Assignment 1: Female Stereotypes in Print Advertising

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Author Note

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# Article 1

**Title:** Understanding advertising stereotypes: Social and brand-related effects of stereotyped versus non-stereotyped portrayals in advertising

**Author:** Åkestam, Nina

**Journal:** Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Stockholm School of Economics 2017

*Problem*: The portrayal of stereotypes in advertising has, for a long time now, acquired considerable attention from different types of people in society. A substantial portion of advertising research has focused on the consumer reactions, brand-related effects, and persuasive purposes of advertisements, with limited emphasis on the social effects it carries. Thus far, numerous literary works from multiple scholars have been focused on three major areas: (1) the frequency and the nature of stereotyped portrayals as exhibited in advertising, (2) the social effects that stereotyped portrayals usually have on the final consumers of print advertisements, and (3) the impact that stereotyped portrayals have on the effects that are related to different brands.

*Research Question*: The study aims to investigate consumer reactions to various non-stereotyped and stereotyped portrayals in advertising to research the social effects of advertising. Moreover, it aims to find empirical connections between brand-related and social effects of advertising, by using empirical data to confirm this relationship. Hence, the social effects carried by various types of portrayals are investigated in mainstream advertising in terms of the audience reactions and media content.

*Research Approach*: The study relies upon existing literature to generate hypothesis by means of a deductive approach, and to confirm the hypothesis by empirical studies. The researcher selected specific empirical studies that would address the problem using carefully selected groups who were exposed to various advertising stimuli. The participants in the selected studies were exposed either to a stereotyped or a non-stereotyped portrayal and their thoughts measured by means of multi-item questionnaires and other thought listing methods. Statistical analysis, such as t-tests, and MANCOVA analyses were used to analyze the collected data.

*Results:* The findings indicate that non-stereotyped portrayals had positive social impacts on consumers in terms of empathy and social connectedness. Moreover, the positive impact was also witnessed in brand-associated effects such as purchase intentions and brand attitudes. 5 Empirical studies confirmed the impact of positive social effects on brand-associated effects. Moreover, consumers were able to clearly differentiate between the stereotyped and non-stereotyped category.

*Conclusion*: The frequent use of stereotypes by marketers and other professionals in the field of business in advertising has resulted in a set of advertising stereotypes. These include the portrayals of professionals, women, and families that are specific to the context of the advertising. Advertising stereotypes have often been used in the presentation of people who appear to be relatively uncommon in the real modern world based on body type, ethnicity, and attractiveness. Portrayals in advertising are usually considered to be stereotyped, particularly when they portray people in the society in ways that are consistent with an advertising stereotype, the overall stereotype, or both.

# Article 2

**Title:** Female Stereotypes in Print Advertising: A Retrospective Analysis

**Author:** Yorgos C. Zotos and Eirini Tsichla

**Journal:** Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 148(25), 446-454

*Problem*: The depiction of women in advertising has so far attracted a considerable amount of attention from researchers, scholars, and other professionals within contemporary society. Arguably, this significant amount of attention has been fueled by the existing feminist movements and the modern evolution of the roles that are played by women in society. Previous studies have discovered that the prevalence of outdated representations of women in society, promoting the need for further investigation.

*Research Question*: The study attempts to comprehensively and holistically explore the existence of female stereotyping in print advertising, analyzing the relationship between advertising and stereotypes, tracing the origins, and undertaking an exhaustive review of literature on the subject to propose directions for future research.

*Research Approach*: A majority of the selected studies for review employed qualitative content analysis to identify the unique experiences of people subject to stereotypical portrayals. It allows the researcher access to messages that contain unique and individualized information about people’s experiences exposed to a variety of gender and sex roles.

*Results*: The analysis revealed that a vast majority of studied painted a different picture than earlier studies which focused on sex object portrayals and physical attractiveness. Conflicting evidence was observed when it came to sexualized images of the female form in magazines, and found that portrayals of women as sex objects decreased from the 1960s onwards. However, the analysis also revealed that sexism remained a major theme in magazine advertisements until recently, even though female stereotyping has become more indirect and subtle, often leaning towards benevolent sexism.

*Conclusion*: The identities of gender are socially constructed such that advertising proposes forms of self-presentation and lifestyles that are used by individuals to enable them to define the roles that they play in modern society. A considerable number of ad campaigns as are usually used to invoke gender identity by primarily drawing their imagery from femininity and the iconography of masculinity that is stereotyped. A significant amount of evidence shows that women continue to take part in the preparation and production of print advertisements that depict women in various stereotypes, such as housewives. However, this is not the reality in modern society, given that women also play a crucial role in the protection of families, as compared to their role in traditional societies. Therefore, print advertisements should currently be aimed at depicting women in a similar way that they depict men.

# Article 3

**Title:** The Impact of Female Empowerment in Advertising (Femvertising)

**Author:** Victoria Elizabeth Drake

**Journal:** Journal of Research in Marketing 7(3), 593-599

*Problem*: Within the current generation, the empowerment of women has been given considerable attention and has gone on to become a notable theme that is becoming increasingly prevalent in most forms of advertisement, including print advertisement. Additionally, female empowerment has become one of the major themes in challenging the current conventional gender roles in society. However, little research has so far been conducted to strengthen the evaluation of why and if these advertisement campaigns are effective, or in establishing the effects that such advertisements have on female consumers of various products and those who purchase and read many print adverts. Plausibly, as a result of the emotions that are usually evoked by such print advertisements, these types of ads have succeeded in the creation of positive brand intentions on the consumers and enhanced positive purchase intentions among consumers

*Research Question*: The study attempts to assess the impact of female empowerment themes targetted at women by determining any significant variations in purchase intentions, brand favorability and self-reported opinions about ads. It also aims to investigate any significant impact of non-femvertising from femvertising for the same brand, while also examining the existence of emotional connection felt by the consumer towards a femvertising brand and whether it impacts the overall perceptions of women regarding gender portrayals in advertising.

*Research Approach*: The experiment assigned each participant randomly for exposure to one out of four conditions, Always Nonfem, brawny Nonfem, Always Fem, Brawny Fem. The impact of femvertising was measured through the brawny fem and always fem conditions while non-femvertising was assessed using the remaining conditions. 181 young female participants were chosen randomly and exposed to a particular advertisement based upon the conditions. Following the exposure, participants were asked to fill a questionnaire that assessed emotional connection, brand attitude, and their personal evaluation of gender role portrayals.

*Results*: Femvertising was found to create a positive impact on brand and advertisement opinions, emotional connection, as well as purchase intention. Fem ads attracted favorable opinions compared to non-fem ads with significance value at 95% confidence. Similarly, the group reported a greater intention to purchase the brand and more likely to identify with the brand's image.

*Conclusion*: Women are crucial to the depiction of their gender in various types of advertising, especially print advertising. Both younger females in the society and those who are more educated on the issue of feminism appear to be sensitive, especially to how various companies and advertisement agencies depict their gender while also putting more emphasis on the modern portrayals of roles. These depictions, at least according to Drake (2017), usually have a direct impact on the outcomes of the businesses of various companies and advertisement agencies. Notably, significant correlations, at least according to Drake (2017), have been found between the offensiveness of the portrayal of female roles in advertisements, and in this case print advertisements, and the purchase intentions of consumers of particular products. Notably, women have reported there is a less likelihood for them to purchase new products that use offensive depictions of women in their print advertisements. Together, these results have so far indicated that offensive and stereotypical portrayals of roles can lead to adverse effects on the profitability of brands. However, significant research should also be conducted to help in the establishment of the effective mechanisms that can be used by brands and advertisement agencies in their advertisements to depict women in the moral and right way just as men. By so doing, the issue of female stereotyping will likely be handled appropriately to help reduce the level of female and also male stereotyping in advertising of products from various brands.

# Article 4

**Title:** A Study of Gender Advertisements. A Statistical Measuring of the Prevalence of Genders’ Patterns in the Images of Print Advertisements

**Author:** Nicoletta Signoretti

**Journal:** Proceedings of the International and Interdisciplinary Conference IMMAGINI 1(9), 947-961

*Problem*: Print media usually incorporates the use of different techniques that help to demonstrate the roles that are played by women not only in advertising but also in the general society. A key earlier work in this regard was done by Goffman who categorized gender stereotypes in various forms of American advertisements from the 1970s, in terms of themes such as function ranking, feminine touch, and ritualization of subordination, relative size, a licensed withdraw.

*Research Question:* The study attempts to provide statistical measures of the frequency of gender-related patterns in print advertising. It aimed to identify any potential changes in the last 30 years of advertising in western countries in terms of gender stereotyping.

*Research Approach*: The study uses various photographic materials obtained from 686 magazines between 2006 and 2015 and divides them into seven homogenous categories. A stratification technique was applied to survey the data, and each participant of the study was asked to fill a questionnaire after being exposed to the picture. Variables included structural characteristics such as the target audience of the ad, the magazine category, pages dedicated to ads, and the overall prince to illustrate variations with regards to these categories.

*Results*: The results show that the stereotypes identified by Goffman are still significantly present in modern print advertisements, in nearly all categories earlier proposed by Goffman. Size differences indicated that lower-class women were depicted smaller or shorter compared to men, and other themes such as the ritualization of subordination still persisted. Some gender image patterns were noted to have changed, which can be attributed to societal changes over the years.

*Conclusion*: The findings indicate that female stereotypes are hard to eliminate despite society undergoing various changes. Although the line between femininity and masculinity has increasingly thinned today, the presence of modern stereotypes in ads still persist. For instance, the ritualization of subordination is a technique that serves the purpose of demonstrating the role of women through the use of different methods of body positioning such as body without a head, smiles, physical lowering, and bashful knee bend, among others styles. As such, these techniques--as seen in various print advertisements--represent a true reflection of the fact that female stereotyping is still prevalent in modern print advertisements. The stereotypes which disappeared are those which do not adequately represent the contemporary woman anymore. Print advertisements continue to associate beauty with success when targeted at women.

# Article 5

**Title:** Gender stereotypes in advertising: A review of current research

**Author:** Stacy Landreth Grau & Yorgos C. Zotos

**Journal:** International Journal of Advertising 35(5), 761-770

*Problem*: the last five decades of research has extensively focused on gender portrayals and stereotyping advertising, especially when changing role structures in the labor force brought about societal changes and began to reflect in advertising portrayals. However, much remains to be learned about the cultural implications, consequences, and forms of these stereotypical portrayals.

*Research Question*: The aim of the study is to illustrate the historical context of female stereotyping in advertisements and examine previous studies investigating these stereotypes. In so doing, it attempts to point future research directions with regards to gender portrayals in advertisements.

*Research Approach*: A systematic review of current and recent literature based on content analysis of qualitative studies and empirical experimental results and summarizes the results.

*Results*: An examination of the various themes which emerged from literature reveal the persuasive impression of campaign based theme which corresponds to gender stereotypes. No advertisement was found to be particularly challenging paternal masculinity and traditional gender roles. Moreover, ads which depict more equal roles are conventionally not targetted at the male audience.

*Conclusion*: The currently fluctuating role structure both in the labor force and in the family has brought with it considerable variation both in the female and male roles in advertising. Within the same breath, this change has subsequently changed the reflection of the roles of both men and women in advertising. Scholars and researchers have noted a lag in culture. For an extended period, sexes were depicted in more traditional roles in numerous advertisements. In so doing, women were presented by print advertisements in inferior ways, relative to their capabilities and their potential. Future research may examine gender portrayals in digital advertising and the impact of femvertising on brand-association and social impact.