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Stereotyping of women in television advertisement

Vaishali Shrikhande

Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College

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STEREOTYPING OF WOMEN IN TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS

A Thesis
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Mass Communication

in

The Manship School of Mass Communication

By
Vaishali Shrikhande
B'Com., University of Pune, India, 1998
M.C. M.S., Mass Communication, University of Pune, India, 2000
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Abstract

This study examined the portrayal of women in television commercials and documented the stereotypes associated with women in today's television commercials. Content analysis was chosen as a method of inquiry for this study. Two hundred and twenty six advertisements were recorded from the three chosen networks, ABC, CBS and NBC. No local advertisements or public service announcements were included in the sample. Each advertisement was initially coded for the central figure, whether the central figure was a male or a female. In addition, each central figure in the advertisement was coded for the following categories: 1) age; 2) product use; 3) occupation; 4) voiceover; 5) product representative; 6) stance; and 7) product types.

Analysis was performed to determine the extent to which female characters portrayed in these advertisements were subject to stereotypical portrayals. The analysis of the data gathered reveals that portrayals of women in television advertisements in many ways conform to most advertising's stereotypical portrayals of women (as documented by previous researcher). However, the study provides evidence that the stereotypes associated with women is lessening. The study provides evidence of the emergence of a new trend in some cases toward portraying women and men as equals.

Chapter I

Introduction

This study will concentrate on stereotypes associated with women in television commercials. It is safe to conclude that stereotypes exist and are a part of our lives. People act according to these stereotypes because stereotypes are considered socially acceptable. For example, when people think of an advertisement for a household cleaner, what comes to mind, most likely, is a woman. It is also likely that the picture in peoples' minds corresponds closely to what researchers have called the "happy housewife" stereotype. This is a stereotype that has been associated with the image of women in most print and television advertisements.

Since the late 60's there have been concerns regarding the portrayal of women in the media (Bardwick & Schumann, 1967). Bardwick and Schumann (1976) analyzed the portrayal of women in television commercials and concluded that "to an amazing extent women are preoccupied with dirt, (SIC) the television woman [in commercials] is shown as housebound" (p. 18).

People watching televisions are bombarded with images and slogans through advertisements. In a 2000 Nielsen Media Research and Radio Advertising Bureau survey it was found that on average, U.S. households watch more than seven hours of television per day (Albarran, 2000).

People memorize slogans and absorb images without questioning them. More importantly people do it without thinking. This is what Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorieli (1980) called the cultivation effect. "The effect of all this exposure to the same

messages produces what has been called cultivation, or teaching of a common worldview, common roles and common values” (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signorieli, 1980, p.10).

According to Gerbner, one of the most common findings from media and cultivation studies is that increased television viewing is associated with more stereotypical views, especially of gender (Allan & Scott, 1996). Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorieli (1980) argued that for heavy viewers, television virtually monopolizes and subsumes other sources of information, ideas and consciousness. Furthermore, the heavy viewers perceive the world as what is shown on television (Gerbner, et al., 1980). Based on Gerbner’s findings it can be argued that if on average an American household watches over seven hours of television a day, this can lead to heavy indoctrination of television stereotypes. People are likely to perceive the world as what is depicted through television.

Hence, the cultivation theory suggests that persuasion and learning can occur without comprehension or deliberation. If people admit to themselves the power of advertising, it becomes reasonable to argue that the “happy housewife” stereotype, which works so well for the advertisers, could be harming its audience. For just as this stereotype has the power to convince people that the advertisers’ message about the product has value, it also has the power to convince them that the stereotype itself has value and that it is real and somehow “right.” In fact, previous research has suggested advertising which stereotypes women can form unconscious and unthinking attitudes about women and their abilities in society (Geis, Brown, Jennings & Porter, 1984).

On the other hand, researchers have also found that stereotypes can have a negative affect on women themselves. Women may perceive the “happy housewife” stereotype as a cultural directive which in turn may lead them to put aside their own desires regarding career and personal life and replace them with the “ideal” presented through popular culture including advertisements (Geis et al., 1984; McArthur & Resko, 1975).

Feminists and others concerned about the image of women in popular culture have long placed much of the blame on advertising (Courtney & Lockeretz, 1971; Courtney & Whipple, 1974; Dominick & Rauch, 1972). Feminist Germaine Greer berated the media for concentrating on advertisements for “things to squirt on women to stop them from being so offensive” (Dominick & Rauch, 1972, p. 259). Marijean Suelzle pointed out that commercials “endlessly show women helpless before a pile of soiled laundry until the male voice of authority overrides hers to tell how brand X with its fast-acting enzymes will get her clothes cleaner than clean” (Courtney & Whipple, 1974, p. 252). However, even if advertising could portray women as self-confident and career oriented, it would still be difficult to change the minds of all those who believe in the “happy housewife” stereotype. Advertising is a powerful tool for selling, but it can also be a powerful tool for attitude change and behavior. Hence, the danger of advertising which stereotypes women is that it can lead to forming notions that undermine women and their abilities.

Researchers also believe that stereotypes are formed very early in life. A study looking at sex role stereotypes and their developmental aspects found that the acquisition

of concepts about sex roles begins at an early age. “By age three children can correctly apply gender labels and can correctly associate sex-typed objects like articles of clothing with the appropriate sex” (Flerx, Fidler & Rogers, 1976, p. 998). In another study by Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson and Rosenkrantz (1972) people were asked to define sex role stereotypes by defining the socially acceptable characteristics associated with gender. Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson and Rosenkrantz (1972) found that most people described certain character traits, which a woman or a man should have in order to be socially acceptable. They termed these character traits stereotypes. An example would be when men said women should not be aggressive, whereas it was found that women considered aggressive behavior from men acceptable (Broverman et al., 1972).

There have been a number of studies conducted through the 1970s and 1980s that looked at the portrayal of women in television advertising and a few that looked at magazine advertisements (Courtney & Lockeretz, 1971; Courtney & Whipple, 1974; Dominick & Rauch, 1972; Geis et al., 1984; Knill, Pesch, Pursey, Gilpin & Perloff, 1981). However, there have been fewer studies done through the 90s looking at the changes in the portrayal of women in television commercials. The purpose of this study is to establish whether there has been any change in the stereotypes associated with women in television and to update research on stereotyping of women in television commercials.

This study will look at the stereotypes that exist today in association with women in television commercials, specifically documenting the current stereotypes and evaluating them in the light of stereotype studies going back to 1960. The Research

Question for this study is: What are the stereotypes that exist today in association with women in television commercials?

Chapter II

Literature Review

Stereotyping of women has been a major concern with media researchers. Studies have dealt with the portrayal of women in all forms of media. A close examination of the literature on stereotyping of women in media revealed that each of these studies had its focus on at least one or more of the following categories:

- 1) Women portrayed at home and with family
- 2) Women and occupation
- 3) Women and their age
- 4) Women and their physical appearance or attire
- 5) Women as product representatives or as product users
- 6) Women and stance

Stereotyping has been found to be quite pervasive. For instance, it is even in the tools of design such as clipart. Therefore, stereotyped images may come pre-packaged. Milburn, Carney and Ramirez (2001) conducted a study where they examined the images of human beings in two popular clipart packages, Microsoft Office 97 and Print Shop Ensemble III for gender and racial equality. A content analysis was done in order to examine potential gender stereotyping. Milburn, Carney and Ramirez (2001) found significant representational biases in both packages. There was an under representation of women, and when depicted, both software packages portrayed them in a significantly different manner than males. Females were more likely to be shown as teenagers rather than as middle aged or elderly and were dressed in more revealing wardrobes. Males on

the other hand were depicted as predominantly more active. Men were more likely to be depicted as authoritative and more knowledgeable. Women were more likely to be illustrated as submissive. For example, women were more likely to be shown in activities like sitting and men were depicted in activities like running. Milburn, Carney and Ramirez (2001) concluded that stereotyping of women exists not only on television but other forms of communication as well.

One of the most strident criticisms of the way in which women appear in television and print advertisements is that women are portrayed in an extremely narrow range of roles, with depictions concentrated on the traditional occupations of housewife, a mother and secretary. Many studies have found support for this criticism (Bardwick et al., 1967; Courtney et al., 1971; Dominick et al., 1972; Ferrante, Haynes, & Kingsley, 1988; Gilly, 1988; and Knill et al., 1981).

Research Concerning Stereotyping of Women In Television Commercials

One of the first studies that talked about the image of women in television commercials was by Bardwick and Schumann (1967). Bardwick and Schumann (1967) analyzed male and female role portrayals in television commercials and concluded that women are portrayed primarily as homebound or as housewives.

Courtney and Whipple (1974) studied the portrayal of women in television commercials and found significant differences between men and women. Women were over-represented in advertisements for cosmetics and were less likely to appear in advertisements for cars, trucks and related products. Seventy-five percent of all advertisements using women were for products found in the kitchen or bathroom,

reinforcing the stereotype that a woman's place is in the home. Women as compared to men were portrayed mostly in house settings rather than business settings. Women did not make important decisions and lastly women were depicted as dependent on men and were regarded primarily as sexual objects. Courtney and Whipple (1974) defined sexual objects as, where women had no role in the commercial, but appeared as an item of decoration. It was also found that 87% of voiceovers were male and only 6% of voiceovers were done using females (Courtney & Whipple, 1974). Later studies reaffirmed this (Culley & Bennett, 1976; Dominick & Rauch, 1972; Lundstorm & Sciglimpaglia, 1977; McArthur & Resko, 1975; O'Donnell & O'Donnell, 1978; Schneider & Schneider, 1979).

McArthur and Resko (1975) claimed that women were most likely to be defined not by occupational or other types of roles, but in roles that defined them in terms of their relationships with others, i.e. as spouse, girlfriend, parent or friend. McArthur and Resko (1975) also found that women were depicted as product users in 86% of commercials and as product authorities in only 14% of the advertisements, whereas men were portrayed overwhelmingly as authorities.

Culley and Bennett (1976) noted that older women (50 years and older) were pictured with much less frequency than similarly aged men in television commercials from 1971 and 1974. Schneider and Schneider (1979) cited a subtle shift between 1971 and 1976 in the depictions of women in prime-time television commercials – a shift away from the portrayal of young women and toward that of women over 50.

Bretl and Cantor (1988) summarized the content analysis of male and female portrayals in U.S. television commercials since 1971 and also conducted a content analysis of television commercials in 1985. Bretl and Cantor's (1988) findings indicate several differences between the portrayal of men and women with many gaps narrowing after time. Men and women appeared equally more often as central figures in prime time commercials. Women appeared in occupational roles and men were presented as parents and spouses, with no other apparent occupation (Bretl & Cantor, 1988).

Although the differences seem to have been narrowing, there are still areas in which no change was recorded. Women still predominantly appear in domestic settings advertising products used in the house and men are still preferred as narrators in the advertising world over women (Bretl & Cantor, 1988).

A study investigated a sample of prime-time network television advertisements to determine how gender portrayals differed in drug and non-drug commercials (Graig, 1992). Craig (1992) found that women were more likely than men to appear as characters in drug advertisements than in advertisements for other products. Women were also portrayed as experts on home medical care often as mothers caring for ill children or a sick husband. According to Graig (1992): "This supports the hypothesis that drug advertisers take advantage of stereotypical images of women as home medical caregivers" (p. 309). The results of Graig's study (1992) indicate that advertisers of over-the-counter (OTC) medications exploit the stereotype of women as nurturers and caregivers in their prime time network television commercials. Women have been found to be primary or central characters in these ads and they have been portrayed as experts

on OTC medicines by either acting as demonstrators of the product to others or as parents administering medications to children. According to Graig (1992), “many OTC medicine ads in the sample show a husband or a child turning to a wife/mother for advice and help during a time of illness and invariably the wife/mother selects the advertiser’s product as appropriate solution for their symptoms” (p. 309). The portrayal of men in medicine advertisements was either absent or unrealistic and men were shown as relying on the wife/mother to make the simplest decisions on home medical care (Graig, 1992).

Browne (1998) examined sex role stereotyping in television commercials aimed at children in the United States and Australia. Her findings are generally similar to those of previous studies and indicate substantial gender stereotyping (Macklin & Kolbe, 1984; McArthur & Eisen, 1976; Sternglanz & Serbin, 1974). Her results indicate that boys appeared in greater numbers in the television commercials, were given more dominant roles and were more active and aggressive than girls. Gender role reinforcement was observed at the level of body language and facial expressions; girls were depicted as shyer, giggly, unlikely to assert control and less instrumental. There was a difference in the numerical representation of boys and girls in the commercials, not consistent with real world distributions (Browne, 1998).

On a cross-national front, similarities in gender stereotyping were found between the two countries, though a few differences were observed. Australian commercials contained more equal male-to-female proportions and more often depicted boys and girls in the same advertisements, and less frequently portrayed girls as shy or giggly and boys as directive. Another difference was that male characters had significantly more

interaction with objects in American commercials than they did in Australian commercials in comparison with female characters (Browne, 1998).

Research Concerning Stereotyping of Women in Print Advertisements

Most of the studies agreed to varying degrees with the work done by Courtney and Lockeretz (1971) who found that women were portrayed with four distinct characteristics: 1) A woman's place is in the home; 2) women do not make important decisions or do important things; 3) women are dependent and need men's protection; 4) men regard women primarily as sexual objects and are not interested in women as people.

Chafetz, Lorence and Larosa (1993) examined six trade publications to assess whether there had been an impact in female participation in professional occupations and if an editorial staff with more women has helped reduce gender stereotyping of professional women. Chafetz, Lorence and Larosa (1993) found that greater relative numbers of women in the occupation over time and an increased share of women in the editorial staff have resulted in portraying women as professionals, confident, independent and attractive. Gender composition of editorial staff had a consistent and a positive effect on how women are portrayed in advertising. However, women are still portrayed less favorably in male-oriented professional publications. Chafetz, Lorence and Larosa's (1993) findings also suggest that the non-advertisement visuals appear to be conveying a decreasing level of gender stereotyping, because such visuals often appear with stories about work being done by those who practice the targeted occupation or are closely related to it, hence encouraging gender equitable treatment. On the other hand, the advertisements have become more stereotypical over time suggesting that the traditional

methods of defining and conducting work, rooted in an era when the overwhelming majority of practitioners were of one gender, continues unnoticed and unchallenged. Chafetz, Lorence and Lorosa (1993) note: “Separate analyses by visual type reveal that women are depicted in a less positive manner across advertisements than other visuals, probably because women have less control of advertisement content” (p. 63).

More recent studies on stereotyping of women in television commercials have revealed no significant differences. Ferguson, Kershel and Tinkham (1990) studied the portrayal of women in the pages of Ms. magazine. The advertising policy of Ms. magazine states, “to preclude the acceptance of advertising for products that are ‘harmful’ or advertisements that are insulting to women” (p. 41). Researchers conducted a content analysis of the magazine itself to assess the extent to which Ms.’s advertising over the first 15 years of its publication has carried out its policy. Ferguson, Kershel and Tinkham’s (1990) findings suggest that Ms. advertising promotes products that are generally considered harmful and that women are portrayed as subordinate to men or merely as a decorative item. In fact, it was found that over the years the magazine’s advertising has increasingly portrayed women as alluring sex objects. One third of all advertisements in the sample promote products generally perceived as ‘harmful’. Stereotyped behavior categorized as “keep her in her place, sex objects” still exist predominantly in a magazine targeting women themselves (Ferguson, Kershel & Tinkham, 1990).

Another research on women in print advertisements has shown that pictures of women’s bodies and body parts appear more often than pictures of men’s bodies (Hall &

Crum, 1994). Hall and Crum (1994) addressed the issue of images of women as sex objects and decoration by observing the number and type of body camera shots used in television beer commercials. Hall and Crum's (1994) findings show that men appear more often than women in beer advertisements and when women do appear in these advertisements, their bodily exposure is greater. Hall and Crum (1994) state: "Of the smaller number of women who appear in beer commercials the number of camera shots of their bodies is greater than those of men" (p. 335). According to Hall and Crum (1994) women are portrayed in these commercials through shots of the chest, leg, buttock and crotch. They also believe such shots increase the stereotype that women are sex objects.

In addition, Hall and Crum (1994) found that most women in these commercials appeared in either leisurewear or swimwear, whereas the men were always dressed in work clothes. Hall and Crum (1994) suggest that this reinforces the stereotype that women are sex objects, while men work, make decisions and look after women who are not capable of looking after themselves (Hall & Crum, 1994).

Research Concerning the Changes in Stereotypes Associated with Women in Print and Television Advertisements

A study by Knill, Pesch, Pursey, Gilpin & Perloff, (1981) was conducted to find whether there had been a change in the stereotype associated with women in the 70s. They found that women were given authority as product representatives. However, these products were used in bathrooms or kitchens. This was the only recorded change. All the previous stereotypes, including women predominantly portrayed as housewives and mothers, still existed (Knill, et al., 1981).

Allan and Coltrane (1996) studied television commercials from 1950's to 1980s, in order to explore the changes, if any, which have occurred in gender images. Allan and Coltrane (1996) focused on gender display of main characters and the circumstances under which it varied. Their results indicated that there has been a change in the images of women, but not men. Allan and Coltrane (1996) recorded this change by considering the following categories. First, the voiceovers were still predominantly by males, hence recording no change. Second, men still are preferred as central figures in most advertisements. However, Allan and Coltrane (1996) did find that women as central figures were six times more likely to be pictured as working in the 1980s than parenting. Additionally, when women were pictured in a work activity, they were 12 times more likely to be shown displaying stereotypically masculine traits. Women were also portrayed in managerial and professional occupations. On the other hand male portrayal changed and many more men appeared as parents and spouses. While these changes may indicate a trend, Allan and Coltrane (1996) note that the change was not statistically significant.

Research Concerning Lessening of the Stereotypes Associated with Women

Some studies presented evidence pertaining to the lessening of the stereotype associated with women. They claimed that women are no longer only portrayed as housewives or in the home, but also in business settings. (Ferrante, Haynes & Kingsley, 1988; Lysonski, 1985;).

Venkatesan and Losco (1975) found evidence of a downward trend between 1961 and 1975 in the portrayal of women as sexual objects in magazine advertisements.

Lyonski (1983) presents evidence of a decrease in the depiction of women as dependent on men in magazine advertisements from roughly 1974 to 1980.

Research Concerning the Effects and Reactions of Stereotypical Portrayals of Women

There have been a few studies that have looked at the effects of stereotypical portrayals of women. Komisar (1971) claimed that such portrayals “make it increasingly difficult for women to break out of the sexist stereotypes which imprison them” (p. 207).

Geis, Brown, Jennings and Porter (1984) attempted to determine the effects of stereotypical portrayals of women within the framework of an experiment. They believed that implicit sex stereotyping in television commercials operates as cultural demand characteristics. Geis, Brown, Jennings and Porter’s (1984) hypothesis was “sex stereotypes implicitly enacted, but never explicitly articulated in television may inhibit women’s achievement aspiration” (p. 513). In the Geis, Brown, Jennings and Porter (1984) study, 160 participants were randomly assigned to the various conditions and a separate group of 40 participants was used as a control group. The subjects viewed commercials and were each asked to write an essay on her/his life and concerns “10 years from now”. The essays were then coded for achievement and homemaking themes. Results indicated that after viewing four television commercials that used traditional portrayal, women subjects emphasized homemaking activities and were less career oriented. However, when the sex roles were reversed in the commercials, showing women as important, women subjects put significantly greater emphasis on their own achievements. After viewing the results of their experiment, Geis, Brown, Jennings and

Porter (1984) concluded that subtle implications of sex typing in television commercials could influence self-concepts, noting “Women’s achievement aspirations were influenced but not men’s because socialization had already given women ambivalent achievement messages” (p. 519). Geis, Brown, Jennings and Porter (1984) believe that the effects, though temporary in the experiment, if constantly repeated over the years in television commercials could change sex-role stereotypes associated with women; women themselves would look towards different career orientations for themselves.

Several studies have examined the reactions of women and men to stereotypical portrayals of women. Lundstorm and Sciglimpaglia (1977) surveyed women to determine how accurately they felt advertising portrayed them. Results indicated that women were much more likely than men to agree with assertions that women do not do important things and that a woman’s place is in the home. In addition, women were more likely than men to think that advertising portrays women in offensive ways. Overall, the women surveyed felt that advertising does not show women in all of their roles (Lundstorm & Sciglimpaglia, 1977).

Leigh, Rethans and Whitney (1987) examined “traditional” and modern portrayals of women in advertising as they relate to advertising effectiveness among different groups of women. The researchers found that young, modern women preferred portrayal of a young, modern spokeswoman, while older and more traditional women preferred the portrayal of a spokeswoman more like them (Leigh et al., 1987).

Research has also been conducted to study gender differences in self-consciousness traits and advertising responses across America (Gould, 1987).

Researchers categorized self-consciousness into three dimensions: 1) private self-consciousness assessed the degree to which one habitually monitors his/her inner thoughts and feelings; 2) public self-consciousness assesses the degree to which one is aware of oneself as a social object; 3) social anxiety assesses the degree of chronic discomfort felt by individual in the presence of others (Gould, 1987). The results showed women as more conscious of the public self-concept roles than men. However both men and women approach the private self-concept roles in the same way. Gould (1987) concluded that women orchestrate their roles in society according to external clues such as advertising that addresses their needs in those roles. Gould (1987) stated women are more responsive to advertising than men in terms of behavioral measures and suggests advertising content should be free from stereotypical behavior.

Summary of Previous Research

In summary, the research indicates that the females as portrayed in television advertisements are younger than their male counterparts, are somewhat less intelligent, and are tied to their home and family. If the stereotyped woman does work, her job is most likely a non-professional one, such as a secretary. She does not often appear as a product spokesperson, but if she does, her authority probably stems from the fact that she has used the product, and not from any inherent credibility or authority. She is always smiling and is usually engaged in some activity.

A problem with the research is that many of the findings have not been updated recently. This study will examine current stereotype patterns associated with women and television commercials.

Therefore the research question is: What are the stereotypes that are associated with women in television commercials? My hypotheses for this study are:

H1: For the age range 18 to 35 years, women in television commercials are younger than their male counterparts.

H2: More women than men are product users in television commercials.

H3: Women's primary occupation in television commercials is as homemakers.

H4: Men dominate voiceovers in current television commercials.

H5: Men are portrayed as product representatives more often than women.

H6: Women are shown in subordinate positions in most advertisements.

H7: Women are primarily associated with household products.

Chapter III

Method

Content analysis is an increasingly popular method for communication researchers. Modern content analysis developed primarily as a way for analyzing mass communication messages. According to Kaid (1989) the most widely accepted definition of content analysis is offered by Berelson where he defines content analysis as a “research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (Kaid, 1989, p. 198). In content analysis, elements (called the units of observation) of the phenomenon under study (called units of analysis) are coded and analyzed to reveal information. Therefore, content analysis was chosen as the method of inquiry for this study.

Sample

In this study, the unit of analysis was nationally run television commercials which contain at least one female character and which are being telecast on one of three chosen networks: ABC, CBS and NBC. The three networks were chosen in order to: (1) ensure manageability of the sample size; (2) ensure the use in the experiment of commercials with a large audience; and (3) to draw comparisons if any, in the stereotypes associated with women. A previous study (McArthur & Resko, 1975) drew its sample from the same three networks, ABC, NBC, and CBS. In order to see the stereotypes associated with women and draw comparisons, if any, this research also considered the same networks and drew the sample in the similar way.

McArthur and Resko (1975) drew their sample from a randomly selected day of the week. A randomly selected day was chosen to record the commercials for this study as well. All the commercials were recorded on Tuesday, December 3rd, 2002. Three videotape recorders were used simultaneously to record selected hours of programming on the three major networks. Each network was viewed for a total of four hours: 10:00 A.M.-12 noon (morning) and 7:00 P.M.-9:00 P.M. (evening) Central Standard Time (CST). In order to be coded, an advertisement had to be on one of the three national networks ABC, CBS and NBC. Any local advertisements were not included because the study was considering the portrayal of women on a nation wide scale. Public service announcements, station identifications and advertisements for upcoming television shows were eliminated while coding.

Intercoder Reliability

Two coders coded 226 advertisements. Both coders coded a two-hour tape in order to test intercoder reliability. A week's training was given to both the coders in order to enable them to code the advertisements effectively and to familiarize them with the sub categories. As there were categories with sub categories in them, the intercoder reliability among the coders was calculated using Scott's *pi*, which according to Holsti (1969) "corrects not only for the number of categories in the category set, but also for the probable frequency with which each is used" (p. 140). Erik Tamplin, Jim Marchwick and Cortney Wanca (1997) used a modified version of Holsti's Scott's *pi*, and for this research the modified version of Scott's *pi* has been used.

The coefficient is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Percentage of agreement} = \frac{\text{Total correct} - \text{Total incorrect}}{\text{Total number measured}}$$

Coding

In regard to coding of advertisements, only those advertisements were coded which had at least one female character who was a central figure. Central figure for this study was an adult female playing a major role by virtue of either speaking or having an exposure on screen for duration of three seconds or more.

The decision to use similar coding categories as those used in previous research was taken in order to allow for increased internal validity and ease in comparing results with past findings. Once the coding was completed the data was analyzed using frequencies, percentages and crosstabs using SPSS. In addition a two-way contingency analysis was conducted to further evaluate the findings.

Coding Categories

There are eight coding categories including age, etc. Specific coding categories for each dominant character or the central figures are: age, product use, occupation, voiceover, product representative, stance and product type. Previous research has suggested that the depicted age of the female figure is important (Culley & Bennett, 1976). Hence, each dominant character was coded from contextual clues for age according to the following scale: 18-35 years were considered as young; 36-55 years were considered as middle aged; 56 years and above were considered as old.

Product Use: this looks at the prime purchaser of the product. Research indicates that women are often depicted as engaged in the use of the product being advertised (Courtney & Lockeretz, 1971; Courtney & Whipple, 1974; Dominick & Rauch, 1972). Hence, the dominant characters were coded for product use through the following situations: a) using the product which is being advertised; b) having the product being used on him/her; c) having the product used for his/her benefit. If none of the above situations were applicable, then the character was coded as a non-user.

Occupation: according to the stereotype, women are best as mothers or housewives. If they are working then it is either as a secretary or in non-professional jobs (Bardwick & Schumann, 1967). In order to test this assumption, central figures were coded for occupation through the following sub categories. Family/home: central figures, which were depicted with children and/or spouse in a home environment; or engaged in any type of domestic activity such as cleaning, serving food, cooking etc, were considered as housewives or homemakers. Professionals: central figures portrayed as doctors, lawyers, politicians or any other profession, which is considered to be of a professional nature. Business management: a person engaged in any business activity (e.g.: debt reduction advertisement such as the Ameridebt, or bank advertisements). Media/Entertainment: known public figures in entertainment or sports. Service: waitresses, gas station attendants, or any other service/repair field. Clerical: secretaries, sales associate, clerk. Other- any occupation which was unclear, did not fit into one of the above categories, or fit into more than one category.

Voiceovers/Narrators: research on stereotyping of women found that men dominate voiceovers for commercials. A woman failing to function as a product spokesperson, where she does not make claims about the product is an important part of stereotyping of women. Closely tied in with this finding is that when women do serve as spokespersons, their authority most likely stems from the product use, rather than from authority (Flerx et al., 1976; Knill, et al., 1981; McArthur & Resko, 1975). Each advertisement was coded for voiceovers, whether it was a male voice or a female voice.

Product Representative: research in this field indicates that women appear as product representatives in very few commercials and when they do appear it is for products used in the bathroom or the kitchen. Hence it is reinforcing the stereotype that a woman's place is in the house (Bardwick & Schumann, 1967). The central figures were tested for product representative through the following categories: a) male, b) female, c) both and d) can't say.

Stance Subordination: another aspect of stereotypical portrayals investigated by researchers was the stance in which figures appeared (Masse' & Rosenblum, 1988). It was their finding that figures in advertisements were shown sitting, bending, laying down, leaning or standing with an out-thrust hip (in other words, shown in subordinate positions) were most likely to be female. In order to determine whether such subordinate positions still exists today, the dominant characters were be coded for stance subordination. Therefore the dominant characters were coded for stance according to: a) whether the stance indicated subordination, or b) a stance in which the character was not shown in a subordinated position.

Product Types: women have been associated primarily with household products (Courtney & Whipple, 1974; Dominick & Rauch, 1972). The dominant characters were coded for product types as follows: a) foodstuffs: Any type of food or beverages; b) personal hygiene: all personal hygiene products with unisex appeal like deodorants, soaps, shampoos etc; c) home products: included exterior and interior household goods like furniture, household cleaners, laundry, dish detergents etc d) car/ related products: including all automotive vehicles advertisements, as well as gasoline, oil, maintenance and repair advertisements; e) electronic and communications: all advertisements pertaining to electronic or communication were coded for the gender of the dominant character; f) restaurants; g) insurance/bank; and h) other: includes advertisements for jewellery, clothing etc.

Chapter IV

Results

The sample was comprised of television advertisements run on one of three chosen networks, ABC, CBS and NBC. A total of 226 advertisements were coded.

Each advertisement was initially coded as to central figure. The central figure was coded as male or a female. Central figure for this study has been defined as a person who has a major role in the advertisement by virtue of speaking or having a visual exposure of three seconds or more on screen. In addition, each central figure in the advertisement was coded for the following categories: 1) age; 2) product use; 3) occupation; 4) voiceover; 5) product representative; 6) stance; and 7) product types.

Two coders coded 226 advertisements. For training, both the coders coded two hours of commercials over a period of a week. This was done to familiarize them with all the coding categories. Each coder coded a two-hour tape for advertisements that was equivalent to 10% of the total sample (the total sample was 12 hours) for intercoder reliability. The coefficient was calculated as:

$$\text{Percent of agreement} = \frac{\text{Total correct} - \text{Total incorrect}}{\text{Total number measured}}$$

The total number of advertisements coded by both coders from a two-hour tape was 27. The total number of categories for each advertisement was eight. Hence the total number measured would be 27 times eight, which is equal to 216 ($27 * 8 = 216$). However, both the coders disagreed on three cases; therefore the total number incorrect was three.

Percentage of agreement was calculated as follows:

$$\frac{216 - 3}{216} = .98$$

$$216$$

Note: 0 (perfect disagreement) < pi > 1 (perfect agreement)

Overall intercoder reliability coefficient was between .97 and .98.

H1: For the Age Range 18 to 35 years Women in Television Commercials are Younger than their Male Counterparts

For H1, females were represented much more often than males as central figures in the young category. While males and females were close in regard to representation as central figures in the advertisements, women were slightly more likely to be portrayed as a central figure. Specifically, of the central figures in the advertisements, 46% were men, while 49.1% were women and remaining were found in the unsure and both category.

Strong differences were found among the representations of women and men in the category of age group. In the “young” category, females were portrayed as central figures much more often than the males. Specifically, the females were portrayed as central figures 63.8% of the time, whereas males were only portrayed as central figures 35.4% of the time. The remaining belonged in the “unsure” category which attributed to about point-eight percent. The situation was reversed for the categories of “middle-age” and “old”. Men were portrayed 56.2% of the time as “middle-age” versus 37% of the time for women and the remaining 1.4% and 5.5% were in the “unsure” and “both” category. Ninety-four-point-four percent of the time, men were portrayed as “old”, versus 5.6% of the time for women.

H1 states that for the age range 18 to 35 years, women in television commercials are younger than their male counterparts. For the young category 46 males (44.2%) were reported as the central figure while 83 females (74.8%) were reported as the central figure.

To further evaluate the central figure, a two-way contingency analysis was run. The variables were age with three levels (“young”, “middle-age” and “old”) and central figure with two levels (“male” and “female”). Age and central figures were found to be significantly related. (Pearson χ^2 (2, $N=215$) = 27.518; $p = .0001$, Cramer’s $V = .0001$).

H2: More Women than Men are Product Users in Television Commercials

H2, that more women than men are product users in television commercials was not supported. Women were depicted more often 50.3% of the times as “product users” than for men 44.9% of the time. However, the difference between males and females in the category of product use is not much. Men were portrayed 51.2% of the times as “non-users” and women were portrayed 43.9% of the times as “non-users”.

Therefore a two-way contingency table analysis was conducted to evaluate whether women tend to be product users more than men in television commercials. The variables were product use with two levels (“user” and “non-user”) and central figure with two levels (“male” and “female”). Product use and central figure were not found to be significantly related. (Pearson χ^2 (1, $N = 215$) = .572; $p = .450$, Cramer’s $V = .450$).

H3: Women’s Primary Occupation in Television Commercials is as Homemakers

H3, that women’s primary occupation in television commercials is as homemakers and they are very rarely shown in professional occupations, was supported.

Central Figure

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	104	46.0	46.0	46.0
	Female	111	49.1	49.1	95.1
	Unsure	6	2.7	2.7	97.8
	Both	5	2.2	2.2	100.0
	Total	226	100.0	100.0	

Central Figure

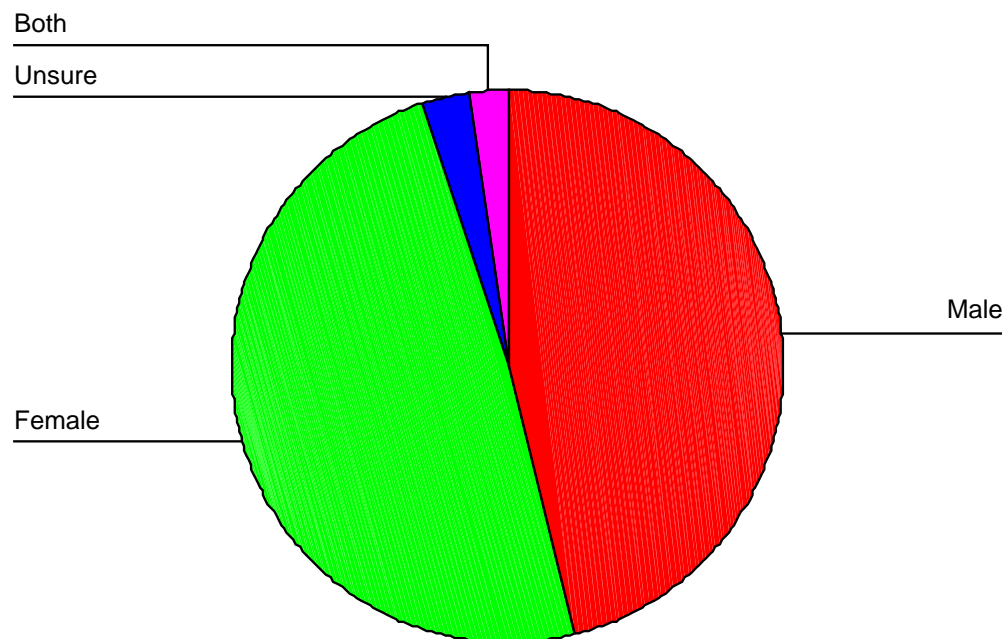


Figure 1: Central Figure SPSS output

Central Figure * Age Crosstabulation

			Age				Total
			Young	Middle Aged	Old	Can't Say	
Central Figure	Male	Count	46	41	17		104
		% within Central Figure	44.2%	39.4%	16.3%		100.0%
		% within Age	35.4%	56.2%	94.4%		46.0%
		% of Total	20.4%	18.1%	7.5%		46.0%
	Female	Count	83	27	1		111
		% within Central Figure	74.8%	24.3%	.9%		100.0%
		% within Age	63.8%	37.0%	5.6%		49.1%
		% of Total	36.7%	11.9%	.4%		49.1%
	Unsure	Count		1		5	6
		% within Central Figure		16.7%		83.3%	100.0%
		% within Age		1.4%		100.0%	2.7%
		% of Total		.4%		2.2%	2.7%
	Both	Count	1	4			5
		% within Central Figure	20.0%	80.0%			100.0%
		% within Age	.8%	5.5%			2.2%
		% of Total	.4%	1.8%			2.2%
Total		Count	130	73	18	5	226
		% within Central Figure	57.5%	32.3%	8.0%	2.2%	100.0%
		% within Age	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	57.5%	32.3%	8.0%	2.2%	100.0%

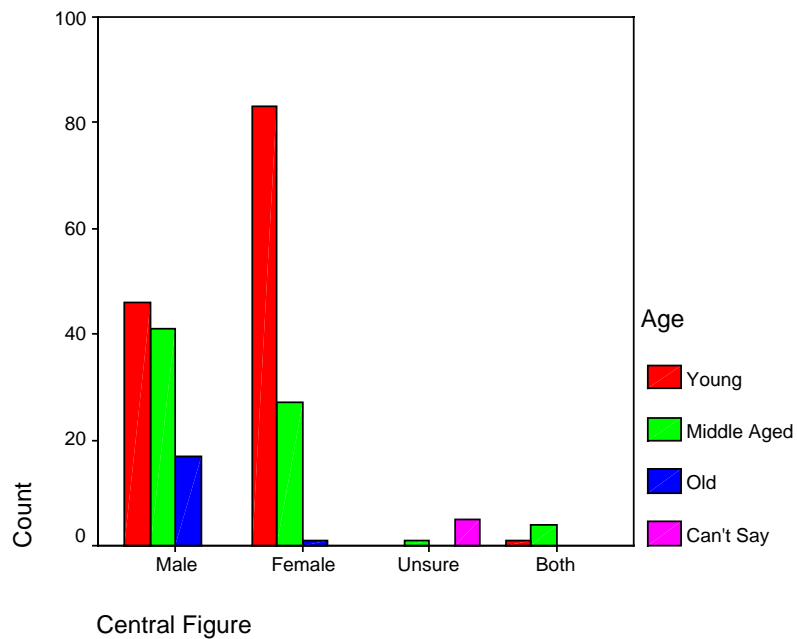


Figure 2: H1 SPSS output

Central Figure * Age Crosstabulation

			Age			Total
			Young	Middle Aged	Old	
Central Figure	Male	Count	46	41	17	104
		Expected Count	62.4	32.9	8.7	104.0
		% within Central Figure	44.2%	39.4%	16.3%	100.0%
	Female	Count	83	27	1	111
		Expected Count	66.6	35.1	9.3	111.0
		% within Central Figure	74.8%	24.3%	.9%	100.0%
Total	Count	129	68	18	215	
	Expected Count	129.0	68.0	18.0	215.0	
	% within Central Figure	60.0%	31.6%	8.4%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27.518 ^a	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	30.667	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	27.095	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	215		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.71.

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.358	.000
Nominal by Nominal Cramer's V	.358	.000
N of Valid Cases	215	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Figure 3: H1 Two-way contingency analysis

Central Figure * Product Use Crosstabulation

			Product Use		Total
			User	Non-User	
Central Figure	Male	Count	83	21	104
		% within Central Figure	79.8%	20.2%	100.0%
		% within Product Use	44.9%	51.2%	46.0%
		% of Total	36.7%	9.3%	46.0%
	Female	Count	93	18	111
		% within Central Figure	83.8%	16.2%	100.0%
		% within Product Use	50.3%	43.9%	49.1%
		% of Total	41.2%	8.0%	49.1%
	Unsure	Count	4	2	6
		% within Central Figure	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
		% within Product Use	2.2%	4.9%	2.7%
		% of Total	1.8%	.9%	2.7%
	Both	Count	5		5
		% within Central Figure	100.0%		100.0%
		% within Product Use	2.7%		2.2%
		% of Total	2.2%		2.2%
Total	Count		185	41	226
	% within Central Figure		81.9%	18.1%	100.0%
	% within Product Use		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total		81.9%	18.1%	100.0%

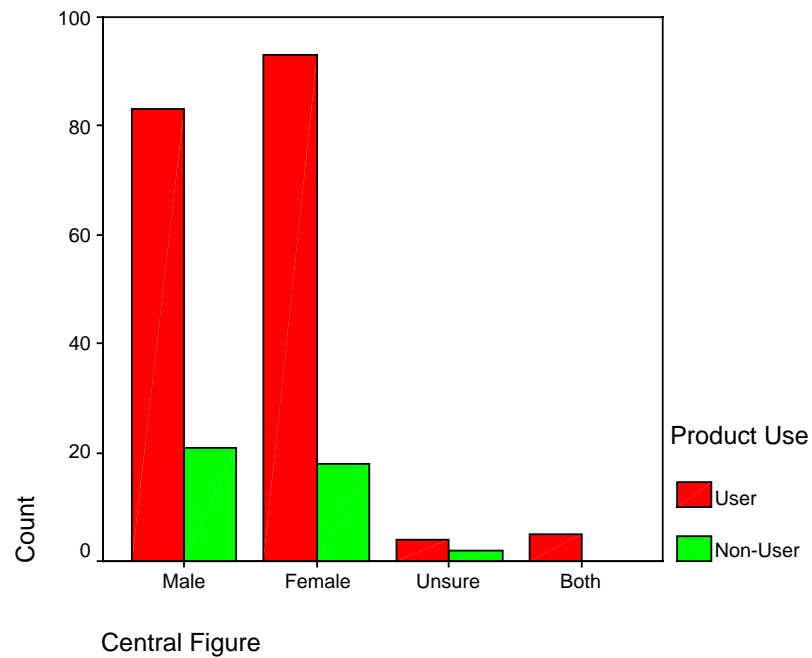


Figure 4: H2 SPSS Output

Central Figure * Product Use Crosstabulation

			Product Use		Total
			User	Non-User	
Central Figure	Male	Count	83	21	104
		Expected Count	85.1	18.9	104.0
		% within Central Figure	79.8%	20.2%	100.0%
	Female	Count	93	18	111
		Expected Count	90.9	20.1	111.0
		% within Central Figure	83.8%	16.2%	100.0%
Total	Count	176	39	215	
	Expected Count	176.0	39.0	215.0	
	% within Central Figure	81.9%	18.1%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.572 ^b	1	.450	.483	.281
Continuity Correction ^a	.335	1	.563		
Likelihood Ratio	.572	1	.450		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	.569	1	.451		
N of Valid Cases	215				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 18.87.

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	-.052	.450
	Cramer's V	.052	.450
N of Valid Cases		215	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Figure 5: H2 Two-way contingency analysis

Significant differences were found between the proportions of women and men depicted in all the categories of occupation. In regard to “family/home” category women were portrayed 61.2 % of the time as having an occupation of a “family/home”, while men were portrayed only 32% of the time in this occupation. Men had higher scores in professional, service, clerical, media/entertainment and business management roles men were preferred over women. Men were depicted in all occupations more than women. A two-way contingency table analysis) was conducted to further evaluate whether women’s primary occupation in television commercials is as homemakers. The variables were occupation with seven levels (“family/home”, “professionals”, “service”, “clerical”, “media/entertainment”, “business management” and “other”) and central figure with two levels (“male” and “female”). Occupation and central figure were found to be significantly related. (Pearson χ^2 (6, $N = 215$) = 19.906; $p = .003$ Cramer’s $V = .003$).

H4: Men Dominate Voiceovers in Current Television Commercials

H4, that men dominate voiceovers in current television commercials, was supported. Previous research has indicated that men have been preferred over women for voiceovers in television commercials (Courtney & Whipple, 1974; Culley & Bennett, 1976; Dominick & Rauch, 1972; Lundstorm & Sciglimpaglia, 1977; McArthur & Resko, 1975; O’Donnell & O’Donnell, 1978; Schneider & Schneider, 1979). Each advertisement was coded for voiceovers. Results indicate that only 44.7% of the advertisements had voiceovers, and the remaining 55.3% of the advertisements did not have any voiceover, because the central figure was talking about the product. A frequency test was done in order to find the percentage of men and women voiceovers.

Central Figure * Occupation Crosstabulation

			Occupation							Total
			Family/Ho me	Professio nals	Service	Clerical	Media/Ente rtainment	Business Managem ent	Other	
Central Figure	Male	Count	33	15	9	3	17	5	22	104
		% within Central Fig	31.7%	14.4%	8.7%	2.9%	16.3%	4.8%	21.2%	100.0%
		% within Occupation	32.0%	65.2%	81.8%	75.0%	65.4%	62.5%	43.1%	46.0%
		% of Total	14.6%	6.6%	4.0%	1.3%	7.5%	2.2%	9.7%	46.0%
	Female	Count	63	8	2	1	9	3	25	111
		% within Central Fig	56.8%	7.2%	1.8%	.9%	8.1%	2.7%	22.5%	100.0%
		% within Occupation	61.2%	34.8%	18.2%	25.0%	34.6%	37.5%	49.0%	49.1%
		% of Total	27.9%	3.5%	.9%	.4%	4.0%	1.3%	11.1%	49.1%
	Unsure	Count	3						3	6
		% within Central Fig	50.0%						50.0%	100.0%
		% within Occupation	2.9%						5.9%	2.7%
		% of Total	1.3%						1.3%	2.7%
	Both	Count	4						1	5
		% within Central Fig	80.0%						20.0%	100.0%
		% within Occupation	3.9%						2.0%	2.2%
		% of Total	1.8%						.4%	2.2%
Total		Count	103	23	11	4	26	8	51	226
		% within Central Fig	45.6%	10.2%	4.9%	1.8%	11.5%	3.5%	22.6%	100.0%
		% within Occupation	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	45.6%	10.2%	4.9%	1.8%	11.5%	3.5%	22.6%	100.0%

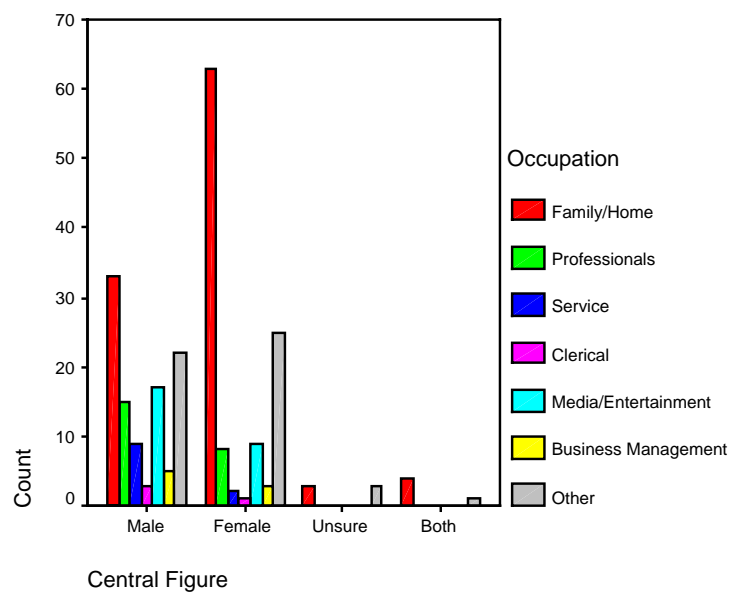


Figure 6: H3 SPSS output

Central Figure * Occupation Crosstabulation

		Occupation							Total
		Family/H ome	Professio nals	Service	Clerical	Media/Ente rtainment	Business Managem ent	Other	
Central Figure	Male								
	Count	33	15	9	3	17	5	22	104
	Expected Count	46.4	11.1	5.3	1.9	12.6	3.9	22.7	104.0
	% within Central	31.7%	14.4%	8.7%	2.9%	16.3%	4.8%	21.2%	100.0%
	Female								
	Count	63	8	2	1	9	3	25	111
	Expected Count	49.6	11.9	5.7	2.1	13.4	4.1	24.3	111.0
	% within Central	56.8%	7.2%	1.8%	.9%	8.1%	2.7%	22.5%	100.0%
	Total								
	Count	96	23	11	4	26	8	47	215
	Expected Count	96.0	23.0	11.0	4.0	26.0	8.0	47.0	215.0
	% within Central	44.7%	10.7%	5.1%	1.9%	12.1%	3.7%	21.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.906 ^a	6	.003
Likelihood Ratio	20.534	6	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.346	1	.067
N of Valid Cases	215		

a. 4 cells (28.6%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.93.

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Phi	.304	.003
Nominal Cramer's V	.304	.003
N of Valid Cases	215	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Figure 7: H3 Two-way contingency analysis

Of the 44.7% of advertisements that did have voiceovers 31% were done using a male voice and only 13.7% were done using a female voice. Sixty nine-point-four percent of the time voiceovers used men while 30.6% of the times voiceovers were using females. Voiceover and central figure were found to be significantly related. (Pearson χ^2 (2, $N = 215$) = 23.574; $p = .0001$, Cramer's $V = .0001$).

H5: Men are Portrayed as Product Representatives More Often than Women

H5, that more men are portrayed as product representatives than women was not supported. All central figures were coded for “product representative” i.e. whether the central figure made claims about the product. A frequency test was conducted to find the percentages of men and women portrayed as product representatives in these television advertisements (See Table 1).

Table 1: Product Representative

<i>Central Figure</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Male	109	48.2
Female	108	47.8
Both	5	2.2
Can't Say	4	1.8
Total	226	100

Results indicate that both men and women were represented almost equally as product representatives. The frequency count for men as “product representatives” was 109 (48.2%) and for women 108 (47.8%). The counts were almost identical.

Voiceover		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No Voiceover	125	55.3	55.3	55.3
	Male	70	31.0	31.0	86.3
	Female	31	13.7	13.7	100.0
	Total	226	100.0	100.0	

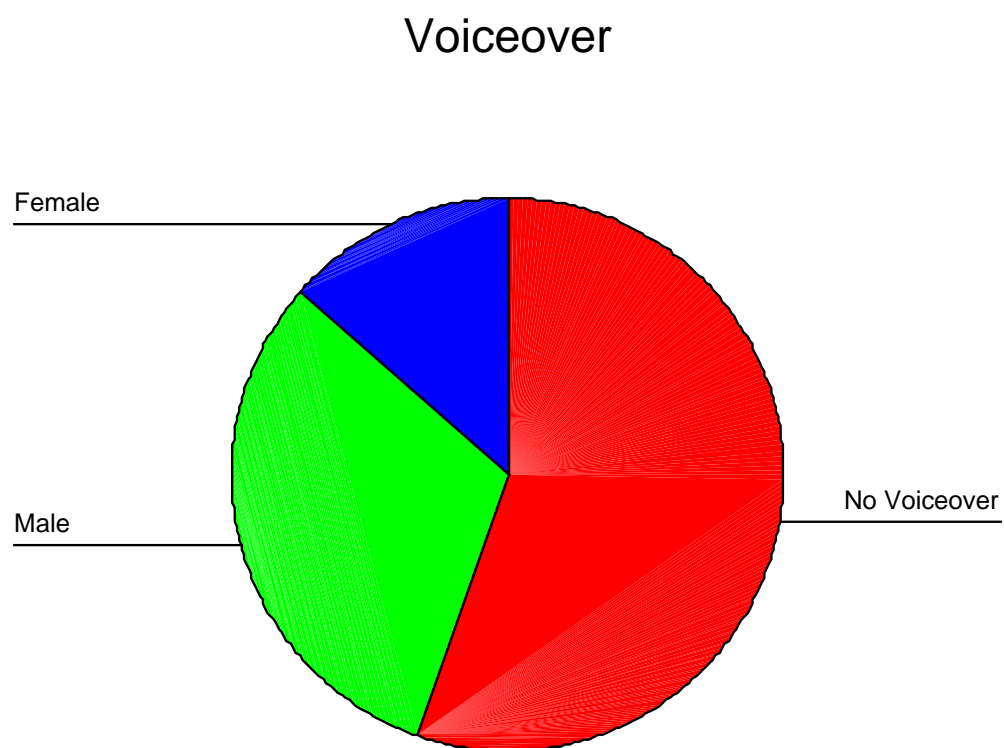


Figure 8: H4 SPSS output

Central Figure * Voiceover Crosstabulation

			Voiceover			Total
			No Voiceover	Male	Female	
Central Figure	Male	Count	66	17	21	104
		Expected Count	59.5	31.4	13.1	104.0
		% within Central Figure	63.5%	16.3%	20.2%	100.0%
	Female	Count	57	48	6	111
		Expected Count	63.5	33.6	13.9	111.0
		% within Central Figure	51.4%	43.2%	5.4%	100.0%
Total	Count	123	65	27	215	
	Expected Count	123.0	65.0	27.0	215.0	
	% within Central Figure	57.2%	30.2%	12.6%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.574 ^a	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	24.660	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.077	1	.782
N of Valid Cases	215		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 13.06.

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.331	.000
Nominal by Nominal Cramer's V	.331	.000
N of Valid Cases	215	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Figure 9: H4 Two-way contingency analysis

		Product Representative			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	109	48.2	48.2	48.2
	Female	108	47.8	47.8	96.0
	Both	5	2.2	2.2	98.2
	Can't Say	4	1.8	1.8	100.0
	Total	226	100.0	100.0	

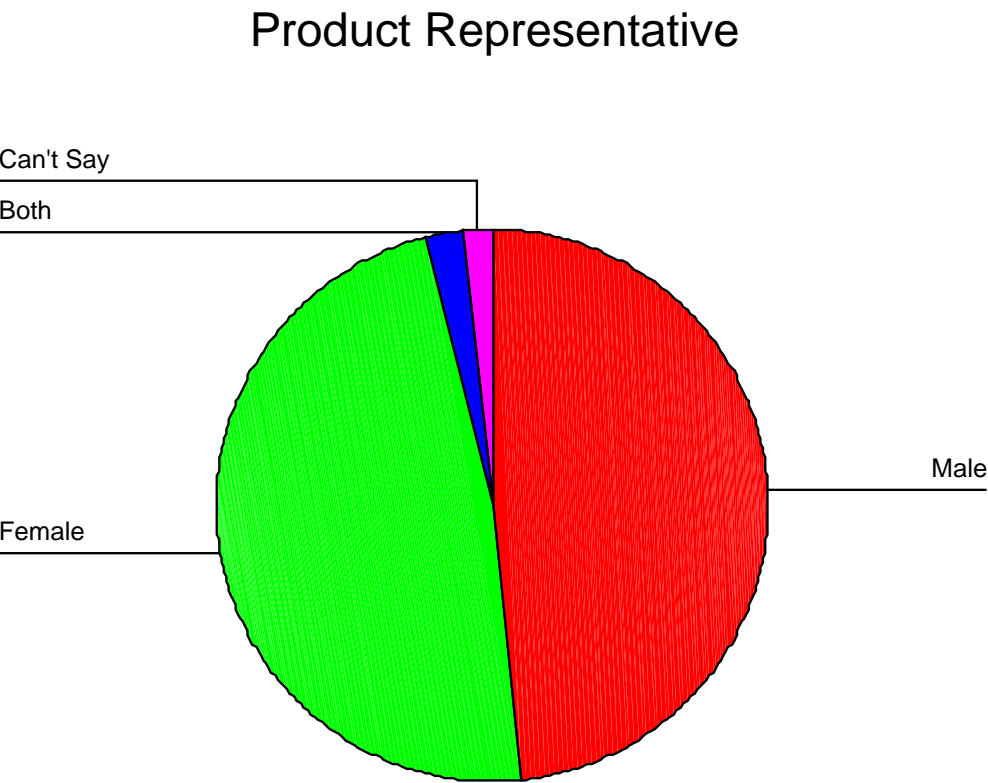


Figure 10: H5 SPSS output

H6: Women are Shown in Subordinate Positions in Most Advertisements

H6, that women are shown in subordinate positions in most advertisements, was partially supported. One of the aspects of stereotypical portrayals discussed by Masse' and Rosenblum (1988) was stance. Masse' and Rosenblum (1988) claimed that most women in television commercials were portrayed in subordinate positions like sitting, bending, laying down or leaning. Each central figure was coded for stance as (1) those in subordinate positions (2) non-subordinate positions (See Table 2).

Table 2: Stance

<i>Stance</i>	<i>Central Figure</i>							
	Male		Female		Unsure		Both	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Subordinate								
Position	8	38.1	12	57.1			1	4.8
Non-								
Subordinate								
Position	96	46.8	99	48.3	6	2.9	4	2.0
Total	104	46.0	111	49.1	6	2.7	5	2.2

After running crosstabs in SPSS, results indicate that more women (57.1%) than men (38.1%) were portrayed in subordinate position and the remaining were of the category "both" (4.8%). In addition a two-way contingency table analysis was conducted

to further evaluate whether women are shown in subordinate positions in most advertisements. The variables were stance with two levels (“subordinate position” and “non-subordinate position”) and central figure with two levels (“male” and “female”). Stance and central figure were not found to be significantly related. (Pearson χ^2 (1, $N = 215$) = .619; $p = .431$, Cramer’s $V = .431$).

H7: Women are Primarily Associated with Household Products

H7, that women are primarily associated with household products, was supported. Women in television commercials have been portrayed as central figures only in commercials about household products (Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Bardwick et al., 1967). A crosstab analysis was conducted to find whether this holds true today.

Women were overwhelmingly portrayed as central figures for home products (76.5%) whereas men were portrayed as central figures in the category of home products only (23.5%) of the time. Both men and women were depicted as central figures equally in the category of foodstuff. In all other categories men had higher scores than women as central figures. In order to see if this difference is statistically significant a two-way contingency table analysis was conducted to further evaluate whether women are primarily associated with household products. The variables were product type with eight levels (“foodstuff”, “personal hygiene”, “home products”, “car/related products”, “electronic/communication”, “restaurants”, “insurance/banks” and “other”) and central figure with two levels (“male” and “female”). Product type and central figure were found to be significantly related (Pearson χ^2 (7, $N = 215$) = 35.467; $p = .0001$, Cramer’s $V = .0001$).

Central Figure * Stance Crosstabulation

			Stance		Total
			Subordinate Position	Non-Subordinate Position	
Central Figure	Male	Count	8	96	104
		% within Central Figure	7.7%	92.3%	100.0%
		% within Stance	38.1%	46.8%	46.0%
		% of Total	3.5%	42.5%	46.0%
	Female	Count	12	99	111
		% within Central Figure	10.8%	89.2%	100.0%
		% within Stance	57.1%	48.3%	49.1%
		% of Total	5.3%	43.8%	49.1%
	Unsure	Count		6	6
		% within Central Figure		100.0%	100.0%
		% within Stance		2.9%	2.7%
		% of Total		2.7%	2.7%
	Both	Count	1	4	5
		% within Central Figure	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
		% within Stance	4.8%	2.0%	2.2%
		% of Total	.4%	1.8%	2.2%
Total	Count	21	205	226	
	% within Central Figure	9.3%	90.7%	100.0%	
	% within Stance	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	9.3%	90.7%	100.0%	

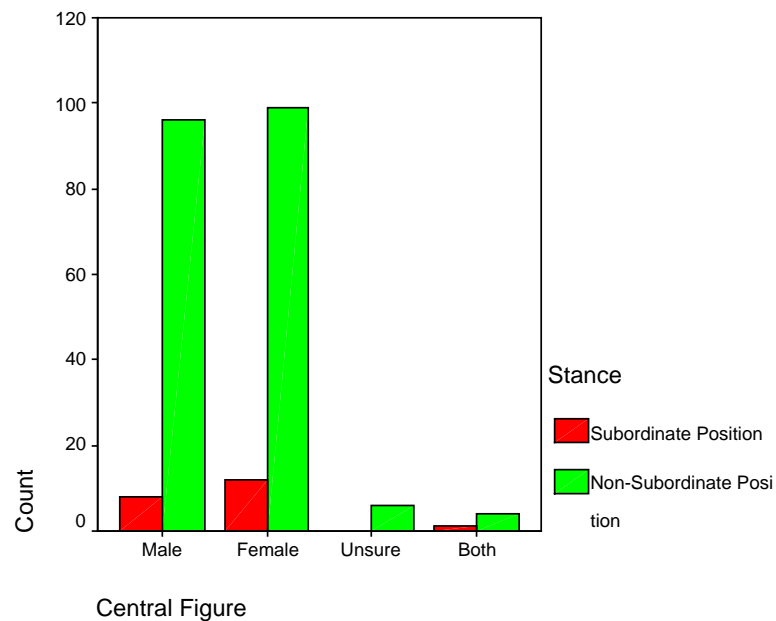


Figure 11: H6 SPSS Output

Central Figure * Stance Crosstabulation

			Stance		Total
			Subordinate Position	Non-Subordinate Position	
Central Figure	Male	Count	8	96	104
		Expected Count	9.7	94.3	104.0
		% within Central Figure	7.7%	92.3%	100.0%
	Female	Count	12	99	111
		Expected Count	10.3	100.7	111.0
		% within Central Figure	10.8%	89.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	20	195	215
		Expected Count	20.0	195.0	215.0
		% within Central Figure	9.3%	90.7%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.619 ^b	1	.431	.487	.292
Continuity Correction ^a	.304	1	.581		
Likelihood Ratio	.624	1	.430		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	.616	1	.433		
N of Valid Cases	215				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.67.

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	-.054	.431
Nominal by Nominal Cramer's V	.054	.431
N of Valid Cases	215	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Figure 12: H6 Two-way contingency analysis

Central Figure * Product type Crosstabulation

			Product type								Total
			Foodstuff	Personal Hygiene	Home Products	Car/Related Products	Electronic/Communications	Restaurants	Insurance/Banks	Other	
Central Figure	Male	Count	14	26	8	20	11	6	11	8	104
		% within Central Figure	13.5%	25.0%	7.7%	19.2%	10.6%	5.8%	10.6%	7.7%	100.0%
		% within Product type	46.7%	32.9%	23.5%	87.0%	47.8%	85.7%	64.7%	61.5%	46.0%
		% of Total	6.2%	11.5%	3.5%	8.8%	4.9%	2.7%	4.9%	3.5%	46.0%
	Female	Count	15	48	26	3	8	1	5	5	111
		% within Central Figure	13.5%	43.2%	23.4%	2.7%	7.2%	.9%	4.5%	4.5%	100.0%
		% within Product type	50.0%	60.8%	76.5%	13.0%	34.8%	14.3%	29.4%	38.5%	49.1%
		% of Total	6.6%	21.2%	11.5%	1.3%	3.5%	.4%	2.2%	2.2%	49.1%
	Unsure	Count	1	3			2				6
		% within Central Figure	16.7%	50.0%			33.3%				100.0%
		% within Product type	3.3%	3.8%			8.7%				2.7%
		% of Total	.4%	1.3%			.9%				2.7%
Both	Count		2			2		1		5	
	% within Central Figure		40.0%			40.0%		20.0%		100.0%	
	% within Product type		2.5%			8.7%		5.9%		2.2%	
	% of Total		.9%			.9%		.4%		2.2%	
Total		Count	30	79	34	23	23	7	17	13	226
		% within Central Figure	13.3%	35.0%	15.0%	10.2%	10.2%	3.1%	7.5%	5.8%	100.0%
		% within Product type	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	13.3%	35.0%	15.0%	10.2%	10.2%	3.1%	7.5%	5.8%	100.0%

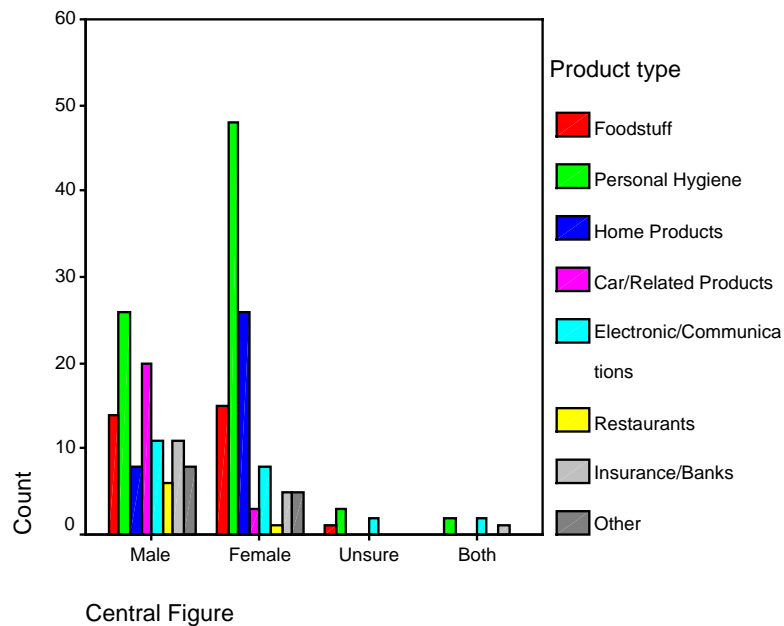


Figure 13: H7 SPSS output

Central Figure * Product type Crosstabulation

		Product type								Total
		Foodstuff	Personal Hygiene	Home Products	Car/Related Products	Electronic/Communications	Restaurants	Insurance/Banks	Other	
Central Male Figure	Count									
	Expected Count	14.0	35.8	16.4	11.1	9.2	3.4	7.7	6.3	104.0
	% within Central Figure	13.5%	25.0%	7.7%	19.2%	10.6%	5.8%	10.6%	7.7%	100.0%
	Female Count	15	48	26	3	8	1	5	5	111
	Expected Count	15.0	38.2	17.6	11.9	9.8	3.6	8.3	6.7	111.0
	% within Central Figure	13.5%	43.2%	23.4%	2.7%	7.2%	.9%	4.5%	4.5%	100.0%
Total	Count	29	74	34	23	19	7	16	13	215
	Expected Count	29.0	74.0	34.0	23.0	19.0	7.0	16.0	13.0	215.0
	% within Central Figure	13.5%	34.4%	15.8%	10.7%	8.8%	3.3%	7.4%	6.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	35.467 ^a	7	.000
Likelihood Ratio	37.996	7	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.824	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	215		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.39.

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.406	.000
Nominal by Nominal Cramer's V	.406	.000
N of Valid Cases	215	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Figure 14: H7 Two-way contingency analysis

Chapter V

Discussion

When an advertiser chooses to portray a woman in advertising, the proper role portrayal becomes a central issue. This is particularly relevant in advertising scenarios today, since evidence indicates that women are more aware than men of stereotyped female portrayals in advertising (Lull, Hanson & Marx, 1997). Previous studies have examined stereotypical portrayals of women in advertising in great detail. This study was meant to be a preliminary attempt to quantify the current portrayals of women in television commercials. The results of the study indicate that some changes in the portrayal of women have taken place over time, however several differences still remain.

Males and females now appear approximately equally as often as central figures in television commercials, and this represents a change from previous research. (Courtney & Whipple, 1974; Culley & Bennett, 1976; Dominick & Rauch, 1972; Lundstorm & Sciglimpaglia, 1977; McArthur & Resko, 1975; O'Donnell & O'Donnell, 1978; Schneider & Schneider, 1979). In fact the results of this study for the central figure in an advertisement indicated that more women than men are appearing as central figures in television advertising.

As noted previously, more females than males were portrayed in the age group of “young”. Men were more likely to be depicted as “middle-age” or “old”. This study’s results document little change from previous studies in this category as women are still portrayed overwhelmingly in the “young” category. Most likely, this is not part of a trend toward realistic portrayals of women; it is simply a marketing strategy on the part of the

advertisers as a young and beautiful face is likely to attract the attention of the viewer. On the other hand, in contrast to women, men were portrayed as “middle-aged” and “old”, giving an impression of maturity and experience. Hence, H1 was supported.

Previous research has indicated that women were mostly portrayed as “product users” and not as product authorities in most television and print advertisements (Courtney & Whipple, 1974; O’Donnell & O’Donnell, 1978). As a corollary to this, the fact that both genders were overwhelmingly portrayed as “non-product users” is of note. Though the findings for this study indicate that more women than men were portrayed as “product users”, the difference was small between men and women in the “product user” category. Further analysis revealed that this difference was not a significant one and hence H2 was not supported. This shows a change from previous studies in the portrayal of women, as they are not being depicted solely as “product users”.

Studies from late 1960s indicate a lack of women in professional roles (Bardwick & Schumann, 1967; McArthur & Resko, 1975; Courtney & Whipple, 1974; Dominick & Rauch, 1972). When women were portrayed in occupational roles, it was in clerical or secretarial jobs with no authority. Data for this thesis reveals that even today women are portrayed mostly in “family/home” settings, while men were portrayed more often in “professional”, “service”, “clerical”, “media/entertainment” and “business management” roles. Hence, H3 was supported. This reinforces the stereotype that ‘a woman’s place is in the home.’ These advertisements fail to show the true range of women’s roles in our society.

Men have dominated voiceovers in television commercials in the past. Courtney and Whipple (1974) reported that men represented approximately 88% of all voiceovers in television commercials. O'Donnell and O'Donnell (1978) reported that 93% of the narrators were male. Our data reveals that the same trend continues as of the 44.7% of the advertisements that did have voiceovers 31% were done using a male voice. Hence, H4 was also supported.

Previous research has indicated that men were represented as product representatives, making claims about the product being advertised. Men were portrayed as product representatives because they were depicted as more authoritative and capable of taking decisions (Bardwick & Schumann, 1967; Courtney & Whipple, 1974; Dominick & Rauch, 1972; McArthur & Resko, 1975). Women were very rarely depicted as product representatives as they were portrayed in the stereotype of 'women are dependent on men and not capable of taking a decision'. The results of this study indicate that both genders were almost equally represented as product representatives. This shows a new trend towards portrayal of women on a more equal footing. Hence, H5 was not supported.

Masse' and Rosenblum (1988) found another aspect of stereotypical portrayals of women in commercials. Women were depicted in subordinate positions like sitting, leaning or laying down, in comparison to their male counterparts. From this study data reveals that this stereotype of stance does not apply to today's television commercials. In most advertisements, both males and females were depicted in "non-subordinate" positions. The number of males and females that were depicted in "subordinate" positions

was very small. Further analysis revealed that this number was not a very significant one and hence, H6 was partially supported.

In the past women in television commercials have been portrayed as central figures only in commercials about “household products” (Bretl & Cantor, 1988). Results for this study indicate that women as central figures are still associated with “household products” in television commercials. Women are also increasingly being portrayed as central figures in the “personal hygiene” category. Hence, we can safely say that H7 was supported. There is no change in the stereotype associated with women in this category.

In summary, women are still portrayed overwhelmingly in the “young” age group, “family/home” being their primary occupation. Voiceovers are still predominantly male rather than female, and women are still primarily portrayed as central figures in advertisements for “household” products. In all the above-mentioned categories there was no change recorded from the past studies. However, women are no longer being portrayed only as “product-users” in the commercials. They are also being depicted as “product representatives” and they are not depicted as often in “subordinate positions”. This does indicate that some changes in the direction of more equal representation of men and women have taken place. However, the “happy housewife” stereotype does exist even today.

While this research examined current portrayal of women in television commercials, there are still many areas which have not been studied. While stereotyping exists and is pervasive in our media we do not know if it is pervasive in other countries.

Little research has been done studying the stereotypes in other parts of the world. Future research could investigate this possibility.

This study has documented only the stereotypes that are present in television advertisements. Previous researchers for stereotyping have studied print advertisements. However, few studies have been conducted comparing the stereotypes that exist in print advertisements and television advertisements. None of these have been done recently. Research into current print advertisements could be compared with this research. This would provide a better understanding of the current state of stereotypes.

This study investigated the stereotypes that exist in television commercials by studying three networks, ABC, CBS and NBC for specific time periods. However, no comparisons were drawn between the networks or morning and evening time periods. A future study could investigate stereotypes, comparing networks and time periods.

Media researchers have closely associated stereotyping with women. Additional studies in male stereotyping would be useful in the future. The prevailing popular assumption seems to be that there are no male stereotypes, and that if there are, they are not ‘degrading’ and ‘limiting’ as those of women. Little research has been done in this area.

In conclusion, it is apparent that stereotypes exist today and the “happy housewife” stereotype is predominant in television commercials. While this may not be harmful, it does not reflect the total picture of women in general. Television cultivates a view of the world. A more inclusive depiction of women would provide women in general particularly young women with options and role model.

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Appendix A: Coding Bible

All commercials in which there was an adult male or female central figure was coded. Advertisements in which children appeared as the central figure, or advertisements with special characters e.g., cartoons, animals etc were not included. In order to be coded, an advertisement had to be the one that was telecast on one of the three networks: ABC, CBS and NBC.

Central figure for this study was defined as an adult male and/or female playing a major role in a commercial by virtue of either speaking or having prominent visual exposure on screen. The coding categories for each dominant character or central figures were defined as follows:

- 1) Age: Each dominant character was coded for age from contextual clues according to the following scale—
 - a) 18 to 35 years = were defined as young
 - b) 36 to 55 years = were defined as middle-aged
 - c) 55 years and above = were defined as old
 - d) Can't say
- 2) Product use: Previous research into portrayal of women in advertising suggests that females are more often depicted as engaged in the use of the product being advertised. Hence each dominant character was coded for product use. If a character depicted in the advertisement was engaged in one or more of these situations, he/ she was considered as a product user. The situations are:
 - a) Using the product which is being advertised;

- b) Having the product being used on him/her; or
- c) Having the product used for his/her benefit.

If none of the above situations were applicable, then the character was coded as a non-user.

3) Occupation: Central figures were coded for occupation according to the following categories:

- a) Family/home: Central figures, which were depicted with children and/or spouse in a home environment; or engaged in any type of domestic activity such as cleaning, serving food, cooking etc were considered as housewives or homemakers.
- b) Professionals: Central figures portrayed as doctors, lawyers, politicians or any other profession, which is considered to be of a professional nature.
- c) Business management: A person engaged in any business activity (e.g.: debt reduction advertisement such as the Ameridebt, or bank advertisements).
- d) Media/Entertainment: Known public figures in entertainment or sports.
- e) Service: Waitresses, gas station attendants, or any other service/repair field.
- f) Clerical: secretaries, sales associate, clerk.
- g) Other- any occupation which was unclear or did not fit into one of the above categories.

The above categories are expected to overlap in some cases.

- 4) Voiceovers/Narrators: Voiceovers or Narrators have been defined as the off-camera voice explaining a particular product, excluding jingles or situations in which the product representative was also the voiceover.
- 5) Product Representative: Product representatives have been defined as those who made claims about a product or who acted as an agent or a convincer for that product, e.g. Oxyclean advertisement.
- 6) Stance subordination: Under this category the stance in which the figures were posed was studied, like sitting, bending, laying down, leaning or standing (depicting slouching, drooping shoulders etc). In other words, shown in subordinate positions. Therefore the dominant characters were coded for stance according to-
 - a) Whether the stance indicated subordination, or
 - b) A stance in which the character was not shown in a subordinated position.
- 7) Product Types: women have been associated primarily with household products. The dominant characters were coded for product types as follows—
 - a) Foodstuffs: Any type of food or beverages.
 - b) Personal hygiene: All personal hygiene products with unisexual appeal like deodorants, soaps, shampoos etc.
 - c) Home products: Included exterior and interior household goods like furniture, household cleaners, laundry, dish detergents etc.
 - d) Car/ related products: including all automotive vehicles advertisements, as well as gasoline, oil, maintenance and repair advertisements.

- e) Electronic and Communications: All advertisements pertaining to electronic or communication were coded for the gender of the dominant character.
- f) Restaurants
- g) Insurance/Banks
- h) Other: Includes advertisements for jewellery, clothing etc.

Appendix B: Coding Sheet

Ad #: _____

<i>Central Figure</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Product Use</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Voiceovers/ Narrators</i>	<i>Product Representative</i>	<i>Stance</i>	<i>Product Types</i>
Male (1):	Young (1):	User (1):	Family/Home (1):	Male (1):	Male (1):	Subordinate Position (1):	Foodstuff (1):
Female (2):	Middle-aged (2):	Non-User (2):	Professionals (2):	Female (2):	Female (2):	Non-Subordinate Position (2):	Personal Hygiene (2):
Unsure (3):	Old (3):		Service (3):		Both (3):		Home Products (3):
Both (4):	Can't Say (4):		Clerical (4):		Can't Say (4):		Car/related Products (4):
			Media/Entertainment (5):				Electronic/Communication (5):
			Business Management (6):				Restaurants (6):
			Other (7):				Insurance/Banks (7):
							Other (8):

Vita

The author was born in New Delhi, the capital city of India. After finishing her high school she joined University of Pune. The author graduated with distinction from University of Pune, India, in 1998 and received her bachelor's degree in commerce. She went on to do her master's in mass communication from the Department of Communication Studies from University of Pune and graduated 2nd in merit in 2000. In the fall of 2001, she came to the United States to begin her graduate studies at the Manship School of Mass Communication, Louisiana State University. She is the 2002 recipient of the Charles P. Manship outstanding graduate student award. She is set to graduate with a master's degree in August 2003.