two male and one female, wrote that physical

RQ 4: What message does “The Grind” send about:

Figure 4.2 Music

Male and Female Responses

	# of Response	Gender		Examples of Responses
		M	F	
Hip Hop and Rap	8	4	4	Rap's good or something, I guess; That pop and hip hop are better liked; That everyone listens to hip hop/rap.
Dance	3	1	2	That you can dance to it; It should be danced to.
Its not good (bad)	2	2	0	That most kids want to listen to a bunch of crappy music concentrated on sex; That “popular music” really stinks.
They play popular music	6	2	4	That the stuff they play is “cool” music; They play all the popular groups and singers to attract attention.

Young People

Like to party	6	2	4	They like to party; That they are pretty wild & crazy; All we want to do is have fun.
In good physical shape	9	6	3	They are all in good shape and active, healthy; Most are in really good shape; strong (in shape) stomach.
Thin	4	1	3	All young people are thin; That we need to be slim; Very skinny.
Looking a certain way is important	3	0	3	All young people look, dance, and dress the same, no variety; That young people feel that its important to look and dress a certain way.

appearance did not matter and the show portrayed a lot of good and bad appearance (see Figure 4.3).

Clothing

The two main responses developed from the question "what messages does 'The Grind' send about clothing" were "less is better" and "clothes need to be cool." Eighteen students, ten female and eight male, responded that less is better, but this could be due to the nature of the episode shown. The setting was at a resort swimming pool next to the beach in Miami Beach, Florida. However, the responses still focused on "showing lots of skin." Six students, three male and three female, responded that the clothes need to be cool and in style. "They set the standards" in how teenagers should look (see figure 4.3).

Dance

Student responses to the dancing were mixed. An equal number of male and female students thought that the dancing had to be sexual. However, more females (4 to 2) thought the dancing was "too much the same" and lacked creativity, while more males thought there were different styles (3 to 0). Only females thought that dancing like that exhibited on the show would make you cool or popular. Both students who thought the dancing was poor were male (see Figure 4.4).

Ethnicity

Three trends emerged about what message "The Grind" sends about ethnicity. Eight students, five male and three female, thought it showed diversity while nine students thought that it showed we are not racially mixed. More females than males (6 to 3) thought the show lacked ethnic

RQ 4: What message does "The Grind" send about:

Figure 4.3 Physical Appearance

Male and Female

Responses	# of Responses	Gender		Examples of Responses
		M	F	
In Shape	13	6	7	You need to be fit & look good; You need to be in shape; The more toned you are the healthier you look.
Attractive	7	3	4	It's very important & show presents idealized version; You need to be attractive to be cool; The better you look, the more respect you are going to receive.
Thin	8	2	6	That a thin dark well built body is best; Being skinnier is prettier; People should be skinny.
Buff	2	0	2	You gotta be tan tall & buff; Guys need to have muscles, girls need to be slim and fully figured.
Does not matter	3	2	1	Doesn't really matter; That was mixed, a lot of good, and bad appearance.
Clothing				
Less is better	18	8	10	Don't wear any; "Less is more;" Modesty doesn't matter; All girls must wear tight and/or small clothing, shows lots of skin. Men can't wear shirts, if they do, must be small.
Needs to be cool	6	3	3	Has to be "cool" and "in style;" They set the standards; To look cool we should wear that.

RQ 4: What message does "The Grind" send about:

Figure 4.4 Dance

<u>Male or Female Responses</u>	# of Responses	<u>Gender</u>		<u>Examples of Responses</u>
		<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	
Should be sexual	8	4	4	Dance sexy; Gotta get close; That dance is for erotic pleasure; Is definitely "provocative" to post generations, but its "cool" to our generation.
Many different styles	3	3	0	Different moves; Different styles dancing; Anything goes.
Too much the same	6	2	4	Only one style; All dance similar, no one is creative; There is one like of way to dance, like they were showing.
Popularity	3	0	3	We should all dance to feel happy, and cool; If you dance like what was shown you'll be popular.
Not good (bad)	2	2	0	Dancing like that sucks; They don't know how to dance.
Ethnicity				
We are diverse	8	5	3	It shows many different ethnic groups; Pretty equal; It doesn't matter where you're from.
We are not racially mixed	9	3	6	Same race couples (the world isn't really this cut & dry, black/white); It seemed to show only white people & African Americans; They were about the same number of white and black people, not really any other race; Most "couples" were not racially mixed.
Does not say much	5	3	2	Doesn't say much; I don't know; Not much.

diversity. Five students felt it did not say much about ethnicity. Two students observed that there were a number of different ethnic groups, but that most “couples” were not racially mixed (see Figure 4.4).

This study presented study responses to two hypothesis and four research questions. The final chapter will report the key findings of this investigation, limitations of the study, implications for future research, and reflections of the author.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary

The purpose of this investigation was to examine the relationship between body image and MTV's feature show "The Grind." A review of pertinent literature in the fields of body image and music television revealed a need to consider the relationship between television targeting teenagers and body image messages. The concluding chapter will be organized in five parts; key findings, limitations, implications of future research, reflections of the author, and application for use.

Key Findings

Chapter four has presented the results of the two studies concerning female body images on MTV's "The Grind." From these results, the following conclusions can be drawn.

- The dominant female image portrayed on "The Grind" emphasizes thinness.

Study one reveals that MTV's feature show "The Grind" displays females who have a body image closer to what is considered ideal by most females than to what women perceive as average. This investigation on "The Grind" is consistent with Perdue and Silverstein's (1985) study on weights and ages of men and women on television. Perdue and Silverstein discovered that females on television were not only younger and thinner than men on popular television, they were thinner than the viewer, constituting a subtle social pressure toward slimming.

Previous research using the body image scale originally developed by Stunkard, Sorenson, and Schulsinger (1983), or the adapted scale

developed Collins (1991) have studied the issue of body image in females. Fallon and Rozin (1985), Cohn and Alder (1992), and Collins (1991) all found that females desired to be thinner than the perceived average female. MTV's feature show "The Grind" emphasizes a view of women as thinner than the perceived average.

The desire to be thin for females is apparent, and MTV's feature show "The Grind" does not help counter the physical attractiveness stereotype. The open-ended responses in study two were more revealing about the emphasis of thinness and body image on "The Grind" than the statistical data. The message the show communicates to teenagers is that you must be in good shape and thin. Females viewed thinness as the message "The Grind" sends about physical attractiveness three to one over the males. One female even said that the message presented is that people should be very skinny.

We cannot say that television causes social problems like eating disorders and drug use. However, MTV does not help to change the image of women on television as thinner than the average female. MTV's feature show "The Grind" is staged as a group of average people getting together and dancing. Yet the images shown are closer to the ideal body shape, rather than the norm.

- Students' body image consciousness changed slightly after watching "The Grind."

Watching "The Grind" did make students slightly more body image conscious. Females felt less attractive, less self-assured, and less in shape than the males before and after watching the episode. Not one male desired to lose weight before or after the show. Fifty-eight percent of females desired to lose weight before the show, and one female

changed her mind to not wanting to lose weight after the show. Overall, this research revealed that males were significantly more satisfied with their bodies and females were more dissatisfied, regardless of watching "The Grind." The findings in study two are similar to that of Paxton, et al. (1991) on body satisfaction.

Stockbridge (1990) and Mazur (1986) also found that women are less satisfied with their body shape than men. This dissatisfaction with body shape can have significant health consequences. Eleven million women in the United States suffer from eating disorders; ten time more than the number of males (Dunn, 1986). The findings of study two is consistent with other research indicating that females are more body image conscious than men.

The females in study two changed their responses for "What do you feel like doing?" after watching "The Grind" more than the males. This may suggest that females are influenced more by television programming and social pressures than males. This is similar to Gould's (1987) study on gender differences in advertising response and self-consciousness variables. He found that females scored high in relation to advertising recall, favorite commercials, public-self-consciousness, and anxiety.

Most people enjoy and expect to see beautiful people on television, whether in soap operas, anchoring the news, sitcoms, cartoons, or Music Television. In addition, most people are aware that the images on television are enhanced by make-up, lighting, and camera angles. However, these images as well as the females on "The Grind" do not contribute to the reduction of misconceptions about women and body image.

- The body image scale developed by E. Collins is somewhat compatible but not a perfect fit with the images viewed on “The Grind.”

The coders in study one recorded the 2,367 body images according to their compatibility with the figures in the body image scale. They determined that the body images presented on “the Grind” were somewhat compatible, but not a perfect fit. This is a unique component to this study. The intent was to try and discover if the body image scale figure drawing looked liked the average female. The drawings developed by Stunkard, Sorenson, and Schulsinger and adapted by E. Collins ranged from very thin to very obese. However, females vary according to hip and breast size, whether being thin or heavy. This could be due to ethnicity, breast augmentation, physical activity level, height, and genetics.

In study one, the coders did not find the scale as a perfect fit, or completely out of proportion. With the score of five being a perfect fit and one being out of proportion, the mean compatibility for all females ranged from 3.27 to 3.56 with body image figure four being the most compatible and body image figure five being the least compatible. Separating body image compatibility by ethnicity was still very similar with Whites receiving a mean score of 3.33, Blacks 3.32, and Hispanics 3.20. This shows that overall, the scale is equally somewhat compatible for body size variation and ethnic diversity.

- Viewers differentiate Black, Hispanic, and White body images.

Study one revealed that Black and Hispanic women appeared to coders as slightly heavier than White women. This is consistent with research relating to ethnicity and body image satisfaction. Rosen (1993) found African Americans’ ideal shape is larger than the White female’s

ideal shape. This study reinforces the perceived ideal of Blacks and Hispanics being somewhat heavier than Whites. However the mean score of 3.33 for the Blacks and Hispanics can still be viewed as a thin body shape.

Study one's findings in relation to ethnicity and body image reinforce the acceptance of Blacks and Hispanics to be heavier than White females. Body images of White females received the two thinnest scores twice as often as Blacks and four times as often as Hispanics. Black youth are significantly less likely to consider themselves overweight than White and Hispanic students (JAMA, 1991). Ingrassia (1995) discovered that 90 percent of white junior-high and high-school girls expressed dissatisfaction with their weight, while 70 percent of black teens were satisfied with their bodies.

- Clothing style and body image are related.

Study one's findings that body image and clothing style are related is not surprising. The women viewed in swim suits were thinner than women viewed with more clothing. The mean body image score of 2.81 was quite different than the oversized "Hip Hop" look mean body image score of 3.79. This reinforces the notion that thinness is more desirable. If you are heavier, cover up.

Limitations of the Study

Some limitations, such as small sample size, have been noted earlier. While this study's results indicate that viewers perceive body image factors, some additional limitations to this research should be noted. The results of study one came from a single body-image rating scale. An additional body image scale displaying average weight

modifications for Blacks and Hispanics would have provided another comparison. Five coders were male and two coders were female.

Increasing the number of female coders would have provided a more even coder group. The study also assessed female images that were actively moving on the video scene, causing possible variations in scores.

In study two the sample group was small, and from one high school located in a suburban area of a western state. Increasing the sample group would have provided more data to run addition analysis, such as significance. The class was also shown only one episode of "The Grind." Viewing an episode in a studio setting or in another outdoor setting would have provided another comparison. The pre-show and post-show questionnaire could have asked more questions relating to body image. Questions inquiring about fitness training, eating behaviors, desired body image, and desired body image of the opposite gender would have aided in the understanding of body image consciousness.

Implications of Future Research

This study focused on female body image. Further research in the area of body image and Music Television could include male body image assessment. The pressure to be attractive and have a "perfect" body is still predominantly focused on the female, but the pressure for males has increased in recent years (Stockbridge, 1990, Mazur, 1986). It would be interesting to discover if males viewing on "The Grind" are thinner than the perceived average male. Female and male body images could also be evaluated on other MTV feature shows as well as music videos.

This study was conducted in a western state high school located in a suburban area. Research in rural and inner-city schools would aid in the understanding of the impact music television has on today's youth. MTV is also shown internationally, and further research in this area would help discover if youth from other countries view MTV feature shows similarly to that of youth in the United States.

Further research on television shows that target African Americans and other ethnic groups would be interesting. The dance show "Soul Train," could be studied to discover if the minority dancers correspond with the white version of thinness or if the images are more appropriate to the Black version of the desirable body image.

While this study has examined body image, it relates to a larger issue of the messages MTV and other music video programming send and the meanings viewers create. This project's open-ended questions certainly generated interesting answers.

Reflections of the Author

Female body image perception and satisfaction has been an interest of mine since early adolescence. As a trained health educator and a trained dancer, gymnast, and cheerleader, body shape and size has always been a focus of my life. I have always viewed myself as large at 5' 5" and 125 pounds. Through teaching high school, I grew even more interested in body image. I observed too many female students skipping meals, taking diet pills, and complaining about their body shape. I also observed male students desiring females with tiny legs and a big chest. The fake "Pamela Anderson Lee" (Baywatch star) look is often vocalized as ideal by male adolescents, as well as by females.

My interest in the topic of Music Television and body image stemmed from teaching a dance camp with Paula Abdul before she became famous. Paula is 5' 2" and will never be tall and skinny. She was blasted by the media for being "chunky" when in actuality she was in great athletic shape and average to thin in build. Just recently Paula submitted herself to an eating disorder's clinic, which doesn't surprise me. I hope that she and other artists can find healthy means to achieving the body shape appropriate for their build.

The battle of beauty and thinness for females is not going to go away in the near future. Actually, it will probably get worse with the popularity of breast augmentations, liposuctions, and chemical treatments. I hope that young females can separate the perfect image viewed in the media from what is reality. I ultimately hope that teachers, parents, and coaches make a pointed effort to build the self-esteem of all students, regardless of race, economic status, gender, or body size.

Application

This research may be useful to health educators, coaches, parents, and teenagers. Listed below are four possible activities and suggested readings that can be employed in the classroom or at home. Appendix D also has a list of warning signs and a guide for helping an individual with an eating disorder.

- **Television Targeting Activity**

When selecting a slogan and commercial image, producers think about what type of people will be purchasing their product. Producers gear the adds toward what would be appealing for that consumer. For

example, you have invented a new detergent called ZWAP that gets grease and mud out of any color. You decide to have female mud wrestlers wearing white for your television commercial. What is wrong with this advertisement? It would be eye catching to males, but who buys the detergent in most households? Even though gender roles are merging, most detergent purchasing comes from females. It would be more profitable to selected a different campaign that would appeal to females.

Activity

Tape various television commercials from different times of the day and from different cable networks. Have others guess the target audience and what time of day the commercial was played.

Commercial Played	(Match)	Time of Day
Teen spirit deodorant		8:00 p.m. Monday Night Football
Sugar Pops cereal		9:30 p.m. Seinfeld
Gerber baby formula		7:30 a.m. Saturday cartoons
Budweiser		4:00 p.m. MTV "The Grind"
Just one Calorie, Diet Pepsi		3:00 p.m. Days of Our Lives
Alaska Airlines		5:00 p.m. CBS News
Ford Taurus		7:00 p.m. Entertainment Tonight

Discussion

Advertising is geared toward a specific gender and age group. Who do the producers of these television shows perceive as their audience? What additional products would you see advertised during these shows? Do some of the commercials stereotype viewers? If so, how?

- Health Behavior and Television Activity

Activity

Watch at least one hour of television a day for one week and write in a journal relating to television programming and health behavior. Write what television show was watched, who the perceived target audience is, and why they are the perceived target audience. Then write down the health behavior the show is promoting and how they portrayed that behavior. For example, if you watched the show “The Grind,” the target audience is Caucasian and Black teenagers. The show is focused on music, partying, and dancing. Most of the dancers are in very good physical shape. The commercials included “Diet Pepsi” promoting a thin look, tropical suntan lotion promoting beauty and thinness, and “Mountain Dew” promoting extreme activities such as bungee jumping.

Discussion

After one week, discuss the dominant health issues that were emphasized on television. Topics such as diet, fitness, drug use and abuse, safety, pollution, sexuality, and mental health can be discussed.

- MTV and Messages Activity

Activity

Watch at least two feature shows on MTV and answer the following questions. Television shows such as “Singled Out,” “Beavis and Butthead,” “Real World,” “The Grind,” “My So Called Life,” and “MTV Jams” are all examples of feature shows aired on MTV.

How well does the show represent U.S. young people?

How well does the show represent African Americans?

How well does the show represent Hispanics?

How well does the show represent your friends?

Are the people on the show realistic?

What message does the show send about: music, young people, physical appearance, clothing, and ethnicity?

Did you enjoy the show? Why or why not?

Discussion

Discuss how MTV targets groups of people within the teenage market. What would make the show more realistic? What would increase viewer response? What themes are central to all the shows?

- Read and Respond Activity

Activity

Read the June 3, 1996 **People Weekly** article on desired thinness in women and the October, 1986 **American Health** article "Thinness Mania." Select two key issues addressed (or not addressed) in both articles and write a three page response paper. Key issues can include topic areas such as family influence, the modeling industry, pre-adolescent concerns, gender differences, plastic surgery, famous people with eating disorders, occupation/gender roles, over-exercising, and ethnic diversity.

Discussion

After the paper is complete, discuss the key issues that applied to both articles.

- Suggested Reading

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Appendices

Appendix A

CODER INFORMATION

Please respond to the following questions by circling the correct response.

CODER NUMBER 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

GENDER Male Female

AGE 13 14 15 16 17 18

ETHNIC BACKGROUND

Caucasian

African American

Hispanic

Asian American

American Indian/Native American

Other _____

How many hours a week do you watch MTV?

Never

0-2 hours a week

2-4 hours a week

4-6 hours a week

More than 6 hours a week

Have you ever watched the show "The Grind?"

Yes

No

Why do you think teenagers watch "The Grind?"

MTV and Female Body Images

Coder Instructions

Thank you for volunteering to participate in my research project. You are part of a study researching female body images on television that targets teenagers. Listed below are the guidelines to follow throughout the research.

1. There are no right or wrong answers to this study. It is important that you code your opinion.

2. Identifying a recordable image.

*Any coder can nominate a female body image to be coded.

*Raise a hand or shout to notify the researcher to pause the video recorded image.

*75 percent of the body image has to be visible to assess body shape.

*Female body images wearing bagging clothing, viewed with males, with other females or in the background can be recorded.

*Female images will be recorded whether the image is on the dance floor, a talent act, or in a video.

*The researcher will ask by a show of hands, what coders agree the image is recordable.

*A majority vote of four will constitute a recordable image. Any vote of three or less will NOT be recorded by any volunteers. If the image is agreed upon by four or five members, the individuals in disagreement will leave that image number blank, and the coders in agreement will record in the image.

3. Recording the female body image.

*Independently record the female shape using the seven point adult female figure drawings by E. Collins (1991). If the body image is between two numbers, select the number closest to the image.

3. Recording the female body image *cont.*

*Independently record the degree of compatibility of the body image to the E. Collins' scale. A score of "1" means the body shape is not very close to the visual image scored. A score of "5" means the body shape appears almost exactly like the Collins' image that was scored.

*Independently record the clothing style the female image is wearing using the ten point scale developed by the researcher. The number ten should be used when the image does not fit into any of the clothing styles presented.

*Independently record the degree of compatibility of the clothing to the clothing style scale. A score of "1" means the clothes are not very close to the visual image scored. A score of "5" means the clothes appear almost exactly like the clothing scale image that was scored.

*Independently record the ethnicity of the female image. The category White includes Caucasians and European Americans, Blacks include African Americans and Caribbean Islanders, and Hispanics include Latinos and Puerto Ricans. The other category is used for Native Americans, Asians, Middle Easterners, and other races. Please fill in the nationality if the 'other' category is selected.

4. Please feel free to make any comments in the 'comments' category. Comments are NOT required and are optional.

5. Thank you for participating in my study and please remember that there are no right or wrong answers to this research.

Sincerely,

Jill Layport

Jill Layport
13790 SW Rawhide CT
Beaverton, OR 97008

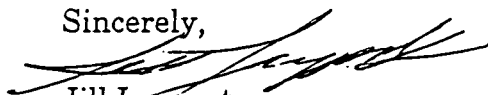
Dear Student volunteer,

You have expressed an interest in volunteering for a research project that is part of my master's thesis in Communication, Business, and Health. As a volunteer, you will spend four or five hours over two afternoons, recording television images from MTV's feature show "The Grind." Dinner will be provided both afternoons of the study.

This research has no foreseeable risks or discomforts to you. The coding results are **strictly confidential** and special precautions have been made to protect the confidentiality of your names and responses. You can refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss to benefits that you are otherwise entitled to. You will also receive a copy of the informed consent form. If you have any questions about the research, please contact me at (503) 579-7884. If I am not available when you call, please leave a message and I will call back.

Thank you for participating in my research project. I appreciate your time and effort.

Sincerely,



Jill Layport
Graduate Student
Interdisciplinary Studies
Communication, Business, and Health
Oregon State University

Participant Approval

_____		_____		Date _____	
Name		Signature			
Address _____					
Street _____					
City _____		State _____		Zip _____	

Jill Layport
13790 SW. Rawhide CT
Beaverton, OR 97008


Dear Parent(s)/Guardian,

Your child has expressed an interest in volunteering for a research project that is part of my master's thesis in Communication, Business, and Health. As a volunteer, your child would spend four or five hours over two afternoons, recording television images from MTV's feature show "The Grind." The research goal is to better understand the significance of female body images portrayed on television that targets teenagers.

This research has no foreseeable risks or discomforts to the recorder involved. The coding results are **strictly confidential** and special precautions have been established to protect the confidentiality of the coders' names and responses. You may withdraw your child from the study at anytime without penalty or loss of benefits to which your child is otherwise entitled. You will also receive a copy of the informed consent form. If you have any questions about the research, please contact me at (503) 579-7884. If I am not available when you call, please leave a message and I will call back.

Thank you for allowing your child to participate in my research project. I appreciate your cooperation.

Sincerely,

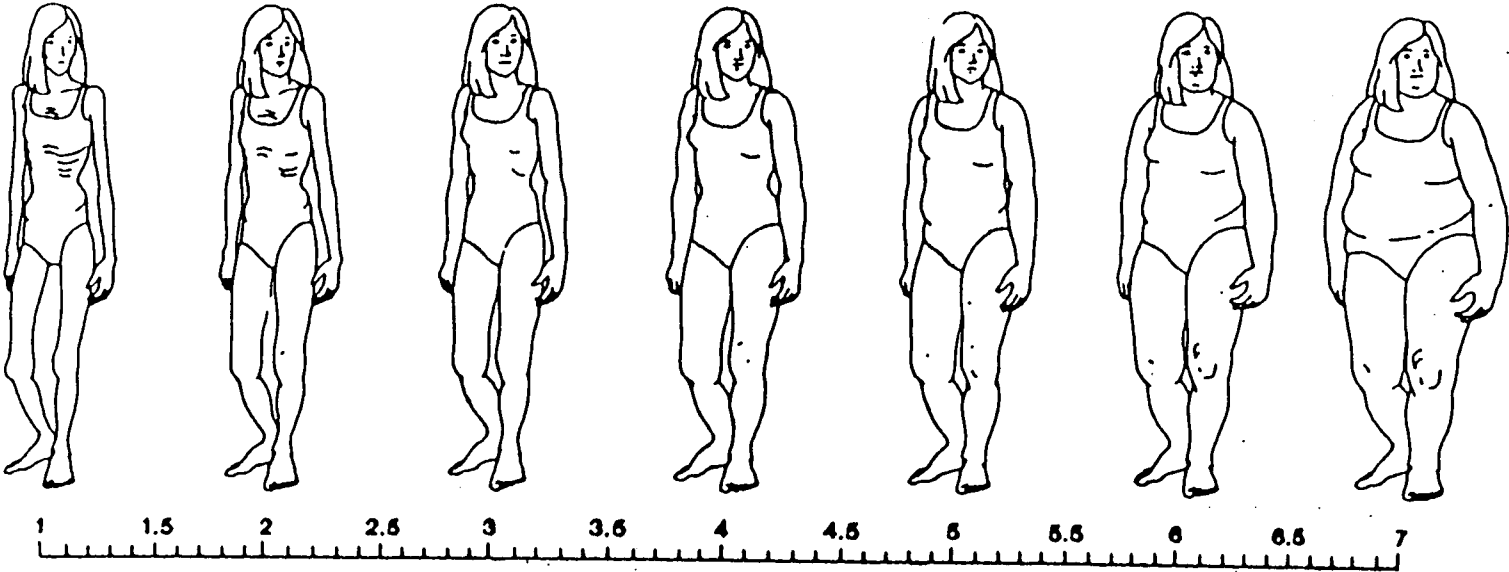


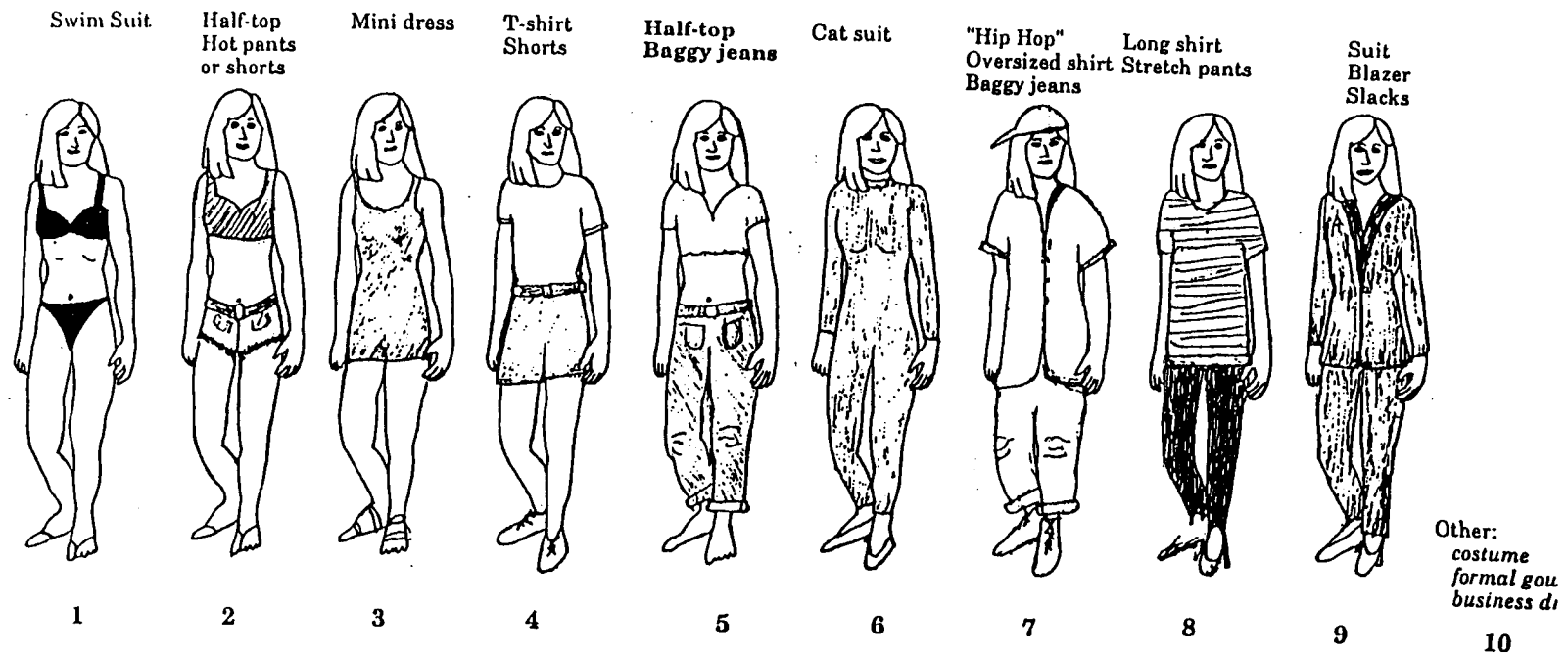
Jill Layport
Graduate Student
Interdisciplinary Studies
Communication, Business, and Health
Oregon State University

Parent/Guardian Approval

_____ Signature	_____ Date _____ Name
Address _____	
Street _____	
City _____	State _____ Zip _____

Appendix B





Coder 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**"The Grind:" MTV and Female Body Image
Coding Sheet**

Image	Body Image Score	Clothing Style Score
1	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
	Compatibility	Compatibility
	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
	Ethnicity White Black Hispanic Other _____	
	Comments:	
2	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
	Compatibility	Compatibility
	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
	Ethnicity White Black Hispanic Other _____	
	Comments:	
3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
	Compatibility	Compatibility
	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
	Ethnicity White Black Hispanic Other _____	
	Comments:	
4	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
	Compatibility	Compatibility
	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
	Ethnicity White Black Hispanic Other _____	
	Comments:	

Appendix C

STUDENT INFORMATION**Student Number** _____

Please respond to the following questions by circling the correct response.

GENDER

Male

Female

AGE

13

14

15

16

17

18

ETHNIC BACKGROUND

Caucasian

African American

Hispanic

Asian American

American Indian/Native American

Other _____

How many hours a week do you watch MTV?

Never

0-2 hours a week

2-4 hours a week

4-6 hours a week

More than 6 hours a week

Have you ever watched the show "The Grind?"

Yes

No

Why do you think teenagers watch "The Grind?"

QUESTIONNAIRE

Student Number _____

Please respond to the following questions.

To what degree do you feel:

Sad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Happy
Passive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Angry
Skinny	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Fat
Homely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Attractive
Sleepy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Awake
Self Conscious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Self Assured
Flabby	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	In Shape

What do you feel like doing?

_____ Going Dancing	_____ Playing a Sport	_____ Losing Weight
_____ Taking Dance Lessons	_____ Going Shopping	_____ Singing
_____ Going on a Date	_____ Being Intimate	_____ Working Out
_____ Going on Vacation	_____ Getting a Hair Cut	_____ Nothing
_____ Other: _____		

QUESTIONNAIRE

Student Number _____

Please respond to the questions relating to MTV's feature show "The Grind."

To what degree did you like the selection of:

	Strongly Dislike			Neutral			Strongly Like	
1. Music	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Location (setting)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Dancers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. V.J.s (D.J.s)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. Video Selections	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Clothing Style	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

After watching "The Grind," to what degree did you feel?

Sad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Happy
Passive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Angry
Skinny	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Fat
Homely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Attractive
Sleepy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Awake
Self Conscious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Self Assured
Flabby	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	In Shape

How well does "The Grind" represent U.S. young people?

Very Poorly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely Well
----------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

How well does "The Grind" represent African Americans (Blacks)?

Very
Poorly 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely
Well

How well does "The Grind" represent Hispanics?

Very
Poorly 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely
Well

What do you feel like doing after watching the show?

_____ Going Dancing	_____ Playing a Sport	_____ Losing Weight
_____ Taking Dance Lessons	_____ Going Shopping	_____ Singing
_____ Going on a Date	_____ Being Intimate	_____ Working Out
_____ Going on Vacation	_____ Getting a Hair Cut	_____ Nothing
_____ Other: _____		

What message does "The Grind: send about:

Music _____

Young People _____

Physical Appearance _____

Clothing _____

Dance _____

Ethnicity _____

Appendix D

Warning Signs of Bulimia and Anorexia Nervosa

**The following symptoms are often seen in bulimia and anorexia nervosa. Remember that each person is unique. No one will have all of these symptoms.*

Bulimia

Secretiveness about eating and food
Fluctuations of weight
Constipation
Puffiness of cheeks, chin, and neck
Depression
Severe dieting and exercising
Substance abuse
Increased irritability, tearfulness
Dry, thin hair
Kidney and bladder infections
Menstrual irregularities
Sexual promiscuity
Muscle cramps or weakness
Rapid or irregular heartbeat
Frequent sore throat
Cavities or gum disease
Blood sugar irregularities
Impulsive spending or shoplifting
Dehydration
Stomach and abdominal discomfort

Anorexia

Unusual eating habits
Excessive weight loss
Absence of menstruation
Extreme sensitivity to cold
Depression
Extreme physical activity
Growth of body hair
Social isolation
Low self-esteem
Denial of the problem
Overuse of laxatives and diuretics

From: Oregon State University counseling Department.

Warning Signs for Coaches

Bulimia

Irregular weight loss
Variable performance
Drug abuse
Binges
Disappearance after binges
Multiple complaints, weakness, aches, and pains
Minor theft-food, money, equipment
Bloodshot eyes
Complaints of light-headedness not accounted for by other medical causes

Anorexia

Weight loss
Obsession with exercise
Withdrawal, "loner"
Concerns with weight, diet, and appearance
Overlying sense of unhappiness
Stress fractures, shin splints, etc.
Increase in speed and endurance

From: Eating Disorders and Athletes: A Handbook for Coaches.

Helping an Individual with An Eating Disorder

Steps to helping a friend

1. Educate yourself about anorexia and bulimia as much as possible.
2. Let the person know you are concerned in a gentle, caring, non-judgmental way. Understand that the individual with anorexia or bulimia is often experiencing a great deal of pain.
3. Know the resources available for help and offer to assist the person in making an appointment. Strongly encourage the individual to seek help from a professional with expertise in the field of eating disorders.
4. Once a person is in treatment, continue to express interest and caring. Try to remain non-judgmental and understanding.
5. Remember that the person with an eating disorder is an individual with characteristics separate from her eating disorder. Try to focus on positive things that make that person special.
6. Remember that recovery is a slow process. Take one day at a time and encourage everyone around you to do the same.
7. Don't let the person's eating disorder overwhelm you. Part of helping a person with an eating disorder is taking care of yourself. Do some nice things for yourself.

Hints

**Denial is very much a part of anorexia. If the person denies that she/he has anorexia, let her know that you are aware that it is difficult to talk about it, and that you are available for future listening.*

**Be direct when confronting an individual. An approach such as, "I've noticed...(these specific behaviors)...and would like to help you overcome your eating disorder." A full explanation of the behavior or patterns that generated suspicion of the problem should be given.*

Helping a Student or Athlete with an Eating Disorder

Teachers and Coaches

1. If you suspect a student has an eating disorder, write down specific examples to support your concern.
2. Notify your athletic director, activity director, principal, or the student's counselor about your concern.
3. Follow district policy in dealing with an eating disorder.
4. Never ignore the symptoms of disordered eating in an athlete. Eating disorder are a serious problem and the medial complications could put the athlete at serious risk.
5. Do not approach the eating disordered individual by threatening to discipline her or throw her off the team. The teeling of loss or rejection could engage the disordered eating behavior.
6. The most difficult step for an individual is to acknowledge that there is a problem. The coach, or another adult who is close to the student should initiate the communication about the problem privately.

C	Concern	The reason you are doing the confronting. You care about the mental, physical, and nutritional needs of the student.
O	Organize	Decide Who is involved, Where to confront, Why--concern, How to talk, When--a convenient time.
N	Needs	What will she (or he) need after the confrontation. Professional help and/or support groups need to be available.
F	Face	The actual confrontation. Be empathetic but direct. Do not back down if she initially denies the problem.
O	Offer	Help and Suggestions. You may want to encourage her to contact you when she needs someone to talk to.
N	Negotiate	Another time to talk and a time span in which to seek professional help.
T	Time	Remember to stress that recovery takes time and patience. However, she has a lot to gain by the process and also, a lot to lose if she chooses to remain with these behaviors.

From: *The National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorder (ANAD).*
Box 7, Highland park, OK 60035, 1-708-831-3438.