Just For Men: The Representation of Masculinities in Grooming Product Advertising

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study is to analyze advertisements for grooming products in order to uncover what these texts communicate about contemporary men and masculinity. To support the present research, a theoretical framework consisting of three sections is provided. First, the concepts of ideology, representation and communication are discussed, with regards to how they operate in advertising. Second, critical social and cultural research on theorizing the body is integrated. Third, theories on the social construction of gender and shifting conceptions of masculinity are outlined and evaluated. Next, a literature review gives insight to how men, masculinity and male bodies are represented in magazine advertising. The examination of this research makes clear the timely relevance of exploring grooming product ads specifically. Cosmetics, once reserved to beautify the bodies of women, are now being aggressively aimed at men. This begs the question of whether this shift in marketing denotes a break with certain normative gendered representations within the mass media. Through conducting a thematic discourse analysis on a sample of advertisements from 2011 to 2013, I argue that advertising for male grooming products are coded as necessarily gendered and inherently 'manly'. While the act of grooming one's body has been historically associated with femininity, advertisers often draw upon traditionally masculine conventions, ideals and stereotypes. However, masculinities are also constructed as heterogeneous and pluralized; as a fragment of the male identity that varies across ages, classes and ethnicities.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past thirty years, the roles of advertising in Western society have been subjects of interest and inquiry for social researchers from many academic disciplines (e.g. Williamson, 1978; Jhally, 1986; Wernick, 1991; Baudrillard, 1996; Kilbourne, 2000; Soar, 2000; Leiss et al., 2005; Berger, 2011; Jackson, Nielsen & Hsu, 2011). As is now well known, we live in a society that is highly saturated with media and we are able to read these images as representing aspects of our culture (Jhally, 1986; Leiss et al., 2005; Berger, 2011; Hall, 2013). Advertisements, consisting of both text and images, are capable of signifying an array of messages and meanings (Barthes, 1972; Hall, 1982). Media scholars are often drawn to analyze the numerous other messages embedded in an advertisement besides its most obvious profit-making motive. In fact, our desire to uncover meaning is not limited to advertising alone. British cultural theorist Rosalind Gill (2003) argues that, "we have become a culture preoccupied with interpreting itself – discovering or producing meaning in anything and everything" (p. 54). However, advertising, in part due to its omnipresence within our contemporary mediated society, is a relevant point of entry for the interpretation of various social, cultural and structural phenomena. A particular sociocultural element that is very commonly represented in advertising is gender. Many researchers have examined how advertising not only depicts, but also helps to *construct* gendered identities (e.g. Goffman, 1976; Barthel, 1988; Jhally, 1990; Gill, 2007; Ross, 2013). Certain social scientists have specifically focused on how men and masculinity are constructed within different types of advertising (e.g. Kervin, 1990; Kolbe & Albanese, 1997; Bordo, 1999; Dotson, 1999; Katz, 2002; Alexander,

2003; MacKinnon, 2003; Schroeder & Zwick, 2004). In addition, other empirical studies have sought to measure how media representations may influence men's understanding and expectations of masculinity and male bodies (e.g. Stevenson et al., 2003, Agliata & Tantleff-Dunn, 2004; Giles & Close, 2008; Gill, 2008; Zayer & Otnes, 2012).

The purpose of this research is to further develop the critical investigation of the representation of men and masculinity in advertisements. Specifically, advertising for male grooming products is the focus of analysis. As will be discussed, male grooming products and their concordant ad campaigns have proliferated in recent years. Indeed, the male cosmetics consumer market has been growing rapidly and is projected to become the largest category of men's commodities (Tungate, 2008, p. 13). This expansion of male grooming products can be easily observed in our daily lives. If one walks through a pharmacy, one is likely to see a vast supply of shampoos, soaps, creams and body sprays with clear logo that states 'for men'. As a researcher, it is necessary to take into account not only the emergence of this market and how male consumers are targeted, but also the ways in which these new products and associated practices have cultural implications. To use the terms of British sociologist Tim Edwards (2003), this topic will be addressed as both a "cultural text" and a "cultural phenomenon" (p. 134). Advertising for male grooming products will be qualitatively analyzed as texts that represent cultural conceptions of men, men's bodies and masculinity. What and how these texts communicate about male grooming will be considered as a part of a historically specific cultural phenomenon that is necessarily bound up with social ideals and categorizations of gender, race, age, class, sexuality, health and bodies.

In order to provide necessary theoretical foundations to inform and guide this original research, Chapter 1 consists of a three-fold theoretical framework. The purpose of the Theoretical Framework is not only to elucidate concepts that need be understood by the reader in order to comprehend the project at hand, but also to situate my work in and through historical frames of academic thought. Put differently, the theories explored in this section showcase, in a sense, my scholarly lineage and in turn, how I interpret my own research. The first part of the framework, entitled "Ideology, Representation and Communication", provides theoretical underpinnings to support a sociological analysis of advertisements. The second part, entitled "Bodies and Embodiments in a Biopolitical Age", examines how the body, and in particular, the male body, have been theorized within critical social and cultural research. Lastly, the third part, entitled "The Social Construction of Gender and Masculinity", outlines a working definition of gender as something performed, rather than something possessed. In addition, historical archetypes or conceptions of masculinity are described in order to present how masculinity has been understood in Western culture across a relevant time frame.

Chapter 2 of this project consists of a review of literature on relevant topics. Through the synthesis of theoretical and empirical studies, I begin with examining how men and masculinity are represented in contemporary magazines and advertising. In doing so, I pay particular attention to trends surrounding the representation of gender roles and relations, but also ethnicity and sexuality. Then, I review literature that charts the rise of the exposed male body in the media. In addition, I address studies that investigate the types of body maintenance – or, bodywork – that men engage in, and also, how men experience bodywork with regards to how they perceive masculinity.

Accordingly, I include a discussion of the social and cultural meanings attached to grooming, and particular empirical data about grooming product sales and use.

The methodological approach adopted for this research is described in Chapter 3. I begin with providing a description of *Esquire* Magazine, as it is the particular periodical that the research sample was retrieved from. Then, the sample itself is described in terms of selection, relevance and basic statistics. A number of tables and graphs are used to illustrate various frequency distributions within the sample. Next, two common methodological approaches to analyzing advertisements – content and semiotic analyses – are outlined and their limitations are highlighted. Following this critique, I sketch the guidelines of a thematic discourse analysis and justify why it is the chosen method for this project. Accordingly, the steps of this method, as provided by Braun & Clarke (2006), are then applied to the current research corpus.

Chapter 4 – entitled "What Do These Ads Communicate?" – is where the data analysis is presented and crafted into five distinct thematic categories. They are: (1) "Body Responsibility and Control"; (2) "Manning Up"; (3)"Explicit and Implicit Heterosexuality"; (4) "Work and Family"; (5) "Nostalgia". These themes were developed with careful attention to and analysis of the sample of advertisements. They are what the researcher considers to be the most prevalent five themes within the entire sample. The categories themselves are defined and then, a number of ads will be drawn upon as noteworthy examples to illuminate and justify each theme. An image of a particular exemplar ad is included in the body of the text under each category, while the other ads referenced are found in the Appendix.

Following the discourse analysis is an accompanying chapter – "How Do These Ads Communicate?" – which discusses some of the structural properties of the sample of advertisements. There are four separate sections. The first examines the physical composition of the ads – such as: fonts, colours, lighting, and settings. The second section makes use of the concept of 'intertextuality' and describes how this process is crystalized within the ad sample. The third section puts forth the argument that masculinity is pluralized in many of the ads. Multiple masculinities are defined and separated within and across product brands, in terms of implied and targeted ages, classes and ethnicities. The last section highlights the 'mixed-media' approach that certain ads in the sample have adopted. This innovative marketing technique requires both a detailed description and a discussion of how it promotes a specific interaction with the reader.

Finally, the conclusion consists of two parts. First, certain methodological and theoretical limitations of the project are outlined. In addition, some suggestions for future studies are included. Second, the overarching findings and claims are briefly reiterated. Following this, final remarks are provided in order to consolidate the key ideas developed in this research.

Chapter 1

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Ideology, Representation and Communication

> *Language and behaviour are the media, so to speak, of the material registration of ideology, the modality of its functioning. These rituals and practices always occur in social sites, linked with social apparatuses. That is why we have to analyze or deconstruct language and behaviour in order to decipher the patterns of ideological thinking which are inscribed in them.*
>
> -- Stuart Hall (1991)

This project is a sociological investigation of many roles that advertising plays in society. The first section of the framework will examine three distinct, yet interconnected, concepts that are inherent to advertising. They are: ideology, representation and communication. The first sub-section – "On Ideology" – begins by exploring the notions of ideology in a primary source by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology* (1976 [1845]). Then, to provide a more contemporary application of the Marxist 'ideology', I will briefly turn to the works of two notable neo-Marxist thinkers: Italian political theorist Antonio Gramsci, and French philosopher Louis Althusser. The Marxist and neo-Marxist conceptualizations of ideology, 'common sense' and 'hegemony' are explained and evaluated, in large part, with the guidance of British sociologist Stuart Hall. Notable contradictions and weaknesses will be highlighted, and how they are to be reconciled will be made clear throughout. The second sub-section – "Representation: Language, Meaning and Discourse" – outlines what Stuart Hall (2013) refers to as the "work of representation" (p. 1). As aforementioned, with advertising commonly considered to be representations of our cultures and lives, it is necessary to

provide a rigorous, operational definition of the term ‘representation’. Understanding some of the more intricate, linguistic properties of representation will be elucidated through the key ideas of semioticians, Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes. Finally, moving beyond language and signification, representation will be posited as a form of what French philosopher Michel Foucault calls a ‘discursive practice’. Treating representations as a part of a particular historical ‘discourse’ will allow for necessary contextualization and broader sociocultural arguments to be made. It is important to note that in light of the contradiction between Marxist and Foucauldian thinking, this trajectory, from ‘ideology’ to ‘discourse’, is mapped with great caution. While Foucault’s work does, so to speak, override Marx and Engels in terms of anchoring my particular research, their insights will not be abandoned all together. The third sub-section – “Communication: Encoding, Decoding and Audiences” – will discuss the communicative functions of advertising. The model chosen to explain these processes is Stuart Hall’s canonical text, “Encoding/Decoding” (1980). Since Hall’s approach concerns the production and reception of mass media in general, his work will be complimented by studies that address advertising specifically. I will discuss how advertisements are ‘encoded’ with meaningful codes and messages, while taking into consideration the role of individual ad designers. Next, I will explore the ambiguity of ‘decoding’ – or, put differently, deciphering – messages from advertisements by individuals and audiences. As advertising involves this communication between encoders and decoders, creators and viewers, it is necessary to further unpack the relational nature of advertising. This will be done, in large part, by investigating certain roles that audiences play in the function of advertising. Although the analysis involved in

this project is on advertising texts and not audience reception, it is helpful, nevertheless, to consider some of the scholarship on the way that audiences influence the production of advertising content.

1.1.1 On Ideology

In Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' classic text, *The German Ideology* (1976 [1845]), the notion of ideology is referred to at many different points and in many different ways. In fact, some would argue that Marx and Engels' definitions of ideology not only vary throughout the book, but this term is actually constructed in a number of contradictory ways (Barrett, 1991). This is perhaps why the Marxist conception(s) of ideology remains a subject of discussion and debate even 150 years after the text was written. For the purpose of this research, I will outline and briefly consider three of the ways that Marx and Engels' conceptualize ideology. In the first chapter, "Feuerbach: Opposition of the Materialist and Idealist Outlooks", Marx and Engels (1976) write, "Consciousness [*das Bewusstsein*] can never be anything else than conscious being [*das bewusste Sein*], and the being of men is their actual life-process. If in all ideology men and their relations appear upside-down as in a *camera obscura*, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process" (p. 42). So, what is it that Marx and Engels are suggesting about the notion of ideology in this passage? While this definition is highly philosophical and arguably difficult to unpack, there is noticeable emphasis on the metaphor of a "*camera obscura*". Marx and Engels refer to the physical process of how the human eye sees an object to describe the relationship between consciousness and ideology. As objects that are viewed by an individual are inverted on one's retina,

ideology, then, is posited as the inversion of consciousness. Put differently, and perhaps loosely, ideology is being defined in opposition to consciousness. Since, to Marx and Engels (1976), consciousness is "interwoven with material activity and the material intercourse of men" (p. 42), then ideology must be non-material, imaginary. Elucidated by Barrett (1991), "the train of thought goes that material conditions can specify real or true interests, for example of the working class, and that in ideology these are then mystified by simple reversal – so people see their interests as the opposite of what they really are" (p. 5). And so, working from this first definition, one can grasp this as the opposite of a real, material consciousness; the type of consciousness, it is implied, that individuals ought to possess.

In the following paragraph, Marx and Engels (1976) build upon their initial explanation of ideology. They write,

> "The phantoms formed in the brains of men are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics, and all the rest of ideology as well as the forms of consciousness corresponding to these, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their thinking. It is not consciousness that determines life, but life that determines consciousness" (p. 42).

This conceptualization is similar to the first in how ideology is constructed as the opposite of the material or the 'real'. However, there are noteworthy differences and added details. For instance, the authors list specific examples of ideological outlets – morality, religion and metaphysics. This provides a clearer sense of how such a philosophical notion is crystalized in our daily, physical lives. In addition, it is worth noting, that given Marx's dedication to the criticism of religion across his works, this definition then posits ideology as a necessarily "distorted or inadequate view of the world"

(Barrett, 1991, p. 6). Again, there is an implicit sense of consciousness as synonymous with 'real' or correct knowledge. Conversely, ideology is connoted as a mystification or put colloquially, brainwashing. Working with these definitions, one can think of ideology as a contributing factor in the production of "false consciousness" – the vastly popularized and contested post-Marxist term used to describe "misrecognizing" or "misidentifying" the nature of commodities, property and consumption by the lower, Proletariat classes (Jackson, Nielsen & Hsu, 2011, p. 259). It is precisely this role of class in the formation of ideology that becomes of concern to the authors.

Later in the chapter is perhaps the most straightforward, pragmatic definition of ideology. Indeed, at this point in the text, Marx and Engels apply ideology as within their model of society's structure. To recall very briefly and basically, Marxist thought conceives of capitalist society as structured on opposition between a ruling class and a subordinate class, the oppressor and oppressed, the Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat (Marx and Engels, 2003[1848]). As such, ideology, in capitalism, represents the ideas of the ruling, oppressing class in society. The purpose of implementing such an ideology is to ensure the reproduction of the labour force. They write,

"The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i. e., the class which is the ruling *material* force of society is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force. The class which has the means of material production at its deposal, consequently also controls the means of mental production, so that those who lack the means of mental production are on the whole subject to it […] [Individuals in the ruling class] regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch" (1976, p. 67).

So, this passage implies that the ruling class of a particular period can and will possess intellectual dominance over the lower class. The ruling ideas are both expressed and imposed upon the subject through ideology. Therefore, ideology is also the apparatus by

which the ideas of the ruling class are disseminated. But, how is ideology imposed? Or rather, why would individuals consent or welcome the subjection to the ruling ideology? Marx and Engels (1976) claim that "in order to carry through its aim, to present its interest as the common interest of all the members of society, that is, expressed in ideal form: it has to give its ideas the form of universality" (p. 68). This is an important train of thought. They argue that individuals allow themselves to be subjected to ruling ideologies, that paradoxically only favor the ruling class, because they understand these ideas as universal, common-sense or for the good of society. The concept of 'common-sense' and its role in sustaining dominant ideologies, or in the creation of 'truths', will be explored further in sections to come.

The concept of ideas becoming universal or being reproduced as common sense is vital insight taken up by many neo-Marxist thinkers. In particular, Italian political theorist, Antonio Gramsci, builds upon this very notion. During his stay in a fascist Italian prison throughout 1929 to 1935, Antonio Gramsci wrote about life, philosophy and politics within many notebooks. Published as *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (1971), much of Gramsci's thought can be interpreted as advancing or complicating a Marxist understanding of ideology. Though his texts are rich with a variety of philosophical and political theories, I will focus on what Gramsci wrote about 'common sense' and 'hegemony'. Keeping in mind Marx and Engels' emphasis on how the universality of ideas is paramount to sustaining a ruling ideology, a discussion of Gramsci's 'common sense' is complimentary. However, Gramsci does posit common sense as a fluid, complex concept – not simply, universal interests or ideas. He writes, "Common sense is not something rigid and immobile, but it is continually transforming

itself, enriching itself with scientific ideas and with philosophical opinions which have entered ordinary life […] Common sense creates the folklore of the future, that is as a relatively rigid phase of popular knowledge at a given place and time" (1971, p. 326). This is a dynamic and important definition, in part, because it stresses the transformative nature of what is considered to be common sense. It is not merely a set of rules or ideas that transcend history; rather, common sense meanings are ever changing and necessarily bound up with cultural, scientific, political and historical contexts. What is common sense to one society, class, group, or subculture cannot be applicable to *any* another set of people, and this is a point that does not resonate with the grand theory of Marx and Engels. In fact, this brief articulation is arguably applicable to a contrary, post-structuralist framework. Nevertheless, Gramsci does tend to stay within the realm of Marxist thinking, and as such, he continues with an interpretation of the Bourgeoisie's ruling ideas and ideology. Specifically, he uses the concept of 'hegemony' to explore how certain structural and ideological formations aid in ensuring the domination of the ruling class. Barrett (1991) clarifies, "Hegemony is best understood as *the organization of consent* – the processes through which subordinated forms of consciousness are constructed without recourse to violence or coercion" (p. 54). Indeed, this notion helps us to think about dominant ideology in a more contemporary setting. Hegemony is not achieved through a repressive or violent Sovereign power. Rather, hegemony or hegemonic ideologies are sustained by "winning the active consent of those classes and groups who were subordinated within it" (Hall, 1982, p. 85). While it is easily conceivable that hegemony is not inherently violent, it is perhaps more difficult to think that it does not involve coercing individuals. Simply, how can the State and ruling class

dominate without any coercion? (Barrett, 1991; Hall, Lumley & McLennan, 2012). At this point, it is helpful to look deeper into the variety of ways and into the variety of state mechanisms that ideology is embedded in. Providing more contemporary examples will aid in making sense of how individuals consent to hegemonic ideologies in every day life.

In 1970, French philosopher Louis Althusser further advanced the Marxist conception of ideology in his essay, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)". Like Marx and Engels, Althusser provides a number of different and not necessarily complimentary definitions of 'ideology'. His most basic conceptualization being, "Ideology is a 'representation' of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (2007[1970], p. 213). And how or where, then, would these 'representations' exist? Althusser outlines a number of state structures that he refers to as 'Ideological State Apparatuses' or 'ISAs'. The examples of such apparatuses are: churches, schools, families, laws, political structures, unions, media and culture (Althusser, 2007[1970], p. 208). Listing such concrete institutions as ideological propagators allows us to consider the relevance and use of ideology in contemporary late-capitalism. Moreover, Althusser's formulations muddle Marx and Engels crisp distinction of consciousness as real and ideology as illusory. It is emphasized that although ideology itself may be 'imaginary', it is imbued with life in or through apparatuses and the actions of individuals. He writes, "Ideology existing in a material ideological apparatus, prescribing material practices governed by a material ritual, which practices exist in the material actions of a subject acting in all consciousness according to his belief" (2007[1970], p. 216). This is quite a different notion than ideology as 'false consciousness'. Individuals do not 'misrecognize' their ideas, choices

and actions due to ideological distortion. Rather, ideology can be both practiced and believed, and this is necessarily a 'real' effect, a 'real' consciousness. Stuart Hall (1982) provides a concise explanation; Althusser makes us think of ideology as "every bit as 'real' or 'material', as so-called non-ideological practices, because it affected their outcome. It was 'real' because it was *real in its effects*" (p. 82). Finally, it is significant that Althusser refers to ideologies as sets or systems of representation. We can consider the mass media to be both a prevailing 'ISA', and a site of multiple representations. Some would argue that the media remains a fundamental 'ISA' *because* of how it constructs so many seemingly 'natural' or common sense representations. Hall (1982) claims that the media shapes a "whole ideological environment" by representing the order of things with "that 'natural' or divine inevitability which makes them appear universal, natural and coterminous with 'reality' itself" (p. 65). We can now think not only about ideology as a constituent of representations, but also about what kinds of ideological representations are frequently reproduced in media – such as advertising. Accordingly, the next sub-sections will further examine what 'representation' is and how we can proceed to analyze the ideological (and other) properties in advertising texts.

Before moving forward, however, I wish to consider some necessary critiques and questions concerning the Marxist/neo-Marxist understanding of ideology and knowledge production. The fundamental shortcoming of this approach concerns human agency. There is an underlying assumption that the dominant ideology *will* be received and understood by individuals in the way that it is intended to be received and understood. Hall (1991) retorts, "People are not irrevocably and indelibly inscribed with the ideas that they *ought* to think; the politics that they *ought* to have are not, as it were, already

imprinted in their sociological genes" (p. 93). Put simply, it is not possible to predict the effectiveness or the particular reception of ruling ideas. For instance, what if individuals *choose not to give consent* to hegemony, the ruling class, and ruling ideas? How can Marx or a neo-Marxist explain how many subordinated classes across history have resisted, deviated from, and re-appropriated dominant ideologies to define themselves? (Hall, 1991, p. 94). While thinking about how particular 'common sense' or hegemonic ideals continue to be reproduced in society remains relevant and important, such broad assumptions about collective and individual knowledge creation may need to be reconsidered, or considered differently. In order to better take into account how historical, contextual, cultural and individual factors affect how ideas are created and communicated, shifting attention towards a conceptual model of 'discourse' is necessary.

1.1.2 Representation: Language, Meaning and Discourse

Althusser had claimed that ideology is a representation, and so, we must now ask, what is a representation? More specifically, what is the definition of representation that is most useful to socio-cultural analysis, and to the current research project? To answer this question, I turn to Stuart Hall's comprehensive essay, "The Work of Representation" (2013). In this text, Hall provides a historical account of how the concept of representation has been defined and constructed by various scholarly fields. In evaluating existing theoretical and analytical approaches, he outlines what he believes are the most advantageous tools for 'working' with representations. It is first made explicitly clear that the concept of representation cannot simply be synonymous with 'reflection'. This is a point made by Hall in a number of texts over the years. For example, in "The Re-Discovery of Ideology" (1982), he proclaims, "representation is a very different

notion from that of reflection. It implies the active work of selecting and presenting, of structuring and shaping: not merely the transmitting of an already-existing meaning, but the more active labour of *making things mean*" (p. 64). With this insight, one must depart from Althusser's understanding of representation and ideology, which implied a reflection of ideas that were indeed 'already-existing'. Now, representations – implicitly bound up with ideologies – can be understood as actively contributing to the construction of meaning and knowledge. Therefore, rather than being a tangible replication or expression of something, a representation is a complex "practice" that incorporates material, symbolic and relational qualities (Hall, 2013a, p. 11-13). Following this constructionist approach, Hall outlines an appropriate research methodology for analyzing representations. However, before discussing research methods, it is necessary to briefly trace how this concept was developed. This process begins with outlining key insights from the field of semiology, and then turning to the notion of 'discourse'.

In the 1940s and 1950s, American social and behavioural scientists interested in researching representations in the media were largely focused on calculating empirical data on 'media effects' (Hall, 1982; 2013a). For example, studies tended to attempt to measure whether exposure to certain types of media would have particular effects on individual viewers or a target audience. While this type of research is arguably useful and still practiced today, such studies do not rigorously examine representations themselves – as an analyzable text. Then, beginning in the 1960s, certain scholars turned to the field of semiotics within linguistic studies to provide necessary tools for investigating not what images or texts do to people, but rather, what they communicate to us. Namely, adopting the work of Ferdinand de Saussure allows for representations to be

analyzed with less focus on generating quantitative data. Saussure advanced the idea that a particular word, image or text will have a multiplicity of meanings. What he has labeled the “sign”, consists of two interconnected concepts – the “signifier” and the “signified” (in Hall, 2013a, p. 16). The “signifier” is the material object that is represented by words or images, and the “signified” are the variety of ideas or concepts that the “signifier” implies (ibid, p. 16). To better clarify and provide an application Saussure’s model, the work of French literary critic Roland Barthes is especially helpful. In *The Elements of Semiology* (1967), Barthes uses the example of clothing to explain how different objects connote a variety of different social and cultural meanings. While bow ties and gowns signify ‘formality’ and ‘elegance’, jeans and running shoes imply a certain laid-back, casualness (in Hall, 2013a, p. 22). In this way, clothing is a language of our cultural expectations of dress. It is through the many different languages we use that meaning is created. Moreover, it is these culturally understood and taken-for-granted meanings that are reproduced in representations across the mass media. As summarized by Barthes (1967), signification and representation deal with “fragments of an ideology. These signified have a very close communication with culture, knowledge, history and it is through them, so to speak, that the environmental world [of the culture] invades the system [of representation]” (in Hall, 2013a, p. 24).

However, is this semiotic approach to representations sufficient for the social scientist? Put differently, can semiotics take into account how meaning, knowledge and ideology are necessarily influenced by larger structural processes? Indeed, critics have argued that semiotic analyses restrict the practice of representation to language alone, and therefore, an approach that considers broader issues surrounding knowledge creation and

power is needed (Hall, 2013, p. 27). To address these issues within an analysis of representations, one must shift away from language and towards the concept of 'discourse'. 'Discourse', as theorized by French philosopher Michel Foucault, is a way of representing knowledge of a certain subject at a certain time in history. Crucial to this definition is the specification of 'a certain time in history'. Foucault's concept of discourse emphasizes the historical and contextual nature of defining 'truth' or meaning. In saying that discourse is "historicized", he is arguing that language and knowledge can only be "true" within a specific historical context (Hall, 2013a, p. 31). As such, with meaning now unable to be attributed to language alone, representations must be analyzed while taking into account relevant, historically specific factors. For example, within this framework, one can analyze not only signified meanings expressed in a media text, but in doing so, one considers how and why these meanings were chosen. Foucault (2002[1972]) writes,

> "The field of discursive events, on the other hand, is a grouping that is always finite and limited at any moment to the linguistic sequences that have been formulated; they may be innumerable, they may, in sheer size, exceed the capacities of recording, memory, or reading: nevertheless they form a finite grouping. The question posed by language analysis of some discursive fact or other is always: according to what rules has a particular statement been made, and consequently according to what rules could other similar statements be made? The description of the events of discourse poses a quite different question: how is it that one particular statement appeared rather than another?" (p. 30)

To do so, one must evaluate the role of influences outside of the text itself – such as: social expectations, rules, institutions and audiences. This perspective gives way for a number of useful inquiries. What are the cultural factors that contribute to a representation appearing as 'common sense'? What are structural restrictions that affect how a representation is created? Who is the implied viewer or consumer of a particular

representation? These are questions inherent to performing a discourse analysis of representations. Thus, a discourse analysis functions to relate texts to audiences, and texts to society (Newcomb, 1991, p. 77). This approach allows for a richer sociological investigation of the complex relationships between ideas, texts, individuals and society.

To summarize thus far, Marx and Engels, and neo-Marxist thinkers provide an important foundation for thinking about the production and dissemination of ideas and knowledge in a capitalistic society. The notion of a dominant ideology – or dominant ideologies – remains a useful conceptual tool for making sense of how particular ideas or images are continually reproduced. This is relevant to how media and advertising communicate culturally understood or taken-for-granted meanings through recurrent images, language and stereotypes. In this way, media and advertising can be posited as representing dominant ideologies. However, a major shortcoming in Marxist theory is its reduction of knowledge creation to an issue of class structure. Although representations may signify the dominant ideology, or 'fragments' of the ideology, one is unable to claim that such representations *will* benefit the ruling class, or even hypothesize *how* an individual will interpret the ideas. Through the years, there have been notable strides made in studying ideology and representation. On the one hand, many empirical social scientists have indeed attempted to measure how exposure to ideological imagery affects individuals, but these studies overlook the textual properties of the representation. On the other hand, semiotics scholars examine text and image as wholly creators of meaning, without taking into account historical and contextual significance. It is necessary then, when concerned centrally with the notions of ideology and representation, to incorporate both a textual analysis and a broader, more social consideration of knowledge creation.

To do so, a shift to Michel Foucault's concept of 'discourse' is fitting. As claimed by Hall (2013a), "[Discourse analysis] rescued representation from the clutches of a purely formal theory and gave it a historical, practical and 'worldly' context of operation" (p. 32). Accordingly, this research attends to the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of discourse analysis.

1.1.3 Communication: Encoding, Decoding and Audiences

In this last sub-section the work of representation is discussed from a more micro perspective, paying particular attention to communicative aspects. As this research focuses on what advertising communicates about gender and masculinity, it is fruitful to elaborate upon how messages in advertising are produced by companies and individual ad designers, and also, the ways in which advertisements can be interpreted by audiences or individual viewers. In addition, one needs to understand how these two components – the producer and consumer, the creator and viewer, the brand and the audience – are in dialogue with one another. To provide relevant and practical insights, Stuart Hall's groundbreaking "Encoding/Decoding" (1980) essay is useful. In this text, Hall outlines a model to make sense of how meaning and value can be embedded in and derived from media discourse. Summarized simply, 'encoding' is the term to describe how producers of media, whether consciously or unconsciously, create signs and symbols which connote a variety of meanings within media texts. Conversely, 'decoding' is the process by which viewers of media interpret particular messages and meanings. Hall (1980) identifies three factors that inform both the encoding and decoding processes. They are: (1) "Frameworks of knowledge"; (2) "Relations of production"; and (3) "Technical infrastructure" (p. 130). Each of these elements will influence how a piece of media is

produced and how it is interpreted, and they will vary in scope and shape for each individual person. Thus, every image or sign within the media is subject to a wide array of meanings or "connotations" and a "wider universe of ideologies in a society" (Hall, 1980, p. 133). With this model in mind, we can now examine either side of the communication process in advertising. We can consider how the aforementioned three factors influence both the 'encoders' and 'decoders' of advertisements in contemporary society.

In terms of the 'encoding' side of the process, there is considerable debate surrounding issues of intentions, creativity and institutional constraints. On the one hand, it is argued that the producers or 'encoders' of media will consciously or unconsciously construct and proliferate representations that reinforce dominant ideologies and the capitalist system. Hall claims (1982), "Just as the myth-teller may be unaware of the basic elements out of which his particular version of the myth is generated, so broadcasters may not be aware of the fact that the frameworks and classifications they were drawing on reproduced the ideological inventories of their society" (p. 72). So, the individual ad designer is posited as unconscious to the fact that he or she is reinforcing the ruling ideology. Moreover, Hall (1982) believes that even if the producers are knowledgeable of such a concept, the dominant ideology or discourse will still "unwittingly" speak itself through them (p. 88). Following this train of thought, it is implied that larger institutional processes outweigh the role or intentions of the individual producer. For example, one's own opinions and creativity will be limited and censored by the very fact that he or she works for an advertising agency. While Hall's argument may too easily deny any possibility for agency and creativity among ad creators, his

points cannot be wholly disregarded. Indeed, institutional policies and broader protocols play a major role in determining what is permitted to be depicted, and therefore, what *will* be seen in the media. An ad creator is not able to make just any advertisement he or she wishes. All commercial advertising is subject to a number of formal rules and parameters that, in part, shape the very content of advertisements. These structural limitations are simply unavoidable and also perform particular ideological work within the system of mass media.

On the other hand, some scholars are in stark opposition to Hall. Communications scholar, Soar (2000) argues that the creative goals, intentions or experiences of the individual producers of advertisements are not adequately and appropriately considered by cultural and media researchers (p. 415-418). When the 'encoding' process is considered, the 'encoders' of advertisements are usually considered to be a company at large. However, there is a very pragmatic explanation for this alleged gap in media studies. The reason is that advertisements, unlike nearly every other form of media, do not include explicit authorship (Jhally, 1990; Soar, 2000). Jhally claims that knowing and understanding precisely who is creating these ads, would have a profound impact on our interpretation. He writes, "Stripping away the veil of anonymity and mystery would by itself be of great value in demystifying the images that parade before our lives and through which we conceptualize the world and role within in" (1990, p. 257). Inspired by the work of Jhally and this inquiry of authorship, Soar (2000) argues that the main audience of concern to the creators of advertisements was their peer group, rather than particular audiences targeted by their employer or the consumer society at large (p. 416). Drawing upon his own data from interviews with graphic designers, he brings to our

attention the role of personal experience and the atmosphere of the workplace as factors that influence the very creation of advertisements. Similarly, as to be discussed at length later, Crewe's (2003) research on the production of *loaded* Magazine, found that the content of the magazine was largely informed by the personal life changes of the editors, rather than guided by pervasive cultural or economic expectations. But, to what extent does such personal, individual experiences modify the broader societal function of mass-produced magazines? Arguably, such media still communicates the ideological inventories of their society.

Both sides of the debate make compelling arguments. For those who believe Hall's argument denies or undermines the possibility of human agency, Soar's argument may be more appealing. However, as aforementioned, it is hard to overlook the very real structural constraints that Hall is concerned with. He highlights an absolutely vital question when analyzing the media within social sciences. He asks,

> "But precisely how is it that such large numbers of journalists, consulting only their 'freedom' to publish and be damned, do tend to reproduce, quite spontaneously, without compulsion, again and again, accounts of the world constructed within fundamentally the same ideological categories? […] *This* is the aspect of ideology under liberal capitalism which most needs explaining" (1991, p. 98)

Taken together, the consideration of both perspectives has provided broader understanding of the 'encoding' process. While the two positions are not wholly irreconcilable, Hall's insights are considered more applicable to the current research project.

In terms of the 'decoding' of advertisements, Hall's model outlines three distinct readings or positions that each viewer can adopt. The first is called the "dominant-hegemonic" position and this infers that the reader accepts the most dominant or obvious

codes of the representation (Hall, 1980, p. 136). The second is the "negotiated" position and this infers that the reader resists the dominant messages to a certain extent and in turn, modifies the messages to better reflect their own position (Hall, 1980, p. 137). The third position is categorized as "oppositional" and implies that the reader fully rejects the codes and provides alternative interpretations (Hall, 1980, p. 138). But, can every individual's 'decoding' processes always fall into one of these positions? Perhaps we can learn more about 'decoding' through examining audiences themselves, rather than relying on static theoretical positions. In fact, audience studies can advance our knowledge of both 'encoding' and 'decoding'.

It has been made clear that meaning creation requires 'encoding', however, it equally involves the process of 'decoding'. It is through the communication of both elements that meaning is produced, understood and reproduced. Thus, the viewer or 'subject' is as much involved in 'making things mean' as the producer. Hall (2013) uses Foucault's discussion of the "Las Meninas" painting from his book *The Order of Things* (1970) to exemplify this point convincingly. Foucault's argument surrounding the painting – and representation more generally – is that the painting does not have meaning in and of itself. Rather, the painting and its discourse require a viewer in order for it to have any meaning attributed to it. Hall (2013a) summarizes, "The spectator, we might say is painted into the position in front of the picture. In this sense, the discourse produces a *subject-position* for the spectator-subject. For the painting to work, the spectator, whoever he or she may be, must first 'subject' himself/herself to the painting's discourse, and, in this way, become the painting's ideal viewer, the producer of its meanings" (p. 44). Thus, messages and meaning in the painting only exist through this

communication, this necessary dialogue between the ‘encoding’ and ‘decoding’ processes. Moreover, a painting, or advertisement, itself can consist of properties that intend to shape it’s ‘ideal viewer’. For example, Canadian sociologists Jackson, Nielsen and Hsu (2011) use insights from Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin to explain particular dialogic aspects of media representations. Inspired by Bakhtin’s concept of dialogue in literature, they claim that the mode of address in media will imply what the viewer/reader “ought to feel” and as such, attempts to craft an ideal interpretation (p. 11).

It should be noted that when ‘encoders’ have in mind a specific ideal audience or subject, this audience is both ‘real’ and imaginary. The ‘real’ ideal audience can be considered to be a commodity. As noted by Dallas Smythe (1994), advertisers very literally buy target audiences’ attention based on demographics, and in this way, audiences themselves are commodities to the mass media (p. 269-270). For example, a men’s grooming product company will buy page space for advertising in a men’s lifestyle magazine, which means that they are essentially purchasing a certain target audience. Conversely, the imaginary or “implied audience” is the type of viewer the producer of media has in mind and assumes they are addressing (Jackson, Nielsen & Hsu, 2011, p. 260). There is, however, no sound way to be sure that one’s implied audience will inevitably result in the same target audience. Despite the fact that advertisers often use focus groups to help determine how to effectively communicate to a specific audience, it is not possible to assume that the ads they produce will elicit the same response in the target market (Leiss, Kline & Jhally, 1986). Other issues on the topic of addressing audiences in contemporary advertising are discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2.

1.2 Bodies and Embodiments in a Biopolitical Age

> *Mastery and awareness of one's body can be acquired only through the effect of an investment of power in the body: gymnastics, exercises, muscle building, nudism, glorification of the body beautiful. All of this belongs to the pathway leading to the desire of one's own body, by way of the insistent, persistent, meticulous work of power on the bodies of children or soldiers, the healthy bodies.*
>
> --Michel Foucault (1980)

Since this research involves the examination of grooming products and bodywork, a brief overview of how the body is theorized in contemporary times is needed. The first sub-section – "The Body as a 'Project'" – I address texts by Anthony Giddens and Chris Shilling which conceptualize the body is an unfinished project that must worked upon in contemporary times. I also briefly discuss how the imperative to work on such a 'project' has contributed to emerging consumer products and markets. However, this issue is discussed at greater length in Chapter 2. Next, in the second sub-section, Michel Foucault's concepts of biopower and 'care of the self' are outlined. These theories are useful to this project because grooming, a form of bodywork, can be interpreted as both a responsibilizing, disciplinary practice, and a technology of the self in the biopolitical age. Foucault's concepts are elucidated through helpful insights from cultural theorists Grosz (1994) and Heyes (2006). In the final sub-section – "Embodiment vs. Disembodiment" – I seek to examine bodywork and embodiment with respect to social and cultural expectations of masculinity. Specifically, Bordo (1999) and Norman (2011) have identified what they refer to as a 'double-bind' of masculinity that is influential on how men and boys experience embodiment. I clarify what is meant by a 'double-bind' of masculinity with regards to bodywork and why it is a beneficial theoretical tool.

1.2.1 The Body as a "Project"

The body, as a sociological interest, may appear to have a relatively short history. However, as identified by Shilling (2007), the body has been a part of the sociological imagination, albeit in varying degrees, from its conception. He traces the sociology of the body back to the founding fathers of this discipline. Karl Marx, for example, brought to our attention the function of the body in the labour force and Emile Durkheim focused upon how moral and religious imperatives often target the body directly (Shilling, 2007). However, from his historical outlining, Shilling admits that the topic of the body for social scientists really only came into fruition in the 1990s. This was a result of a number of factors, but there are two that are compulsory to note. First, in the early 1990s, British sociologist Anthony Giddens (1991; 1994) promoted the idea that living in an age of "post-traditional" or late modernity has a number of implications on the body. We have come to recognize the body not as a natural given, but as a reflexive "project" in which the construction of the body is interconnected to the construction of the self (Giddens, 1991). More specifically, bodies are understood as an "unfinished" or "malleable" aspect of our identities, and as such, must be worked upon (Giddens, 1991; Shilling, 1993). In conceptualizing the body as a "project", one can then think of a wide array of body projects we engage in on a daily basis. From grooming and exercise, to diets and surgeries. But first, the concept of "body projects" can be explained in greater detail. In his landmark text, *The Body and Social Theory* (1993), Shilling contests that the notion of the body as an ongoing project to be maintained and refined is a result of shifting towards a post-modern late-capitalist society. Shilling (1993) proclaims, "In the affluent West, there is a tendency for the body to be seen as an entity which is in the process of

becoming; a *project* which should be worked at and accomplished as part of an *individual's* self-identity" (p. 4-5). Indeed, as the rise of consumer capitalism has brought about increased individualization, the body can be viewed as a site for crafting and reflecting one's unique self or personality. However, Shilling (1993) is quick to contrast in saying that modern bodies and body projects are also strongly bound up with collective social norms and expectations – particularly surrounding gender (p. 5). Furthermore, one must take into consideration the role of health in shaping and informing our body projects. Specifically, modern health expectations may be considered high with individual citizens being increasingly held accountable for their own well-being. Shilling (1993) explains, "At a time when our health is threatened by *global* dangers, we are exhorted ever more to take *individual* responsibility for our bodies by engaging in strict self-care regimes" (p. 5). Body projects can be understood then as both, and often simultaneously, a personal activity and a social directive. Shilling's point about taking responsibility for our bodies will be taken up again in the next sub-section.

When thinking about the body as needing to be worked on, we may be drawn to think of about how, or by what means, we are able to perform such work. In many cases, body practices are deeply reliant or interconnected with consumer products (Featherstone, 1991; Baudrillard, 2005). Indeed, as put forth by Baudrillard, consumers and consumerism have profound preoccupations with bodies. He writes:

> "[The body's] 'rediscovery', in a spirit of physical and sexual liberation after a millennial age of puritanism; its omnipresence (specifically the omnipresence of the female body, a fact we shall have to try to explain) in advertising, fashion and mass culture; the hygienic, dietetic, therapeutic cult which surrounds it, the obsession with youth, elegance, virility/femininity, treatments and regimes, and the sacrificial practices attaching to it all bear witness to the fact that the body has today become an *object of salvation*. It has literally taken over that moral and ideological function from the soul. (Baudrillard, 2005(1998), p. 277)

Moreover, Baudrillard then emphasizes that this investment in the body takes on both psychical and monetary forms. What this means is that the appearance of the body has become not only something that occupies our thoughts, but consequentially, the body has become a site for a number of emerging consumer markets. A clear result being the variety of goods and services pertaining to the maintenance of the body – or put simply, bodywork – that have become commercial successes. The individual body then can be interpreted as a representation or reflection of the consumer practices that has built this particular body type. As explained by Patterson & Elliott (2002), "consumers' bodies are the products of labor (body work) that necessitates consumption and the use of consumer goods, and simultaneously, through visualization, their bodies act as advertisements for such labor" (p. 234). Within the review of literature in Chapter 2, the concept of bodywork is revisited as I investigate the various types of bodywork that men tend to engage in.

1.2.2 Foucault's Biopower and Care of the Self

Shilling's point on the regulation and "responsibilization" of healthy bodies can be complimented by theoretical insights of French philosopher Michel Foucault. Much of Foucault's work emphasizes what he has identified as a shift in the form and function of power in modern society. The end of the Sovereign regime gave way for a new system of power with new mechanisms for operation. While Sovereign power had the right to take life away from the individual, our modern concept of power works to maintain life and in effect, puts this responsibility largely into the hands of the individual. Foucault calls this "disciplinary power", which focuses on preserving life through the disciplining of bodies. He writes, "Their supervision was effected through an entire series of

interventions and *regulatory controls: a bio-politics of the population*. The disciplines of the body and the regulations of the population constituted the two poles around which the organization of power over life was deployed" (Foucault, 1978, p. 139). These regulatory controls are less overtly oppressive then tactics under Sovereignty, and are therefore less obvious in their controlling nature. This form of disciplinary power penetrates all forms of social life and is exercised, in particular, through social norms. It is through this normalization that our bodies, actions and even desires are disciplined, but also defined. As summarized by Grosz (1994), "the forms of disciplinary normalization prevalent today, power, according to Foucault, utilizes, indeed produces, the subject's desires and pleasures to create knowledges, truths, which may provide more refined, improved, and efficient techniques for the surveillance and control of bodies, in a spiral of power-knowledge-pleasure" (p. 146). Thus, the mechanisms of power both shape our bodies and subjectify them to further regulation. Accordingly, one can easily consider the ways in which various body projects are forms of regulatory, disciplining practices. As a result, within a system of 'bio-politics' or 'biopower' reliant on individual upholding of health, much of our interest in bodywork may be influenced by various social imperatives that encourage "active [bio]citizenship and responsibility" (Crawshaw, 2007, p. 1616). Although the ways in which we care or "work" on ourselves may be bound up with regulatory social pressures, such disciplinary practices can also allow for a greater understanding of one's self and contribute to the development of new skills. The extent to which working on the body is either an act of conformity or agency is both negotiable and often contested. In addition, this contestation may be most apparent in

discussions of gender difference across types of body projects (e.g. Gill, Henwood & McLean, 2005; Dworkin & Wachs, 2009).

Some of Foucault's later work, however, focuses on selfhood and the ways in which we care for our 'self'. In his approach, he outlines how systems of discipline can also be enabling, in terms of creating new possibilities and capacities of selfhood. What he calls the "technologies of the self" are practices that "permit individuals to effect by their own means, or with the help of others, a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and a way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality" (Foucault, 1994, p. 146). With this in mind, we can now assume our bodies as not wholly docile. Although the ways in which we care or 'work' on ourselves may rely on discipline, this does not mean that discipline in-and-of-itself will be the only result of the practice. Rather, disciplinary practice can allow for a greater understanding of one's self and contribute to the development of new skills. Heyes (2006) emphasizes that self-discipline in the care of oneself can "exceed normalizing goals and expand, rather than reduce, my possibilities for being in the world" (p. 146). However, this point that Heyes is making is often overlooked, and most contemporary applications of Foucault's concept refer strictly to aspects of self-surveillance and docility of bodies (e.g. Bartky, 1988; Bordo, 1993). Specifically, on the topic of body management, bodywork is often theorized as a responsibility to uphold in light of normalizing disciplinary pressures, and rarely as a technology for caring of the self.

1.2.3 Embodiment and Disembodiment

At this point in the framework, I wish to introduce a concept that allows us to think about the connection between embodiment and gender. Put more precisely, a theoretical device used to explain how masculinity informs and is informed by embodiments or bodywork. First, in this context, the term ‘embodiment’ does not serve as a synonym for ‘physical manifestation’. Rather, its meaning is derived from the phenomenological work of Merleau-Ponty (1962). He describes embodiment as one’s experience of one’s own body in time and space. The body, to Merleau-Ponty, is not something one merely has or can even view objectively, for the very fact that one’s body is inescapable. He explains, “as for my body, I do not observe it myself: in order to do that it would be necessary to have the disposal of a second body which itself would not be observable” (p. 107). Pragmatically speaking, the practice of working on one’s body (e.g. a body project) can be considered an embodied experience. Conversely ‘disembodiment’ in this context, refers to overlooking or denying the experience of the body. Rather than being both interested in and aware of a particular body experience, someone who is disembodied may deny or resist doing bodywork for its own sake. Certain scholars have argued that masculinity has been historically understood as inborn, taken-for-granted and characterized by disembodiment. For example, American philosopher Judith Butler explains that male characteristics are often perceived as “presocial”, “prediscursive” and a result of innate biological predispositions (in Crawshaw, 2007, p. 1608). Women, on the other hand, are typically construed as “somehow *more* biological, *more* corporeal, and *more* natural than men (Grosz, 1994, p. 14). As a result, not only has the male body been considered a universal given, but also

men have historically been able to avoid the social, scientific and medical scrutiny that women's bodies have undergone (Bordo, 1993; Grosz, 1994).

The concept of masculinity as disembodied is advanced by Norman (2011) who argues that "Masculine disembodiment" is constructed through male performance and speech that positions masculinity as detached from the flesh, and often "relationally constituted" (p. 445-446). Norman (2011) purports that the engagement in body projects while actively disavowing such activities serves to "erase masculine embodiment" to ensure the "privileges of living a disembodiment style of flesh" (p. 446). What Norman is saying, in more practical terms, is that boys and men typically renounce or avoid expressing interest in their bodies even while being thoroughly invested in activities that alter the physical shape of the body. These paradoxical experiences exist for the very reason that the requirements for constructing and maintaining masculinity are too often contradictory. Gill, Henwood and McLean (2005) have made a similar observation in their study "Body Projects and the Normalization of Masculinity". They summarize their findings by stating, "despite the fact that each of these practices results in *a visual modification of the body*, there was only one occasion within the entire corpus of interviews when they were talked about as *aesthetic* practices" (p. 53). As such, the *simultaneous* body engagement and disavowal is a means of defining the boundaries of appropriate, normative, hegemonic masculine behaviour. In men's experiences of bodywork, these boundaries are typically made clear through the negotiation of embodiment and disembodiment. To remain aligned with the historical masculine expectation of being disinterested in body aesthetics, boys and men who participate in contemporary body projects may experience a "double-bind of masculinity" where they

must reconcile being involved in the traditionally feminine practice of working on the body's appearance (Bordo, 1999; Norman, 2011). This point is especially relevant to the body project of grooming. Not only has grooming been typically associated with femininity, many grooming products that were once made exclusively for women are now marketed directly at men. Therefore, it is very interesting to examine how exactly these products are advertised, and assess to what extent they reinforce or avoid this 'double-bind' of masculinity. Do bodywork and masculinity remain connected through the contradictory notions of embodiment and disembodiment? Or, do these new ads represent male grooming as an absolute embodied experience?

1.3 The Social Construction of Gender and Masculinity

> *'Masculinity', to the extent that can be briefly defined at all, is simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture*
>
> -- R.W. Connell (1995)

Gender is at the very essence of this research and so, it is necessary to explain how I understand and intend to use the concept of gender in this project. Being a sociologist, I adopt a conception of gender that is influenced predominantly by social constructionism. To define and expand upon this concept, I turn to the work of Goffman (1959; 1976), Kessler & McKenna (1978) and Butler (1993; 2004) in the first sub-section. Then, I turn to focus specifically on how masculinity – or masculinities – have been theorized across academic literature. The central text addressed in this second sub-section is Connell's *Masculinities* (2005). Using Connell's text, I explain and critique

her four theoretical models of masculinity with guidance from scholars such as: Gill (2007), Synnott (2009) and Coles (2009). In the last sub-section, I examine how conceptions and ideals of masculinity have shifted across a historical period. These sorts of generalized models express the ways in which masculinity has been largely understood and represented in and across Western culture. My particular timeline begins in the 1950s and continues until the present day. Sketching detailed historical discourses of masculinity makes it possible to identify, historicize and contextualize particular themes that emerge in the research analysis.

1.3.1 Performing Gender

As social scientists, many of us agree with the now commonplace argument that gender is, to a large extent, a social construction. Gender theorists over the past 40 years have been largely influenced by symbolic interactionism and have frequently utilized the work of the Canadian-born sociologist Erving Goffman. In Goffman's seminal work, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), he argues that human interaction and self-presentation are active performances. In further developing his theory, he uses terminology from the world of theatre to explain how we are all social "actors" who display various "performances" on a "stage" in order to give off particular impressions about who we are as people (Goffman, 1959). Not exclusively innate or informed by biology, gender can be interpreted as a performance that is created and reproduced in social life. To employ Goffmanian terms, one could say that we are actors who perform gender on many different stages. Such stages include local public settings and various regional or global media outlets. Furthermore, later in his career, Goffman focused specifically on gender in advertising. He claims that men and women's gender

performances are merely based upon the imitation of gender ideals, which are largely constructed by popular culture. He writes, "One might just as well say that there is no gender identity. There is only a schedule for the portrayal of gender" (Goffman, 1976, p. 8). In thinking about gender as a practice that is both necessarily different and separated from biological sex, we can begin to understand how it is socially constructed in and through many historical contexts.

Influenced by Goffman, Kessler & McKenna wrote a groundbreaking book in the late-1970s entitled *Gender: An Ethnomethodological Approach* (1978). They were of the first academic writers to reject the notion of gender being biologically determined and argue that it is developed and maintained through social interaction. Throughout their book, they define the difference between sex and gender, as well as the various ways gender is felt, performed and attributed (Kessler & McKenna, 1978). Notably, it is argued that the way in which we attribute gender to each person is most influential in maintaining a gender binary and reinforcing gender as determined by sexual difference. They write, "Whether someone is a man or a woman is determined in the course of interacting […] in order to meaningfully interpret someone's assignment, identity, and role, and the relationship among them, one must first attribute gender" (Kessler & McKenna, 1978). This text provided a new way of thinking about gender as not only a performance but also as a social norm. While it is often believed that biological processes influence how gender is performed, we may seldom consider that the social effects of gender play a role in shaping both our minds and physicality. If gender did not influence our bodies, we would not so easily identify bodies as either male or female and rather, they would be considered merely "sperm carriers" and "egg carriers" (Kessler &

McKenna, 1978, p. 165). Kessler & McKenna's work not only allowed for an expansion of research on gender as a social construction but also acts as a resource for understanding gender as something that can vary beyond sex difference.

Building from Kessler & McKenna, American philosopher Judith Butler defines gender not simply as a social norm, but rather as a multifaceted regulatory practice within society. She writes, "Gender is the apparatus by which the production and normalization of masculine and feminine take place along with the interstitial forms of hormonal, chromosomal, psychic, and performative that gender assumes" (2004, p. 42). Working with this definition, we can understand gender as a mechanism that governs the normalization of sexuality. Her theory suggests that both gender *and* sex are discursive, learned, and above all, actively repeated and reiterated, as opposed to being innately biological, insofar as our understanding of what is "natural" is wholly subjective, historical and contextual (Butler, 1993). Similarly to Kessler & McKenna (1978) and Connell (1987), she also believes that our understanding and use of gender is still largely connected to sexual difference. When we internalize gender as a part of our identity, this contributes to thinking of our bodies as *already* gendered, instead of thinking of our bodies as a medium to perform or practice gender (Butler, 1993). Furthermore, Butler expresses that even resistance to a norm would actually reinforce it insofar as the norm is still taken-for-granted within society. She applies this to gender in stating, "permutations of gender which do not fit the binary are as much a part of gender as its most normative stance. To conflate the definition of gender with its normative expression is inadvertently to reconsolidate the power of the norm to constrain the definition of gender" (2004, p. 42). So then, the only way to do away with the normativity of the gender binary would be to

eliminate or "undo" the binary altogether. Because the binary is still in effect, gender norms precede and inform our bodies. From as early as birth (or even before birth), we become subjects of gender and continue performing gender throughout our lives. It is manifested in human interactions, but also in and through various media such as advertising.

1.3.2 Theorizing Masculinity

Over the past three decades, Australian sociologist R. W. Connell has been researching gender and has developed highly influential theories on masculinity. In resonating with both Kessler & McKenna and Butler, Connell (1987) recounts how much academic research has either equated or compared gender to sex differences among men and women. Moreover, she also emphasizes that our continued focus on scientific sex "differences" rather than on sex "similarities" has allowed for the cultural appropriation of masculinity and femininity as essentially opposites (Connell, 1987). This idea of men and women as opposites has been manifested in a variety of artifacts from popular culture and, has been both an accepted and marketable polemic.

For Connell, however, there exists a different single element that serves as the primary influence on the various facets of gender. This "structural fact" being: the overall dominance of men over women in Western society (Connell, 1987; 2005). If we are living within a patriarchal system, this gendered power relation not only affects other social structures (such as the division of labour), it also shapes the way in which masculinities and femininities are constructed and understood. Connell believes that gender is defined largely through intersections with other social and cultural categories (1987; 2005). This idea is encapsulated by the term 'intersectionality' to explain the

necessity of examining the points or elements of intersection of a particular cultural phenomenon. As elucidated by Benwell (2003), "any coherent account of the meanings arising from popular cultural forms needs to assume a fluid set of interconnections between the various sites within a 'circuit of culture'" (p. 7). For example, in investigating issues surrounding gender, one must also take into account the role of race, class and often, age, as factors that necessarily inform gender. This holds true for examining masculinity in particular. As noted by Katz (2002), "at any given time, the class structure and gender order produce numerous masculinities stratified by socioeconomic class, racial and ethnic difference, and sexual orientation" (p. 350). Within the context of the present research, it will be necessary to consider how racialized masculinities are depicted in the media (e.g. Coltrane & Messineo, 2000; Katz, 2002; Gill, 2003; Osgerby, 2003); the racialized history of soap and body cleaning (e.g. Vinikas, 1992; McClintock, 2005); and the stereotyping of men from different socioeconomic classes in the media (e.g. Benyon, 2002; Gill, 2007). Moreover, the data analysis of the research project will be guided by the theoretical conception of gender being co-constituted by the cultural elements of race and class.

It is important to note that conceiving masculinity as a topic of academic inquiry had only become possible after the release of the aforementioned landmark texts on the social construction of gender. Prior to this, men, masculinity and men's bodies were not subject to investigation and were largely understood as stable and/or biological norms. In this sense, men and masculinity had been "invisible" or without a history (Kimmel, 1993). What Kimmel means is that by way of taking for granted the universality of men and men's experiences, we have avoided tracing a critical genealogy of men as a gender and

gendered bodies. An implication of this, as argued by Kimmel, is that the invisibility of men has sustained their power and privilege. He writes, "Invisibility reproduces inequality. And the invisibility of gender to those privileged by it reproduces the inequalities that are circumscribed by gender" (p. 30). Therefore, with gender and masculinity studies becoming a legitimated academic focus, one can make men, masculinity and men's bodies visible for critical investigation. In turn, this could illuminate a number of larger social implications concerning power and/or privilege. Additionally, it can promote a better, more complex understanding of who men are and what masculinity is. What is more, we can denounce the universality of masculinity and seek to uncover the divergences among an array of masculinities.

In Connell's authoritative book, *Masculinities* (1995; 2nd ed. 2005), she seeks to elaborate on the plurality of men's gender performances and how they may be positioned in and across various cultural perspectives. This text provides both a historical overview of the ways in which masculinity has been previously theorized and also a new framework for understanding masculinity not as a typology, but as a complex result of numerous social influences. She writes, "'Masculinity', to the extent that can be briefly defined at all, is simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture" (Connell, 1995, p. 71). Although Connell acknowledges the limitations of and complications with categorizing generalizable masculine identities, she chooses to define four types of masculinity for the sake of developing a substantial theoretical framework. Briefly, they are: (1) hegemonic masculinity – that which ensures the domination of men over women and subordinated

men; (2) subordinated masculinity – that which is oppressed by those in a hegemonic position; (3) complicit masculinity – that which accepts hegemonic ideals but does not possess them; and (4) marginalized masculinity – that which refers to the masculinities of subordinate classes or ethnic groups in relation to a hegemonic group (Connell, 1995, p. 76-80). Connell's most central theoretical category, and the one about which she has written most prolifically, is that of hegemonic masculinity.

Since first developed, the concept of hegemonic masculinity has been employed by a variety of theoretical and empirical researchers dealing with studies of men and masculinity. As first stated by Connell (1987), "'Hegemonic masculinity'" is always constructed in relation to various subordinated masculinities as well as in relation to women. The interplay between different forms of masculinity is an important part of how a patriarchal social order works" (p. 183). Several years later, the concept was elaborated upon to explain how it can be perceived as the culturally dominant ideal of masculinity (as seen across a variety of media), rather than something that can actually be possessed by men (Connell, 2005). As pointed out by Wedgewood (2009), hegemonic masculinity is often used as a "free-floating concept", which may not have been a part of Connell's historically specific formulation (p. 335). Similarly, Gill (2007) identifies, "One problem with the notion of hegemonic masculinity is that it implies considerable uniformity and consensus in values about what form of masculinity is culturally valuable and powerful at any one point" (p. 31). Although Connell had defined certain traits connected to this category (e.g.: heterosexuality, power, aggression and technology) in *Gender and Power* (1987), hegemonic masculinity is perhaps over-used as a term to refer to anything that is culturally accepted or endorsed as necessarily masculine. Other

theorists have added to the list of hegemonic conventions to include physical muscularity (e.g., Dotson, 1999; Coles, 2009); homophobia (e.g., Kimmel, 2009); and the fear or repudiation of femininity (e.g., Kimmel, 2008; Dworkin & Wachs, 2009). While these conventions could be all considered as culturally dominant among men of a particular historical context, they may not necessarily be connected to the structural supremacy of men over women – which is a central constituent of Connell's original theory. The universality, ambiguity and changing definitions of hegemonic masculinity over the past twenty years have often been the focus of academic debate and criticism.

It is now widely acknowledged that gender relations have dramatically changed from the 1980s to today (e.g. Atkinson, 2011; Rosin, 2012). As a result, the definition and use of the concept of hegemonic masculinity may not be *as* applicable as it once was. Many theorists, including Connell herself, have pointed out various flaws in the model and how it may need to be redefined in the present (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Gill, 2007; Coles, 2009). The underlying question pertaining to the relevance of hegemonic masculinity is whether or not we continue to live in a patriarchal system. In stark criticism of Connell's use of the "patriarchal dividend" (her term used to describe how patriarchy benefits all men), Synnott (2009) argues that there also exists a "patriarchal tax" as many men within patriarchy are disadvantaged through systemic discrimination in the health, education, welfare and justice systems (p. 258). An example of this would be involuntary conscription of men into wars. Furthermore, in 2005, Connell and criminologist James Messerschmidt re-developed the concept to take in to account the rising equality of women and to place more emphasis on the agency of subordinated masculinities as a means of resistance.

In revisiting the original backdrop of Connell's model, we may encounter a number of questions. For example, could otherwise culturally normative and dominant themes still be considered "hegemonic" if they do not promote and ensure the domination of men and the subordination of women? Perhaps a change of language is necessary. As argued by Coles (2009), it may be more appropriate to understand masculinity as a "field" in which there exists multiple struggles and negotiations of both dominant and subordinate masculinities. The metaphor of Pierre Bourdieu's "field" is used to explain masculinities as relational and to explain how they overlap with other "fields" such as race, class and social institutions (Coles, 2009, p. 35). In this way, we can understand not only complacency and resistance within masculinity, but also how individuals can adopt dominant positions even within a subordinated group. Coles' model is progressive, especially in terms of promoting the agency of typically subordinated groups and necessarily complicates the often-simplified theorization and categorization of masculinities. However, in spite of the aforementioned complications with the model of hegemonic masculinity, it remains an utilizable and recognizable theoretical tool for sociologists engaging with research on men and masculinities. In fact, it may be ill advised to enter into such a field of work and not employ this iconic model at some level. It is thus my intention to analyze male grooming product advertisements to uncover what visual or textual elements promote hegemonic ideals. At the same time, it is equally my intention to investigate how these advertising texts diverge from the hegemonic masculine archetype.

1.3.3 Shifting Conceptions of Masculinity

I will now trace a history of the shifting conceptions and expectations of North American masculinity starting from the postwar period of the 1950s up to the present. This provides practical characteristics of the cultural ideals of masculinity pertaining to specific eras in North American history. Moreover, examples are used to illustrate how these idealized models were, at least in part, created and maintained in and through institutions of popular culture – such as the mass media. This historical overview begins by examining what is referred to as the 'traditional man' whose trappings are largely associated with the ongoing social expectations of men in America from the industrial revolution onward until the early 1960s (Kimmel, 2012; Milestone & Meyer, 2012). As will be elucidated, the characteristics of the model of manhood include, but are not limited to: work, production, family, breadwinning and homosociality. Next, as the Western world saw a number of revolutionary movements and changes throughout the 1960s and 1970s, a new model of masculinity emerged. This has been widely defined as the 'new man', whose various virtues appear to be more sensitive and less traditionally manly in nature (Nixon, 1996; Dotson, 1999; Beynon, 2002; Gill, 2003). Finally, in light of the substantial differences between 'traditional' and 'new' manhood, many theorists claim that men of the 1980s and 1990s were largely confused about what it means to be a man (e.g. Kimmel, 2008; 2012). Some have noted that many men were deeply opposed to this 'new man' (Beynon, 2002; Edwards, 2003) and were angered by growing equality of women (Gill, 2003; Kimmel, 2008; 2012). And so, as a retaliation against the 'new man' and an exaggerated call to tradition, the UK's 'new lad' (Crewe, 2003; Edwards, 2003; Gill, 2003) and the US's "guys" (Kimmel, 2008) or "child-men" (Hymowitz, 2010)

emerged. These modalities of masculinity based primarily on anger and retribution have contributed to the development of what many refer to as the contemporary 'crisis of masculinity' (e.g. Atkinson, 2011; Kimmel, 2012).

There are certain cultural artifacts that can shed some light onto the expectations of manhood in the 1950s. Specifically, Michael Kimmel identifies that masculinity in the 1950s was still largely bound to the ideals of the men of the industrial revolution. This industrious, work-hungry American male archetype is labeled as the "Self-Made Man" (Kimmel, 2012). The self-made man's identity was forged from the creation of the United States of America, as its own nation now separated from Britain. Moreover, the rise of America's industrial revolution was, in part, indebted to the proliferation of the work-oriented ideals of the self-made man. Kimmel (2012) describes, "The central characteristic of being self-made was that the proving ground was the public sphere, specifically the workplace. And the workplace was a manly world (and a native-born white man's world at that)" (p. 20). The self-made man who values work, competition in the public sphere and economic prosperity has remained central to the American ideal of masculinity (Synnott, 2009; Kimmel, 2012).

And so, what were the social and cultural implications of self-made manhood? Most essential to this identity is the gendered separation of public and private spheres. It was not just that men were encouraged to participate in the public, working world; it was *only* men to be allowed in this arena. American manhood and 'male' activity was structurally and socially defined by the separation of spheres. Kimmel (2012) explains, "'Because women remain out of the world, men can safely enter into it,' writes one historian, while another observes that 'by making the women and children of the society

the guardians of virtue, the male was released to act amorally in the world outside the home.' The separation of spheres thus bolstered men's identities on both the home front and in the workplace" (p. 40). Therefore, men had created their own world, for them alone. When looking at media that depicts the late-1940s and 1950s, we can view the separation of spheres in effect (Jackson, Nielsen & Hsu, 2011). Men can often be seen in the workplace or other "male" institutions outside the home, while women are commonly seen bound to domestic responsibilities.

One could also provide some more practical descriptors of this model of the 'traditional man'. As summarized by Milestone & Meyer (2012), he is often thought of and represented as "strong, active, powerful, authoritative, hard, aggressive, violent, competitive and rational, and lacking sensitivity and emotions" (p. 114). In reading this description, one might think of any or all of these characteristics to be typically masculine. This is because this type of masculinity has been both culturally encouraged and proliferated in the media for numerous decades. Moreover, these adjectives are largely bound to cultural conceptions of gender difference and should men not fit this description, they may suffer feelings of inadequacy. Men of the 1950s endorsed this imperative of gender difference and in turn, gender similarity was seen as a threat. Kimmel (2012) writes, "The trappings of gender failure were all around us in the 1950s, and American men discovered what happened to men who failed, especially the sons of men who failed as breadwinners and fathers. They became homosexual, they became juvenile delinquents, they became communists – soft, spineless dupes" (p. 171). It is possible then, that traditional masculinity continued to bourgeon not only because men

valued its roles, but also because they feared the consequences of failing or resisting these norms.

In terms of consumerism at this point in time, shopping and the purchasing of goods were largely considered to be women's territory. Put simply, men were commonly thought of as the producers of commodities and women as the consumers (Wernick, 1991; Mackinnon, 2003). A woman's break from the domestic sphere was often to participate in the growing industries of commodity sales. However, there did exist certain exceptions of traditionally 'male' commodities and for the most part, they were goods that are closely related to their own activities in the public sphere. Namely, alcohol has been often understood as a masculine product. It is manly because it is both a challenge and risk to ingest, and that our mastery of alcohol consumption is something that we compare to other men within male-populated bars (Mackinnon, 2003, p. 93). In addition, automobiles have also been understood as a man's commodity. They are a man's means to get to his workplace and have also been typically crafted in the media as a signifier of a man's virility (Mackinnon, 2003, p. 96). It is important to note that these items were not the only goods that men bought in this early consumer era. They are merely generalizations. Moreover, Osgerby (2003) argues that men have actually been consumers of various products since as early as the 1920s. He does acknowledge, however, that the popular cultural ideology at the time was that women were targeted and encouraged more than men to become active consumers.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the women's liberation movements were, in part, a response to the gender roles governed since the industrial revolution. These movements, along with the rise of second-wave feminist theory, were influential on the commonplace

gender roles and relations of men and women. As popularized by feminist theorists, it was unfair to confine women to the domestic sphere while men were allowed to enter the workforce (e.g. Friedan, 1963). Moreover, it has been argued that the amount of work required to maintain a home and raise children was at least as demanding as paid labour. Some were particularly critical of female domestic responsibilities such as Betty Friedan who described the daily life as a "comfortable concentration camp" (in Synnott, 2009, p. 142). This backlash resulted in allowing women to enter the workforce thus, changing the current gender relations. This era saw not only the inclusion of women to the workforce en masse, but it also had a profound influence on our cultural perceptions of gender, roles and expectations. Put concisely by Gill (2003), "At its most basic, feminism started a conversation about gender, power, work, sex, intimacy, nature and culture – and opened up a space where gender relations could be progressively revisioned" (p. 42). Expectedly, these phenomena have played a major role in the changing ideals of masculinity at this time. The structural and social transformations have resulted in men having to necessarily adapt and modify some of the facets of traditional manhood. This point in time is considered by gender theorists to be a transitional period for men – some seeking to retain more traditional customs, while others welcoming the possibility to foster new identities. Moreover, men were forced to question what it means to be a man and how a more judicious manhood could be achieved.

In light of the newfound changes to gender relations, an archetype of a more sensitive masculinity emerged in the 1980s. The model is what scholars refer to as the 'new man'. What was this 'new man' like? Described simply by Milestone & Meyer (2012), "He is caring, sensitive, emotionally skilled and shares household duties,

including childcare. He is usually middle class and well educated, liberal in his political outlook and sympathetic to the feminist cause" (p. 116). These ideals of manhood are clearly opposing that of traditional masculinity, and thus considered 'new'. Such expectations appear to be far more progressive and egalitarian than those of previous eras. However, there is a particular caveat in terms of this seemingly flawless conception. Not only was the new man a nurturer; he was also a narcissist (Beynon, 2002). New man was attentive to the sensitivity of his demeanor but also to that of his skin. Men, more than ever, were invited into the realm of consumerism and a number of markets were formed to target the "new man" ideal (Wernick, 1991; Dotson, 1999; Edwards, 2003). The 1980s marked the starting point of when men began to be culturally encouraged to pay attention to the appearance of their bodies. This emphasis was implied through a variety of means including: the exposure of men's bodies in the media (Bordo, 1999; Dotson, 1999, Alexander, 2003; Schroeder & Zwick, 2004); the rise of the men's lifestyle magazine market in the UK and US (Nixon, 1996; Benwell, 2003; Crewe, 2003; Stevenson et al., 2003); and the expansion of men's fashion industries (Edwards, 1997; 2003).

It is necessary to emphasize the significance of men's lifestyle magazines in the contemporary construction and representation of masculinity. With the exceptions of *Esquire* and later, *Playboy* magazine, men had not yet had a large magazine market that directly addressed them and sought to generate a male consumer identity (Nixon, 1996; Edwards, 1997; Osgerby, 2003). Men now had at their disposal a variety of different guides on how to be a man – such as *GQ* or *Arena* (Nixon, 1996; Crewe, 2003). What is more, they were now exposed to the multiplicity of products and practices designed to construct or refine one's manhood. Canadian cultural studies scholar Marc Lafrance

claims, “It isn't just the fact of being a family-man or a provider that defines being a man anymore. Rather, it is practices of consumption that now allow him to take on a certain image” (in Morin, 2014). Considering that magazines consist of a high quantity of advertising, men’s lifestyle magazines are perfect conduits to disperse a number of commodities targeted at men. Moreover, since the magazine itself is gendered, one would expect advertising within it to be aimed directly and exclusively at men. Wernick (1991) notes, “How ads have come to encode masculinity (and correspondingly, femininity), then, partly reflects the way advertising has sought to secure men’s identification, in sometimes unprecedented contexts, with the standpoint of consumption itself” (p. 49). One could argue that the rise of the men’s magazine press (and the throng of advertisements therein) is likely connected to the rise of consumer goods marketed overtly ‘just for men’. There may not be a sound method to measure such a connection. However, we can draw on statistics to see whether or not the men’s magazine market and men’s consumption of particular products have risen in unison.

One could safely assume that not *all* men could relate to this lifestyle of the ‘new man’. In fact, due to his extraordinary break with traditional masculine norms, one could also assume that men may actively resist these ‘new’ conventions. As pointed out by several theorists, the ‘new man’ and his according mediated ideals is not only an adaptation to woman’s liberation, but it may also be thought of as an aberration from true manliness. The ‘new man’ was often condemned as an inauthentic or unnatural form of masculinity (Crewe, 2003; Gill, 2003; Milestone & Meyer, 2012). A result of this profound rejection was the emergence of another form of contemporary masculinity soon to be flourishing within consumer society of the 1990s. This new archetype has taken on

a number of labels such as the ‘new lad’, ‘child-men’ and also, simply ‘guys’. The primary characteristic of this discourse of masculinity is that it is a backlash to both the ‘new man’ (Beynon, 2002) and, to feminism and increasing gender equality in the public sphere (Gill, 2003). There exists an explicit nostalgia for more traditional, libidinal manhood from a time when male power was more stable and the emancipation of women and homosexuals had not yet occurred. Correspondingly, this was a model of manhood that is largely influenced by anxiety, anger and resentment (Kimmel, 2012). As such, contemporary manhood had been often considered to be in a state of ‘crisis’. Summarized by Atkinson (2011), “The splintering and redistribution of masculine control across institutional landscapes is generally believed to be the cause of the masculinity crisis” (p. 6).

It should be noted that these male ideals have been largely marketed to and adopted by a younger male audience than that of the “new man” of the 1980s. The surrounding social world of these current young men is what Kimmel (2008) calls “Guyland”. He summarizes:

> “Guyland is the world in which young men live. It is both a stage of life, a liminal undefined timespan between adolescence and adulthood that can often stretch for a decade or more, and a place, or, rather a bunch of places where guys gather to be guys with each other, unhassled by the demands of parents, girlfriends, jobs, kids, and the other nuisances of adult life. In this topsy-turvy, Peter-Pan mindset, young men shirk the responsibilities of adulthood and remain fixated on the trappings of boyhood, while the boys they still are struggle heroically to prove that they are real men despite all evidence to the contrary” (p. 4)

It is made clear that ‘guys’ are young men who are dedicated to proving their manhood while paradoxically avoiding the various obligations of becoming an adult. What Kimmel explains later in his book is how this drive to prove one’s manhood is often displayed through engaging in risky activities. These types of activities and motivations

are the observable and marketable conventions of this masculinity. 'Laddism' or 'Guyland' are not merely characterized by more traditional masculine practices but by an exaggeration or glorification of them. Milestone & Meyer (2012) compile a number of various traits such as drunkenness, sex, aggression, machismo, misogyny and womanizing (p. 118). As aforementioned, it is not surprising that these expressions are birthed out of anxiety and anger. In addition to mere raucous, drunken behaviour, a number of researchers have noted that rites of passage for young men tend to be increasingly violent (e.g. Katz, 2002; Kimmel, 2012). The encouragement of violent homosocial behavior among young men, along with the increased portrayal of male violence in the media, could be, in part, contributive to the fact that 86% of all violent crime in the United States is committed by men (Katz, 2002). In this way, the contemporary 'crisis' of masculinity is not only a theoretical concept; it is often supported through empirical data on the rise of risky and violent behaviour among young men. While certainly not all young men of the 1990s and 2000s may be interested in or affected by these rites of manhood, a growing consumer market and media depictions pertaining to this type of masculinity became rampant.

Selling the 'new lad' can be found in a variety of avenues in consumer culture. Most notably, however, the men's lifestyle magazine market expanded in the 1990s to create titles specifically marketed towards the 'new lad' (Crewe, 2003). These titles, such as *loaded, FHM* and *Maxim*, promote their manly authenticity through the rejection of the sensitive 'new man' and the promotion of the aforementioned traits of the 'new lad'. The most prevalent component of these "lad magazines" is the unabashed emphasis on heterosexuality and heterosexual conquest (Crewe, 2003; Gill, 2003; Attwood, 2005;

Milestone & Meyer, 2012). In effect, with heterosexuality as being so central to this type of masculinity, others have argued that homophobia is also a guiding feature (Kimmel, 2009). In addition, in Edwards' (1997) study on men's fashion, he notes that while the 'new lad' is a rejection of the style-conscious 'new man', there are a number of clothing brands marketed towards this masculine identity. While designer clothing and attention to fashion marked the "new man", brands of mid-priced and men's work clothing found an ideal consumer in the "new lad" (Edwards, 1997). This was a resurgence of what Bordo (1999) calls "nonfashion-guy fashion" (p. 194). Furthermore, it should be noted, in light of the present research, that grooming and grooming products are not as highly valued for the 'new lads' as they were for the 'new men' (Gill, 2003). However, it did not take new persuasive marketing campaigns to encourage these men to continue to consume typically manly goods. As advocates of all things *traditionally* masculine, the 'new lads' and 'guys' were encouraged to spend their money not on their appearance but at bars, at sporting events and on automobiles (Mackinnon, 2003; Gill, 2003; Milestone & Meyer, 2012).

It is useful to continue to uncover the cultural ideals of what it means to be a man and how they are manifested within popular culture. While a 'crisis' of hegemonic masculinity (singular) continues to be spoken about at length, there are arguably a number of other masculinities (plural) in flux. Considering that there has not been such a solidified archetype since the "new lad", we may be beginning to understand masculinities as more complicated and flexible. Benyon (2002) inquires, "perhaps what we are currently witnessing at the start of the 21st century is nothing less than the emergence of a more fluid, bricolage masculinity, the result of 'channel hopping' across

versions of the ‘masculine’” (p. 6). If he is correct, we can begin to reject simplistic, generalized understandings of masculinity, which could, in turn, help to eradicate certain long withstanding cultural expectations and stereotypes.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Representing Men in Magazines and Advertising

Empirical studies addressing the representation of men and masculinity in magazines have been an "area of arguable neglect in sociology" in the past (Benwell, 2003, p. 27). Over the past twenty years, however, there have been several studies that provide data on the content of men's lifestyle magazines, and of men in advertising more generally. First, in 1990, Kervin performed a far-reaching content analysis on advertisements from *Esquire* Magazine from the 1930s to the 1980s. She found that male models across this period tended to be both "Sturdy Oaks" and "Big Wheels" (Kervin, 1990, p. 63). These terms borrowed from Robert Brannon (1976) are used to describe men depicted as self-reliant hard workers, and successful in terms of business and social status. A notable change found in content from the 1980s was that there now tended to be younger male models with more exposed bodies (p. 63-67). Overall, however, there were relatively few variations in representing masculinity across this time period. She concludes, "certain stereotypes from the beginning of *Esquire* fifty years ago still survive, suggesting that they fulfill some need or answer some concern, perhaps related to men's sense that they – as individuals – do not hold power" (p. 68).

Kolbe and Albanese conducted a content analysis of ads found in five different men's magazine titles published in 1993. Their research pays specific attention to the ways in which printed advertisements depict a single, solitary man. What they identify as the 'sole-male' is "the image of a man, functioning in isolation without the assistance of

others, […] a depiction of American manhood deeply rooted in history and laden with symbolic meaning" (Kolbe, 1997, p. 815). Generally, this 'sole-male' is seen in white-collar occupations or in outdoorsmen type roles (p. 820-822). In addition, this study provides other relevant data on *Esquire* Magazine. For example, *Esquire* had the largest average number of 'sole-male' ads and the second highest percentage of total ads among magazines in the sample (p. 819).

One year later, Vigorito & Curry investigated portrayals of masculinity across popular magazines not exclusive to the men's lifestyle genre. Their analysis reveals findings concerning the differences in representations of men and women. Men and women, as depicted in 83 popular American magazines released in 1992, were most often seen in an occupational role (Vigorito & Curry, 1998, p. 143). The second most frequent representation was men in an outdoor setting and women seen as a parent or family member (p. 143). In addition, it is specified that within magazines targeted to a male audience, portrayals of men tended to express dominance, control, coolness and emotional repression (p. 148). On the other hand, magazines targeted to a female audience included ads that show men in a more sensitive manner (p. 149). This may be unsurprising as magazines actively choose and organize text and images that are designed to be appealing to their implied and target audiences. It should be noted, however, that the 'sensitive male' was becoming increasingly common across a variety of media, and in popular culture more generally, around this time. Leiss et al. (2005)'s comprehensive study of television ads from 1994 to 1996 found the 'sensitive male' in familial roles appearing more often than in earlier eras (p. 535). This trend was not limited to advertising. As noted by Salzman, Matathia & O'Reilly (2005), "Hollywood is

increasingly tilting toward a 'lite' version of masculinity – one that emphasizes sensibility and sensuality over power and bravado" (p. 124).

In 2000, Coltrane & Messineo performed another type of quantitative analysis that is also relevant to this research. They conducted a content analysis on television commercials with the intent to reveal how race and gender are communicated. From a sample of 1699 televised ads from 1992 to 1994, they found that 86% of all characters depicted were White (p. 375). Moreover, White men were most likely to be represented as 'powerful' and Black men were most likely to be represented as 'aggressive' (p. 376). Other ethnic groups were so rarely viewed that they were not included in the thematic coding. Asian Americans made up 2% and Latinos only 1% of the sample (p. 382). As such, this research reveals a notable under-representation of ethnic minorities in advertising. Other studies have found that when Asian Americans are shown in advertising, they tend to be positioned within very specific business and technological settings (Frith, 2003; Leiss et al. 2005). In addition, Hispanics continue to be the most under-represented group in advertising (Frith, 2003, p. 129).

To provide a more recent account of qualitative research on representing masculinity in magazines and advertising, Alexander's (2003) analysis of *Men's Health* magazine is useful. She claims that masculinity, as presented in this magazine, is something that is branded – it is constructed as obtainable through the consumption of particular brand name products (p. 535). This notion is familiar as it posits the body as a 'project' to be created and refined through the use of various consumer goods and practices. To summarize, Alexander (2003) writes, "the multiplicity of masculine gender displays found in contemporary popular culture is exposed as capitalist hegemony in the

form of branded masculinities purposely constructed by multinational companies for the purpose of increasing sales and profits" (p. 552). Many of the depicted "branded masculinities" do not convince men to be consumers for the sheer enjoyment of shopping. Rather, they promote consumption as a solution to men's feelings of anxiety or inadequacy (Alexander, 2003). It is, therefore, not surprising that she found that the most prevalent images in her sample were of a muscular male body.

In the UK, Attwood (2005) performed a similar qualitative analysis on a variety of lad magazines (e.g. *loaded*, *FHM, Nuts, Maxim*). Similar to the more theoretical claims made by Crewe (2003) and Gill (2003), her analysis found that lad magazines tend to depict and encourage heterosexuality and heterosexual activity above anything else (p. 92). Providing empirical weight to others' theoretical claims (e.g. Crewe, 2003; Gill, 2003), she found that lad magazines typically promote more traditional masculine ideals through their textual content. She writes that these magazines are, "a bricolage of those familiar and rather old-fashioned signifiers of masculinity, 'tits and ass and porn and fighting'" (p. 97). Indeed, the 'new lad' archetype is strongly bound up with rather dated ideals and characteristics. Such conventions are understood as a rejection of the interests of the 'new man' or metrosexual. This is "most clearly evidenced by a shift away from a concern with style and grooming and towards more stereotypically masculine interests such as sport, gadgets and machines" (p. 86).

Finally, in 2010, Canadian sociologists Ricciardelli, Clow & White sought to examine the representation of hegemonic masculinity in 56 men's lifestyle magazines available in Canada. Similarly to Alexander (2003), their most general finding was that masculinity was presented as something that can be achieved or enhanced through the use

of consumer products. More specifically, they claim that masculinity, in their sample of magazines, is often directly associated with one's appearance and it is emphasized that men should be responsible for improving their bodies in order to attain a desirable lifestyle. They note, "readers gain the impression that they need to groom and dress in a particular manner in order to be successful, although the look varies depending upon the desired form of masculinity" (p. 77). This point resonates with Alexander (2003)'s claim that multiple masculine identities are marketable and marketed within the media. What is more, unlike previous research, they found that grooming products and aesthetics were notable within the magazine content. Although Alexander (2003)'s study was only 7 years prior, her analysis found that 0% of the advertising in her sample was devoted to grooming (p. 549). Conversely, Ricciardelli, Clow & White (2010) recorded that 6% of all advertisements in their sample was for male cosmetics such as moisturizers, facial cleansers and fragrances (p. 74). These statistics show an increase in the advertising of male grooming products and further validate the importance of this study.

2.2 The Exposure of the Male Body

Traditionally, men's bodies were largely influenced by personal and national duties that they were to expected uphold. Outlined by Glassner (1989) and later by Dworkin & Wachs (2009), the military and political speeches played a major part in promoting an idealistic male body in a less media saturated age. Men needed to be in shape for everyday life but also fit enough to defend or "display the success of their nation through their body" (Dworkin & Wachs, 2009, p. 89). Moreover, a man's profession typically played a hand in sculpting the shape of his body. For example, much

of the manual labour taken on by many men required a body that is physically capable of performing such work. However, as technology and globalization transformed the workplace, they simultaneously transformed the male body. The office and service jobs that are now prevalent in our culture do not have the same physical demands as manual labour of a more traditional society (Connell, 1983; Bordo, 1999). Consequently, the media since the 1980s has acted as a replacement for constructing the ideals of a male body (Bordo, 1999; Dotson, 1999, Alexander, 2003; Schroeder & Zwick, 2004). This new exposure of the male body in the media has historical significance. Having the body on display puts men in a position that was once reserved exclusively for women and in turn, permits the male body, for the first time, to be gazed upon by women and other men (Bordo, 1999; Patterson & Elliott, 2002; Mackinnon, 2003; Gill, 2007). While there have been a variety of changing social dynamics in the contemporary Western world, one could assume that the aforementioned women's and gay liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s have played pivotal roles in normalizing the exposure of male bodies in the media (Gill, 2007).

So, what did this newfound male body ideal in the media look like? The male body ideal, proliferated in the media, is one that is in stark contrast to that of the female body ideal. Rather than an archetype of slimness, the male body is typically sanctioned as sculpted and muscular (Dworkin & Wachs, 2009; Mallyon et al., 2010). Muscularity continues to be a common exhibition of how manhood is embodied (Connell, 1983; Glassner, 1989) and it is an aesthetic bodily norm within media representations (Bordo, 1999; Labre, 2002; Hatoum & Belle, 2004; Dworkin & Wachs, 2009). Some believe that the role of muscularity has come about precisely to strengthen gender normativity in an

era of shifting gender relations. Hesse-Biber (2006) claims, "Today, women can be CEOs of top companies and high-ranking military officers, so men may feel that, more than ever, muscles define manhood" (p. 197). Similarly, Dworkin & Wachs (2009) argue that men's drive for muscularity may be central to gender not only as a cultural norm but also as retaliation to women's liberation (p. 101). Regardless of the plethora of possible reasons for why muscularity is central to contemporary male body image, it has been identified by many researchers that muscles are a prevailing constituent of the male body ideal proliferated in the media.

However, muscles are not the sole indicator of the male body ideal. Men's bodies in the media are typically constructed with a variety of potentially contradictory bodily features. As summarized by Gill (2007), "The models are generally white, they are young, they are muscular and slim, they are usually clean-shaven (with perhaps the exception of a little designer stubble), and they have particular facial features which connote a combination of softness and strength – strong jaw, large lips and eyes, and soft-looking, clear skin". From this summary, we can notice a number of binary oppositions – muscular and slim, softness and strength. Indeed, the male body ideal often attempts to incorporate particular paradoxical elements. As noted by Bordo (1999), having a body that is simultaneously "hard" and "soft" is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain and such ideals articulate the contradictory demands of contemporary masculinities. It appears that men are subject to an ongoing negotiation of "hardness" and "softness" of both their personalities and their bodies.

Additionally, in revisiting Gill's description, one must not overlook her inclusion of race. She goes on to mention that White bodies are over-represented across most

forms of media (Gill, 2007, p. 99). However, when non-white bodies are shown in the media, they tend to be *more* exposed in a literal sense. African-American male bodies, for example, are typically shown as muscular, but also more bare or sexualized than White male bodies (Jefferson, 1998; Gill, 2007). In Soar's (2002) analysis of Nike advertisements from 1970 to 1995, he found that, in later ads, more Black skin tended to be shown (p. 52). Across his whole sample, "the common characteristics of these ads are: very little clothing, large expanses of sweat-laden skin and an unfettered, close-up view of the athlete's body either in action or briefly at rest" (p. 49). In general, across all advertising, Black male bodies are most often used to portray athletes (Soar, 2002; Frith, 2003; Leiss et al., 2005). So, while Black males are generally underrepresented in the media, they are overrepresented in this particular elite profession. Such an occurrence can be considered problematic. Soar (2002) argues, "the contemporary preponderance of black male sports stars in advertising […] creat[es] a formidable yet largely invisible disjuncture between the overwhelmingly disadvantaged experience of racially marginalized groups and their distant counterparts in the approving public spotlight" (p. 39).

Certain scholars have noted the increase of less muscular, thinner male bodies in media and while the exact causes may not be calculable, they hypothesize that it may have been a result of the mainstreaming of queer culture and the homoerotic gaze (Nixon, 1996; Dotson, 1999; Sender, 2006; Gill, 2007). It is clear then that when investigating the representation of the male body, one must be attentive to not only how the body is racialized, but also sexualized.

2.3 Male Bodywork and Grooming Products

We now have a general idea of how masculinity and male bodies are typically represented in media and advertising. Although one can expect to see bodies of different shape and size, we would most often encounter bodies that are White, muscular and flawless. This male body is truly an 'ideal' because it may not, or cannot, be easily obtained or maintained by actual men. The media, and advertising more specifically, makes use of this body ideal to promote consumption of specific products and reinforce the cultural imperative for men to work on their bodies. Schroeder & Zwick (2004) note, "Men are increasingly encouraged to view their own bodies as sites of identity management: 'consumer' bodies are the products of labor (body work) that necessitates consumption and the use of consumer goods" (p. 25). However, one can also interpret the rise of exposure of the male body in the media in a way that is less reliant on notions of ideals and imperatives. As declared by Patterson & Elliott (2002), "The negotiation and renegotiation of male identities is made all the more possible by the increasing visualization of male bodies in advertising and the media. These institutions of consumer culture provide men with both templates for their body/identity projects and, facilitate their experience of multiple subject positions" (p. 341). In this way, we can think of working on the body not merely as social pressure that men are now subjected to. Rather, as emphasized by Heyes (2006), it can be considered an opportunity for self-discovery. While much scholarly attention has been paid to the bodywork of women, there is arguably a larger gap in literature pertaining to male specific bodywork. However, in recent years, critical masculinities scholars have increasingly paid attention to how men

sculpt and maintain their bodies, and how physicality might shape and reflect one's masculinity.

Men's bodywork, like women's, consists of exercise, dieting and various products to facilitate either practice. Male involvement in typically 'female' bodywork begs the question of whether or not we are beginning to loosen or blur our gender norms. Are men becoming more like women due to the fact that now it is socially acceptable for them to diet? Is our gender binary eroding as men now are expected to weight-watch and control their body shape? Commercial dieting programs, for example, that are addressed to men posit bodywork as implicit to a sculpted, muscular ideal. Weight-loss programs for men are often successful when they focus on losing weight in order to form more muscle (Mallyon et al., 2010). Fear of fat is not because men are expected to be thin, but rather because fat signifies that they have been unsuccessful in building muscle. The use of language tends to be a notable divergence between men and women's tools of body management and this serves to strengthen the practice as necessarily masculine or feminine (Hesse-Biber, 2006; Dworkin & Wachs, 2009). The stigma of being feminine is effectively eradicated in assuring men that what they are doing is purely masculine. To use *Weight Watchers* as an example, this lucrative organization recently developed a weight-loss program specifically for men. The website reads, "Lose like a man" and promises to show how men can lose weight while retaining their (traditional) manhood (*Weight Watchers*, April 2013). They contest that in the program, you can still eat "real" food and enjoy beer, and ensures men that weight-loss is a "science" rather than a fad diet (*Weight Watchers*, April 2013). Similarly, in Mallyon et al. (2010)'s study, common textual elements in promotional dieting pamphlets targeting men include typically manly

subjects, such as “science and technology” (p. 330). In emphasizing the alleged manliness of body management, such practices would be, in effect, working on both one’s body and one’s manhood.

Bodywork is not only about laborious physical activities like fitness and dieting, it is also about daily personal practices like cleaning and grooming. Historically, grooming and grooming products have been linked to health and cleanliness. Vinikas (1992) shows that beginning in the 1920s, the American cosmetics industry, in large part, created social anxiety surrounding hygiene and in turn, provided a solution. This “crusade” for bodily cleanliness was constructed though tropes of morality and thus, a visual lack of basic grooming became socially deviant (Vinikas, 1992). However, most grooming products that were produced were indeed aimed specifically at female consumers. By 1927, 7000 different types of female grooming products existed (Vinikas, 1992, p. 59). This industry continued to expand and diversify over the next 70 years, but largely remained a woman’s market. Since the late 1990s, however, the male grooming products industry has been booming. According to Euromonitor International, a market data firm, American consumers spent $2.4 billion in 1997, and this amount was doubled by 2009 (Newman, 2010). Today, cosmetics may be becoming the largest market of male commodities in the Western world. Tungate (2008) provides a market predictor, which states that the combined sale of male grooming products in Europe and North America would accumulate approximately 40 billion dollars in 2010 (p. 13). Male grooming products would include, but are not limited to: shaving creams, razors, soaps, hair gels, and skin care. In fact, the subdivision of men’s skin care, which refers to non-shaving goods like facial cleansers, moisturizers and exfoliants, has grown more than fivefold

over the period of 1997 to 2009, from $40.9 million to $217 million (Newman, 2010). So, what are the reasons that men are interested in daily maintenance and modification of the body through the use of these new products? Some theorists argue that it is certainly not out of a concern for bodily health or cleanliness. Rather, it is a response to the now omnipresent youthful and beautified male bodies in the media. Berger (2011) points out that contemporary advertisements for cosmetics tend to play upon our anxieties surrounding age and beauty (p. 95-96). One could say that the growing exposure of male bodies has 'raised the bar' or increased the importance of a favorable male physicality. Thus, cosmetics can help achieve this bodily ideal.

At first blush, the use of cosmetics by men seems contradictory to traditional masculinity. However, advertisers may use these more traditional traits to market such typically feminine products. In Barthel (1988)'s extensive analysis of gender in advertisements released in the 1980s, she came across certain cosmetic ads aimed at men. She describes in great detail how such womanly products are transformed as masculine:

> "Besides such 'grooming gear' as perms and hair sprays, Real Guys use 'skin supplies' and 'shaving resources.' They adopt a 'survival strategy' to fight balding, and the 'Fila philosophy' – 'products with a singular purpose: performance' – for effective 'bodycare.' If they wear scent, it smells of anything *but* flowers: musk, woods, spices, citrus, and surf are all acceptable. And the names must be manly, whether symbolizing physical power ("Brut") or financial power ("Giorgio VIP Special Reserve", "The Baron. A distinctive fragrance for men," "Halston – For the privileged few")." (p. 176)

The purpose of such stereotypically 'manly' language in ads is to ensure that men can feel comfortable using a certain product without compromising their masculinity. Dworkin & Wachs (2009) clarify, "The stigma of the feminine is removed from men's working out and engaging in consumer culture in a number of ways, for example, by

linking practices to unquestionably powerful male pursuits such as sports performance, the military or male-identified jobs" (p. 92). Moreover, in a similar study, Kirkham & Weller (1996) examined advertising and packaging of Clinique cosmetic products. They found that the use of colour is central to distinguishing between products marketed either to women or to men (p. 197). Accordingly, while female products were advertised and packaged in many colours, male products tended to be limited to black and white. The avoidance of colour provides a "rational" or "objective" tone and in turn, ensures the manliness of the advertisement or product (p. 197). These masculine themes are also reinforced through specific language and labeling that signifies "utilitarianism", "science", "rationalism", "efficiency" and "business" (p. 198). Overall, Kirkham & Weller (1996) claim that these products are inherently gendered objects through how they are labeled, packaged and advertised. They summarize, "it would appear that although the production and use of male toiletries are evidence of the blurring, if not breaking down, of what have been rigid gender boundaries in the 'touchy' area of male cosmetics, the advertising and packaging practices which distinguish between Clinique's 'male' and 'female' products draw heavily on gender stereotypes based on binary oppositions" (p. 202-203). With this scholarship in view, it will be fruitful to explore how contemporary grooming product advertising addresses men and represents masculinity. Do they typically draw on traditional masculine conventions similar to the findings of Barthel (1988) and Kirkham & Weller (1996)? Or, do they promote a more sensitive masculinity characteristic of the 'new man' or metrosexual?

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sample

The sample analyzed in the current research consists of print advertisements for male grooming products contained in men's lifestyle magazines. However, many of these magazines tend to focus in on a specific male-oriented topic, rather than addressing a variety of aspects pertaining to male lifestyles. For example, we can find magazines that are largely concentrated on health and fitness (e.g. *Men's Health, Men's Fitness*); sex and heterosexuality (e.g. *FHM, loaded, Maxim, Nuts*); and various periodicals that are not explicitly advertised as "men's lifestyle magazines" but are arguably dedicated to typically male hobbies, interests and professions (e.g. *Sports Illustrated, Road & Track, Stuff*). These topic-specific magazines tend to include advertising that is also topic-specific, rather than consumer ads for a plethora of men's products. For example, *Men's Fitness* includes ads related to fitness, such as workout equipment, nutritional supplements and athletic clothing. While magazines such as this may include advertisements for a wide array of products, they do not necessarily include many ads that are specific to male grooming. As previously noted by Attwood (2005), the 'new lad' lifestyle does not place a high emphasis on grooming and therefore, lad magazines (e.g. *FHM, loaded, Maxim*) may not feature a large volume of grooming product ads.

In order to avoid the more narrow scope of topic-specific magazines, I have chosen titles that focus more generally on the 'lifestyle' or 'culture of life' of Western men. Two of the most widely successful magazines that are devoted to a broader

definition of male lifestyles are *Esquire* and *GQ.* Both present themselves as essential guides to all things masculine and serve as a form of self-help advice on issues such as sex, fashion, health, work and family. *Esquire*, founded in 1933, was the first magazine to consciously create a male consumer lifestyle and it continues to be the most recognizable name as a magazine for men (Barthel, 1988; Kervin, 1990; Breazeale, 1994; Osgerby, 2003). The sample of advertisements has been drawn from every issue *Esquire* magazine released in North America from 2011 to 2013. With reference to statistics accumulated by Tungate (2008), the male cosmetics industry was projected to expand in recent years. If the industry has indeed grown, it is expected that there are not only more advertisements included but also, a wider variety of brands and products presented in the magazine than in earlier studies (e.g. Barthel, 1988; Kervin, 1990; Kolbe & Albanese, 1997). All ads that present a grooming product have been used. Grooming products include razors, shaving cream, soap, shampoo, body wash, body sprays, deodorant, lotions, moisturizers, hair gels, hair dye and hair removal kits. Certain exemptions include advertising for cologne, dental care and nutritional supplements. Cologne, for instance, may not be commonly considered a 'cosmetic' and can be viewed in a product category of its own (Kirkham & Weller, 1996). In other words, it is seen as *not* a 'grooming product' per se and therefore, not a part of the recent proliferation of cosmetic products 'for men' in advertising. Furthermore, dental care products, as goods or in advertisements, do not tend to be gendered male or female. Nutritional supplements, although highly gendered, are products that modify the body, rather than groom it. For these reasons, commodities such as these are not considered to be male grooming products and therefore, have not been included in the sample of advertisements. After the

sample was collected, it was methodically organized. In accordance with Altheide & Schneider (2013)'s guide to qualitative media analysis, each advertisement was categorized following their guidelines for analyzing print media photos. Every ad was listed numerically and includes the following information: source, date, page number, photo caption, source and description. This organizational protocol facilitates the coding process.

3.2 Methodological Approaches to Analyzing Advertising Texts

The most popular method for analyzing advertising texts is content analysis (Rose, 2001; Gill, 2007; Krippendorf, 2012). A content analysis is used to interpret texts or images by means of quantitative methods. Rose (2001) summarizes, "Content analysis was concerned to analyse cultural texts in accordance with 'the ideals of quantification and natural science methodology'" (p. 54). The emphasis on quantification and frequency-counts aids in creating a precise, descriptive set of categories that have been interpreted from the sample (Rose, 2001). The purpose of a content analysis, however, is not limited to description. One commonly uses content analysis to make larger claims about social and cultural phenomena. The interpretation and extraction of meanings or "symbolic qualities" is a necessary part of performing such an analysis (Krippendorff, 2012, p. 38). However, the utility of a content analysis within research that is largely guided by theory is highly critiqued. For example, Rose (2001) argues that an objective, quantitative method of analysis cannot adequately support subjective or theoretical arguments. In a similar way, Leiss et al. (2005) argue that content analyses tend to "universalize meaning, thus diminishing our appreciation for the complexity and intricate

play of differences within advertising texts" (p. 163). So, in light of these important objections, this particular method is posed as insufficient for the current project.

In looking back at the work of representation by Stuart Hall in Chapter 1, we are reminded of a methodological solution. As emphasized by Hall (2013), an analysis of 'discourse', rather than of content or of signs, allows for a broader historical and contextual investigation of representations (p. 32). Since this research is informed by the notion of meaning as contextual, the discourse analysis is a more appropriate method. In *Gender and the Media* (2007), Gill describes three main purposes or criteria for a discourse analysis. First, this method is concerned with a particular text in and of itself – the content and organization of text "in its own right" (p. 58). Second, as previously emphasized by Stuart Hall, this analysis is attentive to the construction of language as it creates and connotes various possible meanings (p. 58). Third, discourse analysis is concerned with the "orientation" of discourse, meaning that it is concerned with how a given text is part of a social practice within a particular historical context (p. 58-59). An advantage of such an approach is that one is not limited to producing only quantifiable data. Rather, the "flexibility" of this method allows for a wider range of analytical options to interpret the content with regards to wider socio-cultural phenomena (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 97). However, such a flexible and less quantitative analysis also means that one must make more modest claims, as they cannot be backed up with substantial numerical data (Rose, 2001).

3.3 Thematic Discourse Analysis: An Overview and Application

A thematic discourse analysis is used to interpret advertising texts and develop theoretical arguments from the findings. As aforementioned, this analysis places less emphasis on quantification and is more concerned with the creation of thematic categories based on the data sample. The themes that are extracted by the researcher must be used to support the theoretical claims being made. Accordingly, this research follows the detailed "Phases of Thematic Analysis" as outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006). The six phases are as follows: (1) Familiarizing yourself with the data; (2) Generating initial codes; (3) Searching for themes; (4) Reviewing themes; (5) Defining and naming themes; (6) Producing the report (p. 87). Once the themes in advertising for male grooming products have been discerned, they are each thoroughly defined and described. Within the analysis, it is made clear how particular thematic representations are necessarily intertwined with historical, contextual and cultural conceptions of gender, race and class. Keeping in mind the concept of 'discourse', the thematic categories are considered to be discursive fields that are overlapping and mutually constitutive. Moreover, arguments specific to male grooming products and practices are put forth and supported through a synthesis of theoretical and empirical data. Finally, with the construction of these themes informed by scholarly theory on masculinity, propositions are made about contemporary Western men, masculinities, and male bodywork.

3.3.1 Phase I: Familiarizing Yourself With Your Data

In this first phase of analysis, as outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006), it is necessary to read and re-read one's data and take note of all initial ideas (p. 87). Since this is a study of advertisements and not of verbal responses, a traditional transcription of

data is not a requirement. However, reading advertising texts does require a similar level of attention and engagement. Accordingly, each advertisement of the sample was read at three different times over the course of a month and during these times, all notes and ideas were recorded. To start, each advertisement was organized by brand and magazine issue (month, year, volume, issue number and page number). The total number of *Esquire* magazines released over the 3-year span was 33. All issues from 2011 to 2013 were included in this sample. 30 were found in two local libraries in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. The 3 remaining issues were purchased online through www.ebay.com. The total number of magazines that featured grooming product ads was 29. The total number of grooming product ads was 62. Next, basic descriptive statistics were calculated. First, frequency distributions of advertisements in *Esquire* Magazine by year are represented by bar charts in FIGURE 1, 2 and 3:

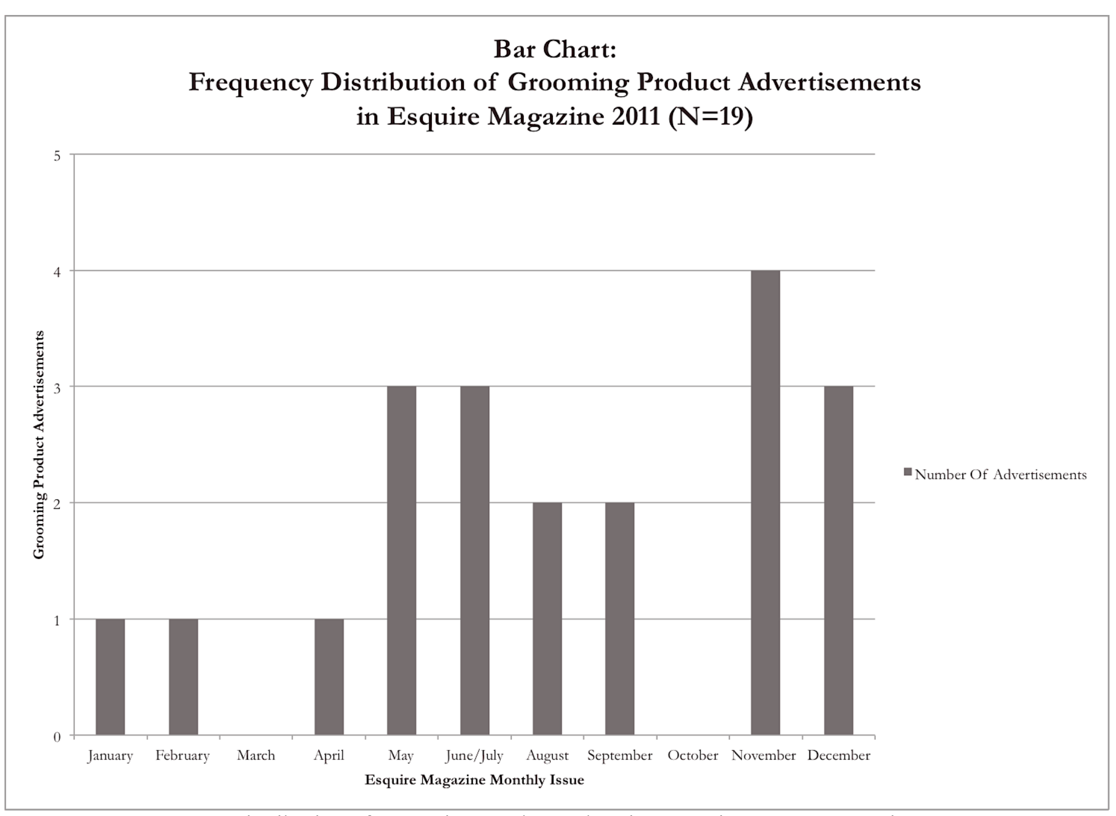

FIGURE 1. Frequency Distribution of Grooming Product Advertisements in *Esquire* Magazine 2011

In 2011, 9 of 11 issues of *Esquire* featured grooming product advertisements. The issues that did not include such ads were the months of March and October. The total number of grooming product ads in 2011 was 19. The monthly issue that had the highest number of ads was November 2011 with 4. The average number of ads found in each issue of *Esquire* in 2011 was 2 (19 ÷ 11 = 1.72 ~ 2 ads).

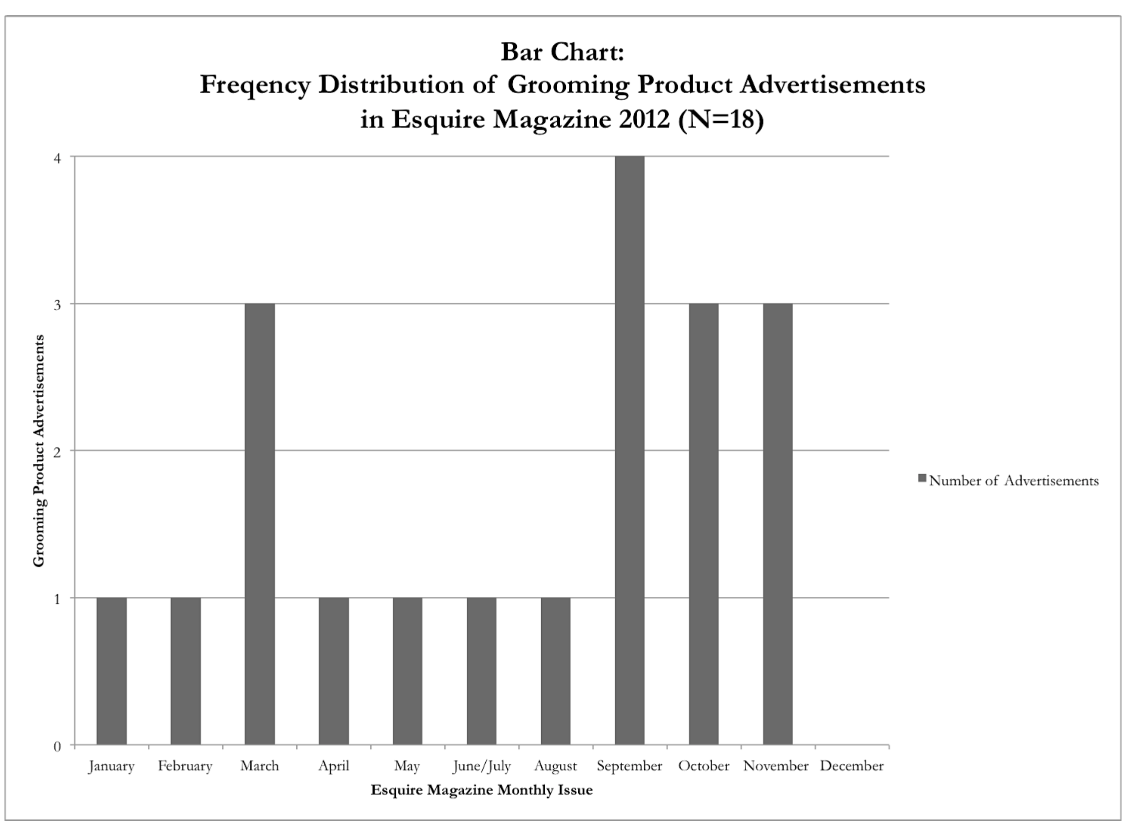

FIGURE 2. Frequency Distribution of Grooming Product Advertisements in *Esquire* Magazine 2012

In 2012, 10 of 11 issues of *Esquire* featured grooming product advertisements. The issue that did not include such ads was December. The total number of grooming product ads in 2012 was 18. The monthly issue that had the highest number of ads was September 2012 with 4. The average number of ads found in each issue of *Esquire* in 2012 was 2 (18 ÷ 11 = 1.63 ~ 2 ads). Although the number of ads from 2012 was one less than 2011,

more issues from this year included grooming ads. Unlike 2011, where there were 2 monthly issues without grooming product ads, only December did not feature any such ads. Therefore, although the frequency of ads was less in 2012 than in 2011, the distribution of ads was spread across more issues.

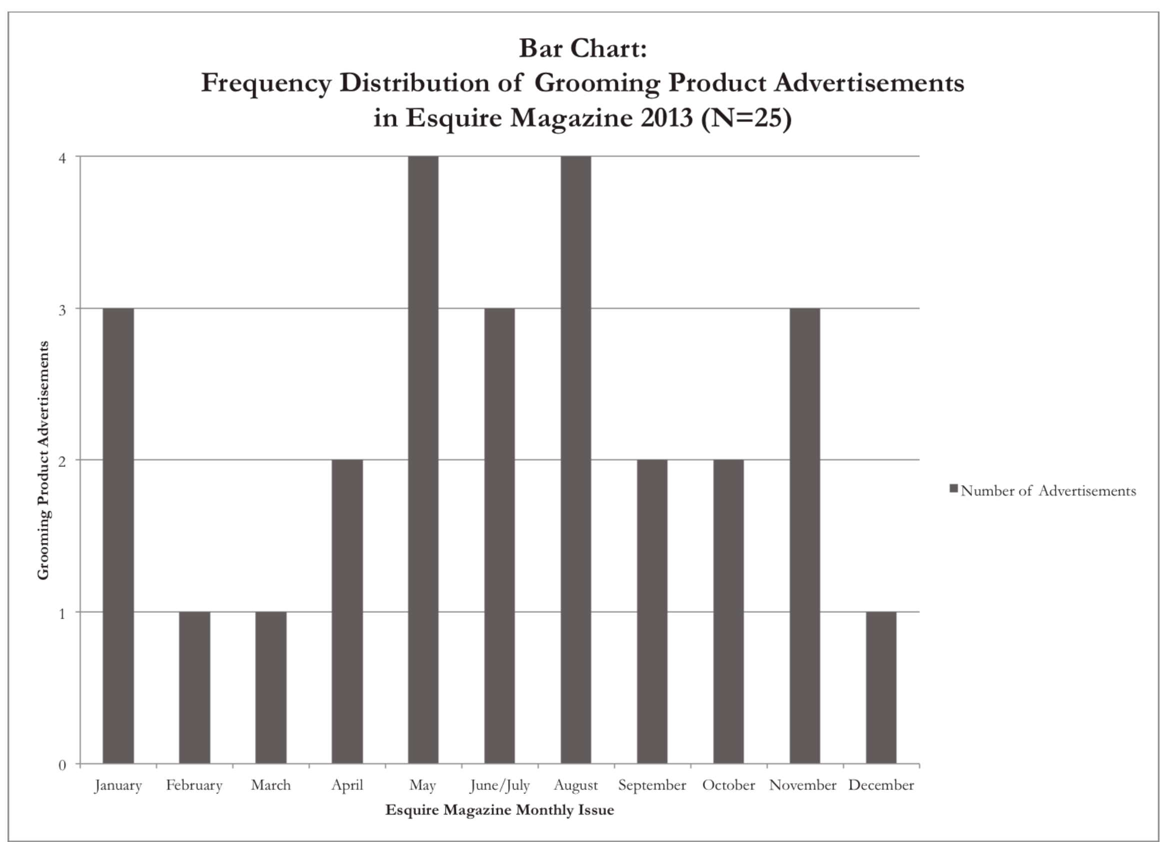

FIGURE 3. Frequency Distribution of Grooming Product Advertisements in *Esquire* Magazine 2013

In 2013, all 11 issues of *Esquire* featured grooming product advertisements. The total number of grooming product ads in 2013 was 25. The monthly issues that had the highest number of ads were May and August with 4. The average number of ads found in each issue of *Esquire* in 2013 was 2 (25 ÷ 11 = 2.27 ~ 2 ads). Although the average number of ads in 2013 is the same as in 2011 and 2012, the total number from 2013 is

considerably higher (25 vs. 18 and 19). Additionally, unlike 2011 and 2012, there were no monthly issues without grooming product ads. Therefore, both the frequency and distribution of ads was higher in 2013 than in 2012 and 2011. These statistics indicate the increased presence of male cosmetic ads in 2013.

Next, the ads were each given a title. For some, the title was obvious in that it was the overarching text included in the ad. For others, I determined a concise, but descriptive title. The specification of titles not only allows for preliminary descriptions, but also makes it easier to identify when certain ads were repeated across different issues (which was often). Following this step, a short, purely descriptive paragraph was written for each advertisement. This process functions as a formal transcription of the data. If an ad featured text, it was recorded verbatim and other visual content was described with high attention to detail. As aforementioned, this process was repeated three separate times and the notes from each reading were kept, rather than replaced. The purpose of repeated viewing was to become thoroughly familiar with the data and to provide several opportunities for interpretation.

3.3.2 Phase II: Generating Initial Codes

Once familiarized with the data set, the initial coding procedure was performed. In this phase of the analysis, this coding process serves to organize data into potentially meaningful groups (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 88). Only in the next phase is the sample analyzed and coded for signs that may transform into broader themes. The first way in which the sample was coded and grouped was by brand. This serves largely as a means of sample organization; however, it also provides statistics concerning brand prevalence

within *Esquire* magazine. The distribution of ads by brand name is represented in a pie chart as seen in FIGURE 4:

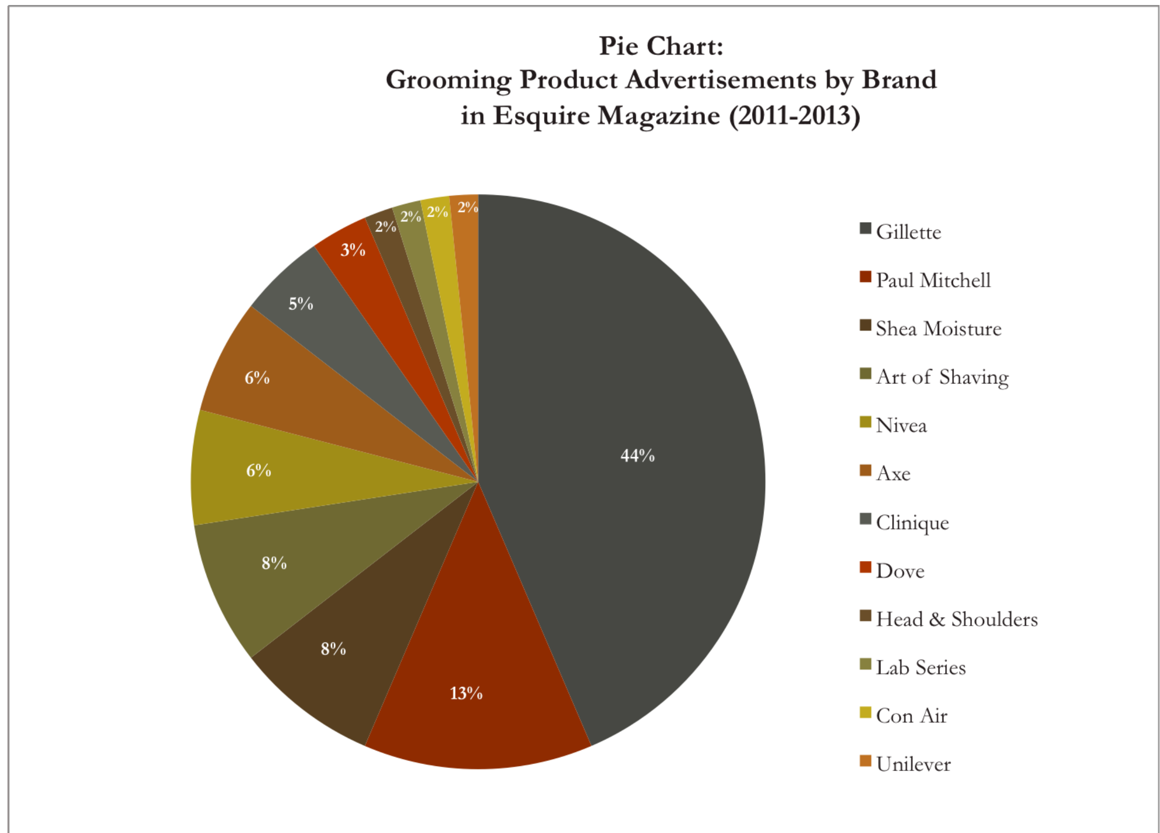

FIGURE 4. Grooming Product Advertisements by Brand in Esquire Magazine (2011-2013)

Here we can see that Gillette is the most advertised brand of grooming products (44%) while all other featured brands constitute 13% of the sample or under. It is also worth noting that Gillette is the only brand that was featured across all three years of the sample, and thus, has both the highest frequency and widest distribution. In fact, ads by Gillette were only missing in 8 issues out of the entire sample of 33 magazines. This may come as unsurprising considering that Gillette is the oldest and most well-known commercial male grooming company in North America (Tungate, 2008). The second most prevalent brand was Paul Mitchell, taking up 13% of the total sample. However, ads by Paul

Mitchell were only found in issues from 2011 and 2012. The third most frequent brands were Shea Moisture and Art Of Shaving which each consist of 8% of the sample. Shea Moisture ads were only present in issues from 2013 and, Art Of Shaving campaigns were only found in 2011.

Next, informed by previous scholarship on gender and race, each ad was coded for gender and race distributions. The distribution of gender is represented by a pie chart, as seen in FIGURE 5:

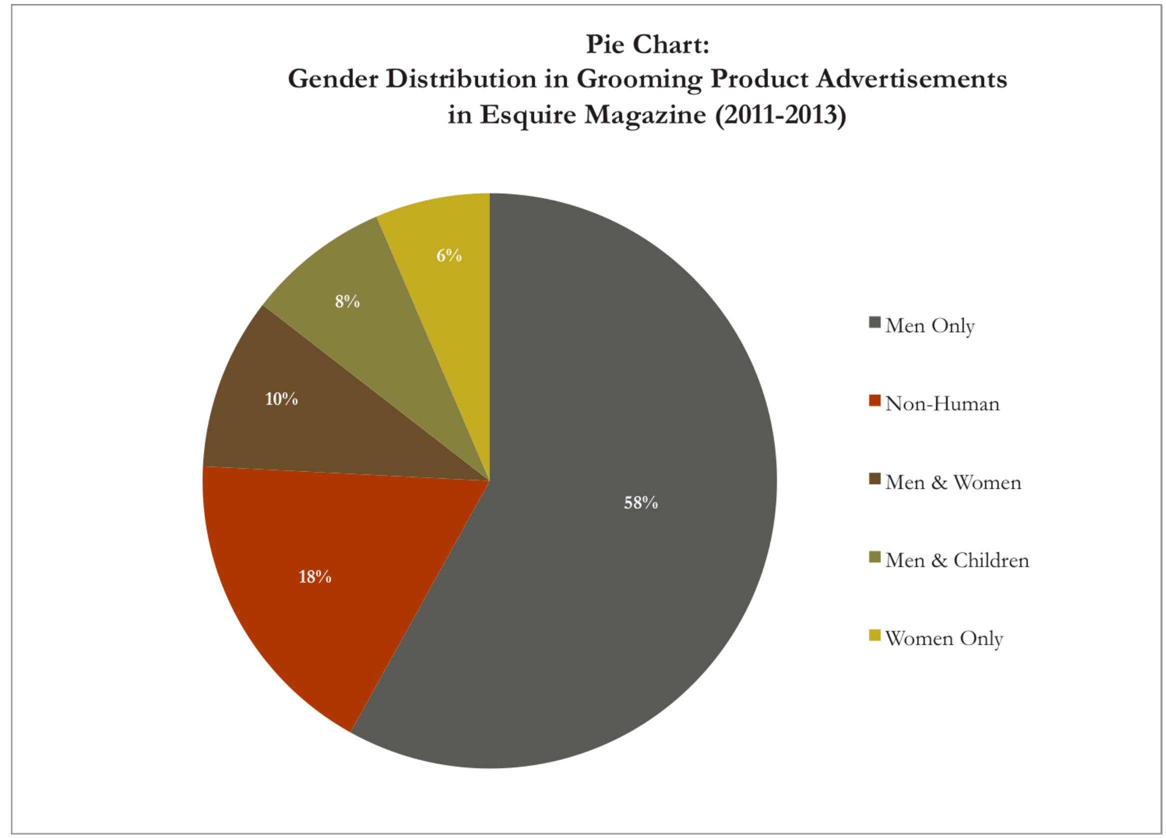

FIGURE 5. Gender Distribution in Grooming Product Advertisements in Esquire Magazine (2011-2013)

The coded categories for gender are: (1) Men Only; (2) Women Only; (3) Men and Women; (4) Men and Children; and (5) Non-human. While certain categories do not elucidate gender per se (e.g. Men and Children, Non-Human), they are a constructed the

way they are in order to enable me to express particular arguments relating to norms and values of masculinity. The pie chart shows that over half of the ads in the sample (58%) featured only men. This statistic is important and supports the notion that grooming products are advertised as 'just for men'. After 'men only', the second highest number of ads depicted no humans at all (18%). For example, a large number of ads did not include any human models and instead tended to portray images of grooming products alone. Few ads included scenes of men with women (10%) or men with children (8%). Only a small number show women only (6%) and as will be discussed in the following chapter, ads that featured women alone tend to depict them in a particular and homogeneous way.

In FIGURE 6, the racial distribution is shown in a pie chart:

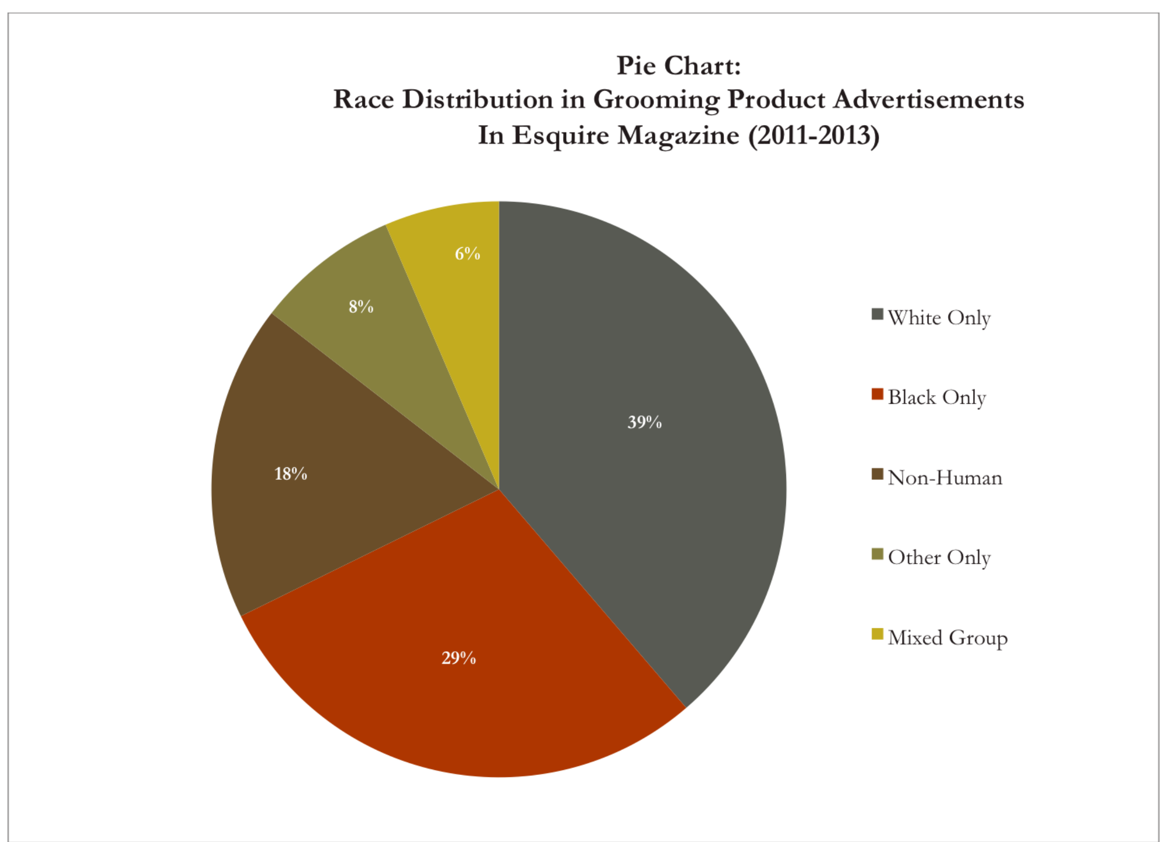

FIGURE 6. Race Distribution in Grooming Product Advertisements in Esquire Magazine (2011-2013)

The coding for race is as follows: (1) White Only; (2) Black Only; (3) Other Only; (4) Mixed Group; and (5) Non-Human. While I acknowledge that the codification of race may be difficult, if not controversial, the sampled advertisements tend to present male and female actors of an easily identifiable ethnicity (e.g. White or Black) more often than other racial minorities. For example, ads that feature only White individuals make up 39% of the sample and ads that feature only Black individuals make up 29% of the sample. Ethnicities that are not identifiable as White or Black represent 8% of the sample and even less common are depictions that feature multiple ethnicities, taking up a mere 6%. These distributions are noteworthy. Although Black individuals are the second ethnic category most commonly depicted, other racial minorities are notably underrepresented. Asian individuals, in particular, are not found in any advertisements in this sample. However, such underrepresentation of ethnic groups was expected as earlier studies have had similar distributions (e.g. Coltrane & Messineo, 2000; Leiss et al. 2005). Perhaps even more interesting is the rigid segregation of race in the advertisements. While we are able to see individuals of different races in grooming product ads, we rarely see ads where individuals of different races are depicted *together*.

3.3.3 Phase III: Searching For Themes

In the third phase, each advertisement and ad description is re-read with great care and attention to detail. The re-reading of each advertisement allows for preliminary theme-driven codes to be determined. There was no restriction on this set of codes, rather, any interpreted ideas were consolidated into single-word thematic codes. For example, if an ad prominently featured a man and women in an endearing embrace, one code attributed to it would be: “sexuality”. However, each ad would not be given a mere

singular code. Instead, the purpose of this stage of analysis is to develop as many potential themes as possible, to be narrowed down later (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 89). In general, each ad had between 3 and 5 initial thematic codes. They included: Advice; Aggression; Alcohol; Celebrity; Class; Control; Family; Fatherhood; Health; Heterosexuality; Homosociality; Leisure; Love; "Manning Up"; "Mind and Body"; Muscles; Nostalgia; Power; Responsibility; Science; Sports; Style; Tools; "Vintage"; Women; Work; and Youth. Following the suggestion advised by Braun & Clarke (2006), I illustrated these preliminary themes in a "thematic map" (p. 89). The initial thematic map is shown in FIGURE 7:

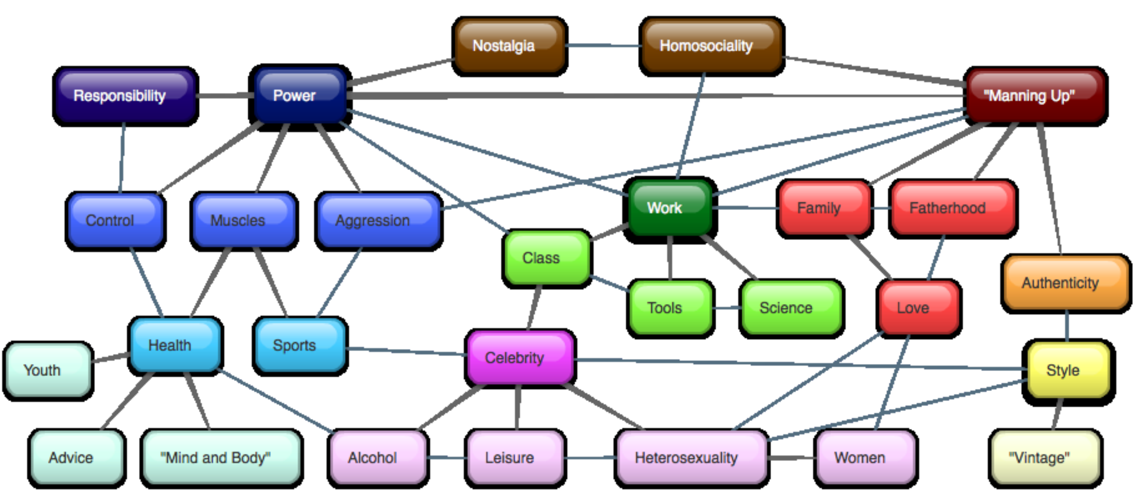

FIGURE 7. Initial Thematic Map

The map is designed to organize themes and also allows for the researcher to illustrate how the themes are connected to one another. Moreover, having a visual representation of the large number of initial themes can help illuminate what codes can collapse into a broader theme, and which codes can be discarded all together.

Once the researcher has determined which are the most predominant codes, both in terms of frequency in the sample and relevance to theoretical approach, a new map can be created. In the developed thematic map, many initial codes are eliminated and less pertinent themes are placed into broader categories. In my particular developed thematic map, shown in FIGURE 8, we can see that the themes of Body Responsibility", "Manning Up", "Nostalgia", "Sex" and "Work" are categories with a number of sub-themes. For example, the codes of "aggression", "physicality", "style" and "authenticity" are included within the category of "Manning Up":

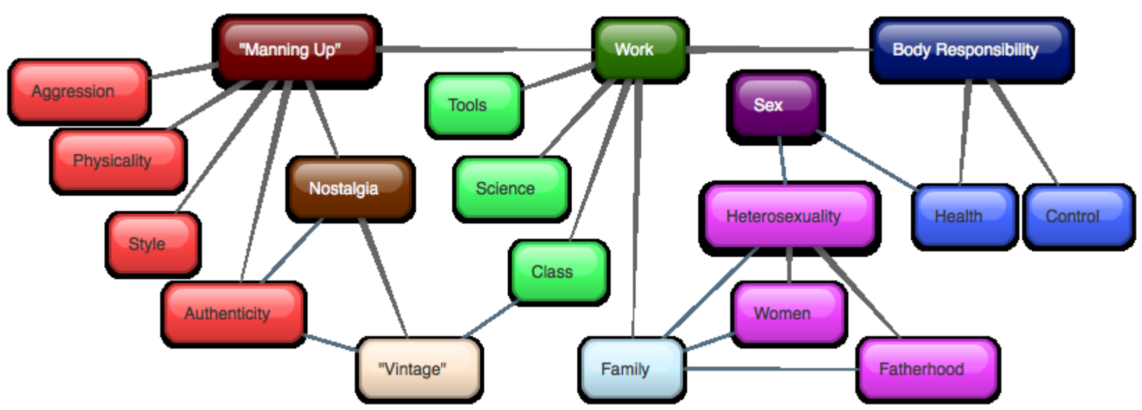

FIGURE 8. Developed Thematic Map

3.3.4 Phase IV: Reviewing Themes

However, the developed map still includes too many themes and the fourth phase in the analysis demands more streamlining to be performed in order to decide on the final, formal thematic categories. Again, one must re-read the ads and descriptions systematically and establish which few themes most "accurately reflect" the sample and "fit together" in the overall theoretical approach to the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 91-92). In doing so, I developed five formal thematic categories, with only the most pertinent sub-themes. Shown in FIGURE 9 is the final thematic map:

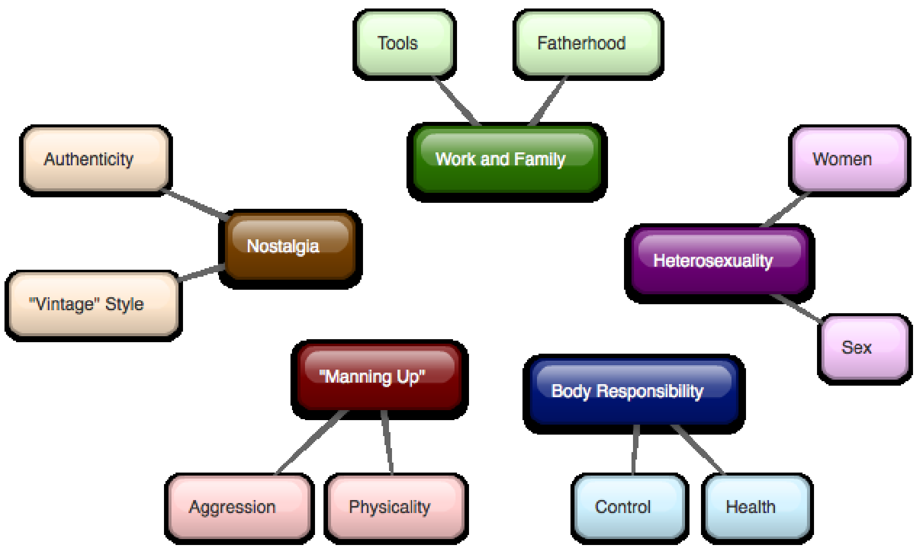

FIGURE 9. Final Thematic Map

3.3.5 Phase V: Defining and Naming Themes

Once the final themes are chosen, they must be identified by concise names that accurately describe the larger concepts they represent. In FIGURE 9, we can see that "Work and Family", "Nostalgia", "Manning Up", "Body Responsibility" and "Heterosexuality" are the names chosen for the final thematic categories. To avoid any confusion or ambiguity surrounding the name, each thematic category must have an accompanying operational definition. These definitions are provided in the first paragraph under each category in the analysis.

3.3.6 Phase VI: Producing the Report

The final phase of this method is the practical write-up of the report. In doing so, one must show ample evidence of the prevalence of themes in the data. Such evidence is presented, in large part, within the text of the analysis. However, I have also chosen to include a percentage to represent the frequency of each theme in the sample. In addition, the particular ads described and referenced in the analysis were selected as the most vivid

and useful examples to justify each theme. The overarching guideline, provided by Braun & Clarke (2006), is to provide extracts "that compellingly illustrate the story you are telling about your data, and your analytic narrative needs to go *beyond* description of the data, and make an *argument* in relation to your research question" (p. 93). With the methodological protocol now meticulously outlined, the thematic discourse analysis for this research project is applied and demonstrated in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4

WHAT DO THESE ADS COMMUNICATE?

4.1 "Body Responsibility and Control" (40%)

FIGURE 10. Nivea's "Re-Civilize Yourself" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 156 / No. 2, September 2011

Theme Definition. "Body Responsibility and Control", found in 40% of this sample of grooming product advertisements, refers to being responsible for controlling the aesthetics and processes of the body.

Detailed Description. The exemplar presented in FIGURE 10 is Nivea's "Re-Civilize Yourself" advertisement from 2011. On the left side, we see is a Black man standing in a parking lot. We are able to see his entire body. He is standing with his torso twisted and knees bent. He has short shaved hair and a small goatee on his chin. He is looking away from the camera with eyes slightly squinted and mouth tightly closed.

His clothing is casual and well fitted – a white collared shirt, grey V-neck sweater and crisp blue jeans. In his right hand, he is holding a mask that is the face of a Black man with an Afro and large beard. It is clear now that this man is in an action pose where he is in the process of hurling this mask across the parking lot. In large white writing spreading across the page, we can read "Re-Civilize Yourself" and in the top right corner is the Nivea logo with a slogan that instructs the reader to "Look Like You Give A Damn". On the right page, there are three Nivea products – shaving gel, face scrub and after-shave balm. They stand out in front of an all blue background. There is also a short narrative and description in white writing above the products.

The dominant message communicated is that being hairy and unshaven is equated with being uncivilized. The reader is drawn to recognize that the mask the man is throwing is indeed his own face before being groomed. His previous, "uncivilized" look consisted of a large Afro and beard. However, now he is clean and civilized with very short hair and a minimal amount of facial hair. His body language shows that he is about to throw this mask forcefully and combined with his facial expression, he looks angry and disgusted with his former look. What is more, this imagery is highly racialized. The ad suggests that a natural and common African-American hairstyle (e.g. the Afro) is uncivilized, wild, savage and unacceptable. Constructing Black males as exotic and/or savage and/or undomesticated are recognizable stereotypes that have proliferated across the media for many years (Snead, 1994; McClintock, 1995; Leiss et al., 2005; Hall, 2013[b]). Arguably, this particular ad is similar to the "commodity racism" of advertising for soap in the early 1900s, where such grooming products were often posited as means to clean and domesticate non-White individuals (Wernick, 1991; McClintock,

1995). As such, in order to civilize or 're-civilize' himself, this man needs to remove his African-American body aesthetics, through the use of grooming commodities. Moreover, one could argue that this ad suggests that becoming civilized requires a Black man to look more like a White man. This is a bold claim but one that is worth consideration. Do White men typically have Afros? Are White men typically told that they need 're-civilizing'? Does the Black man in the advertisement indeed display a grooming and clothing style that is more often found on White men?

The write-up on the right side of the ad speaks about how to be a 'real man'. In this particular text, 'real men' are said to value looking good over feeling good. This is unexpected as caring about beauty aesthetics – or 'looking good' – is *not* typically a part of discourse on how to be a 'real' man. Rather, this order is similar to the marketing of the metrosexual or 'new man' of the 1980s. However, since it makes explicit reference to being 'real', the command can be read as a bridging of metrosexual and traditional masculine values. The practices of the 'new man' (e.g. grooming) are now represented as being as authentically manly. Rather than being antithetical to authentic masculinity, contemporary masculinities can be a "bricolage" of different historical characteristics (Benyon, 2002). In addition, the proclamation that "looking good is absolutely imperative" places a considerable pressure upon readers. Grooming is therefore a social expectation and failure to 'look good' contributes to one's failure as a man, and also as a proper citizen. As aforementioned, if grooming represents being 'civilized' then, it is clearly posited as a social and cultural responsibility for men to uphold. As these imperatives to beauty become more commonplace in contemporary Western society, men's physical beauty expectations are likely to become higher. Such a pressure may

contribute to increasing narcissism among men, and in turn, a growing market of cosmetic users and products.

Another telling example is Gillette's "Sweat Stain" ad from 2012 (AD 1 in Appendix). In it, we see a close-up of a White man's chest who is wearing a grey t-shirt. In the center of his chest is a very particular sweat stain. This stain outlines a caricature of a basketball player jumping in the air with the ball held far above his head. It is signifying a player about to make a 'slam dunk'. Written on the bottom of his shirt in similar grey writing are the words, "Great things can come out of sweat. Don't let odor stop you". A white banner with small blue lettering that states, "Turns odor into freshness", runs across the bottom inch of the page.

What is first noticed, at the focal point of the advertisement, is the silhouette of the basketball player. This pairing of grooming and athleticism is common. Professional, competitive sports, like basketball, are acceptable male activities and culturally approved sites for the expression of dominant masculine behaviour. In turn, using athletic imagery can successfully remove the feminine stigmas surrounding the use of grooming products (Dworkin & Wachs, 2009). Therefore, a reader is reassured that he is not beautifying his body for narcissistic purposes. Rather, he is controlling and stopping the unwanted odor that results from his manly, athletic pursuits. In addition, the sentence, "Don't let odor stop you", is a warning. It makes the reader responsible for the control and elimination of his own odor. It is implied that odor can "stop you" and is therefore a threat to one's success and possibly, to one's health. Thus, failure to eliminate it will result in negative social and physical consequences. This ad tells men that Gillette has the necessary products to stop foul smells, but it is up to the every man to do the right thing. The right

thing, in this instance, is to use Gillette grooming products that "turn odor into freshness". Since odor is an inevitable part of physical activity but it is framed as a problem, the use of grooming products are considered a necessity. There exists an imperative to freshness or cleanliness. It is posited that naturally occurring human odor can develop a social stigma where it is, at best, unappealing, and at worst, unhygienic and unhealthy.

Many other ads of the sample draw on a similar overarching message of body responsibility and control. However, there are a number of variations in the images and texts. For example, Axe's "Keep Your Cool" ad from 2013 (AD 2 in Appendix) is very straightforward. It displays the product and exclaims the statement "Keep Your Cool". Such a command corresponds with particular ideals of hegemonic masculinity. Men are often told to 'keep their cool' in a variety of ways. For instance, keeping your cool can refer to the repression of emotions and/or refraining from aggression. Overall, it implies staying in control. Therefore, it is directly implied that Axe products can be used to stay *in* control and to keep control over your body. In a different way, Clinique's "Erasing the Past" ad from 2012 (AD 3 in Appendix) has a central slogan that states, "Imagine erasing the past". Most literally, it implies imagining the ability to effectively conceal marks on the skin. But thinking more abstractly, it can imply a variety of meanings. For instance, the word "imagine" alongside the featured item signifies that we *do* actually live in such an advanced age where we are capable of erasing the past. In the current biopolitical era, consumer products and procedures that alter the physical body can be used to help repress personal memories and experiences of the past. Moreover, the text connotes a convergence of body and self – erasing physical imperfections but also the unfavorable memories attached to them. This ad presents grooming as an opportunity to work on the

physical body but also, on the more psychical 'self'. Finally, it is also promised that transforming the physical body *will* erase the past and, this notion may undermine varied complex relationships between the body and self, physical and mental.

Summary. The ads in this category indicate that "Body Responsibility and Control" are achieved through grooming and using the correct kinds of grooming products. But, this is not simply posed as a suggestion. Rather, most ads include texts that express an order or command. The technique of using such direct and commanding statements, in part, helps to assert that the products and practices are unquestionably manly. Rules, commands and threats are linguistic tools that are reminiscent of the male archetypes of the drill sergeant or sports team coach, and this mode of address helps to remove the feminine stigma of using grooming products. And so, it is incessantly communicated that men need to be responsible for controlling how their body looks; or else they will risk being condemned and stigmatized as not 'real' men. Men are represented as needing to discipline their bodies through grooming, in order to abide to the standards and expectations of contemporary masculinity. Thus, successful and desirable masculinity is seen to rest on grooming responsibilities.

This responsibilization of working on the body immediately reminds us of Foucault's theory of biopower, as outlined as in Chapter 1. Bodywork, and in this case, grooming, is considered to be a form of disciplinary power. The incentive to groom relies heavily on evoking an anxiety around not being a 'real' man. What is more, body control is also informed through a health imperative. As introduced by Foucault (1978) and emphasized by Shilling (1993) and Crawshaw (2007), bodywork in the contemporary biopolitical era is often influenced by our culture's overwhelming concern with

maintaining health and vitality. Many of these ads make clear the various threats to one's health that can be eradicated through grooming. Such textual cues to emphasize the responsibility of cleanliness have been included in grooming product ads in 1920s (Vinikas, 1992) and the 1990s (Kirkham and Weller, 1996). Grooming products, in the past and present, are advertised as a common-sense consumer choice to abide expectations of controlling inappropriate body secretions. To summarize, grooming is represented as a means of taking responsibility for one's body aesthetics and functions. Men are commanded to oblige to this duty, otherwise their health and masculinity will be in jeopardy.

4.2 "Manning Up" (23%)

FIGURE 11. Paul Mitchell's "Man Up" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 156 / No. 5, December 2011

Theme Definition. “Manning Up”, found in 23% of this sample of grooming product advertisements, refers to establishing a traditional male identity that is bound up with characteristics and values of historically dominant hegemonic masculinity.

Detailed Description. In the Paul Mitchell “Man Up” advertisement featured in *Esquire* issues across 2011 and 2012 (FIGURE 11), five White men are standing and facing straight ahead. Each of them is well dressed wearing various combinations of suits and outerwear. For example, two are wearing crewneck shirts under blazers, two others with collared shirts and one in a full tuxedo. They have been photographed in black and white and so; it is not possible to discern what colors they are wearing. A common trait among all five models is a stern and serious glare, expressed through squinted eyes, furrowed brows, closed mouths and heads cocked slightly to the side. This is what is commonly referred to as a “hard look” used to showcase toughness and masculinity within advertisements or other print media (Nixon, 1996). The men are presented as cool and stylish, but also tough and defensive. Also, each of them has immaculately sculpted hair that shines brightly from the camera’s flash. Four of the five men have their hands in the pockets of either their pants or blazer. One man has his arms crossed at his chest. Again, this sort of body language and “hard looks” give off a threatening and invulnerable demeanor. At the bottom of the page there is a large yellow banner with text inside. On the left, the largest text says, “Man Up”. Just below in smaller writing is, “Style isn’t born. It’s groomed”. To the right of these bolded sentences is a longer narrative in even smaller writing. It states, “Every guy needs a wingman to make him look good. Created just for men, MITCH is modern manpower that makes great grooming easy”.

There are many notable themes embedded in the text of this ad. Nonetheless, the overarching message in the largest, boldest writing is to “Man Up”. This command exhorts a sense of pressure and responsibility on to men to take control, and/or fix, and/or improve their manhood. To ‘man up’ may involve many different activities, but emphasized here is the act of mastering a proper, stylish and ‘hard’ look. The text proclaims, “Style isn’t born. It’s groomed” and this sentiment puts forth that men must work at achieving a favorable image. It is something that involves time, effort, knowledge and consumption of the right products. It should be noted that this ad connects, so to speak, the notion of ‘manning up’ with ‘body responsibility and control’; the latter postulated as a particular requirement of the ‘manning up’ process. Next, readers are assured that Paul Mitchell products are “just for men”. This is a simple tactic to assert masculinity through repudiating femininity; something is manly when it is for men and *not* for women. The exclusion of women is also a traditional way to sustain male power and privilege. In an earlier era, there existed bars and clubs that were for men only (Swiencicki, 1998). Over time, such spaces have become obsolete as a result of the rising equality of women. So now specific consumer products may be present themselves in ways that promote male exclusivity in an era where things and space that are ‘just for men’ are extremely limited. As stated in this Paul Mitchell ad, these grooming products are the “modern manpower”. They help men to ‘man up’ and strive to regain a sense of ‘power’ in light of traditional manpower being splintered and disintegrated over time.

In an alternate version of the Paul Mitchell “Man Up” ad (AD 4 in Appendix), we see the same products and slogans. However, the setting is now inside a bar. The choice

of placing the men inside a bar is significant. As aforementioned, bars in earlier historical eras were male-exclusive spaces. In addition, barroom settings in advertising aimed at men is commonplace because the consumption of alcohol is highly interwoven with traditional rites of manhood (Breazeale, 1994; Mackinnon, 2003). Because drinking alcohol is often put in the service of risky behaviour, it is an activity that is undergone with the intention of proving manhood to other men. In this way, proving one's manhood can be considered a form of 'manning up'. Furthermore, one can also associate this barroom atmosphere with violence. These four men all look tough, possibly angry, and they are standing close together giving "hard looks" (Nixon, 1996) and "stand-off" poses (Bordo, 1999). The bodies and looks of these men communicate the warning: "Don't mess with us". This communication points to risk and aggression and therefore allows for a quick association of the product with hegemonic masculinity. Such overtly manly themes are likely to be adopted precisely because the use of salon-grade grooming products retains feminine or homosexual stigmas. This ad then assures readers that Paul Mitchell products are appropriate for tough, manly, heterosexual men.

Ads released by other brands are perhaps less forward and articulate in their promotion of 'manning up'. However, there are many more instances where fragments of this ideology are present. For example, in Nivea's "Look Like You Give A Damn" ad from 2011 (AD 5 in Appendix), we see three men gambling inside a casino. To the right of them is a short narrative that speaks to 'manning up'. The text begins by stating, "A real man takes the time to double-check his reflection in the mirror". This mode of address implies that the reader is not a 'real' man and therefore, needs to 'man up'. The way to 'man up' in this case is to groom meticulously in order to "Look Like You Give A

Damn". The narrative concludes with a bolded text that reads, "The man who gives a damn is the man who comes out on top". The drive to "come out on top" is a traditionally masculine pursuit affixed to notions of dominance and competition. Men who have come out on top are those who have 'manned up' and thus, reaffirmed their power and masculinity. In a similar way, Con Air's "Be A Better Man" ad from 2013 (AD 6 in Appendix) features a White man running his hands through his brown hair. He is clean-shaven, in a white collared shirt and gazing forward with his head cocked to the side. A bolded slogan that proclaims, "Be The Better Man" and the Con Air logo with the words "For Men" is situated at the bottom of the page. This statement, "Be the better man", is yet another instruction or incentive to 'man up'. It also implies a sense of competition by proposing that one can become 'better' than another. Finally, if being groomed is what makes someone 'the better man', then consequently, men who are not groomed are worse. The cultural imperative of male grooming is reinforced explicitly and, in effect, those who do not abide are considered inferior or less manly.

Summary. The discourse surrounding 'manning up' typically implies that men have become repressed and lost a sense of power in Western society over the years. These notions are complimentary to the model of the emerging 'new lad' (Benyon, 2002; Crewe, 2003; Gill 2003) and to a so-called contemporary 'crisis' of masculinity (Kimmel, 2012). Men are told to embrace feelings of aggression and machismo, as they are inherent to natural manhood. This resurgence of manly expectations from earlier eras, can be considered as a direct retaliation to the rise of women and softer, 'new man' identities. The 'new men' of the 1980s would be considered dishonest cultural dupes, and thus, need to stay true to their nature and 'man up'. Most generally, 'manning up'

suggests that contemporary men and masculinities need to be *fixed* and the proposed solution involves reasserting a sense of traditional masculinity. Like the responsibilization of bodywork, 'manning up' is not a suggestion; it is a non-negotiable manifesto for the revitalization of male hegemony. These profoundly hyper-masculine ideologies also serve to repudiate the feminine labeling attached to grooming and grooming products. Advertisements that order men to 'man up' are not subtle in their assurance that grooming is not only un-feminine, but a means to construct a powerful masculine identity. Lastly, the fundamental contradictory nature of this concept should be mentioned. 'Manning up', in this context, is paradoxical because it assumes manhood as natural, while simultaneously reinforcing the idea that grooming can construct or enhance one's masculinity. However, the majority of ads in this category represent masculinity in a way that is in keeping with social constructionist logic; as an aspect of the male identity that is constructed, performed and alterable.

<u>**4.3 “Explicit and Implicit Heterosexuality” (23%)**</u>

FIGURE 12. Gillette’s “How Does Kate Upton Like Her Man’s Body Styled?” Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 159 / No. 4, April 2013

Theme Definition. “Explicit and Implicit Heterosexuality”, also found in 23% of this sample of grooming product advertisements, refers to overtly heterosexual imagery, and/or content that is implicitly aimed at a heterosexual reader.

Detailed Description. In 2013, Gillette released a 3-part interactive advertising campaign that allowed readers to "read the mind" of three popular North American female celebrities: Kate Upton, Hannah Simone and Genesis Rodriguez. Ads from this series can be found in four different monthly issues of *Esquire*. Shown in FIGURE 12 is Gillette's "How Does Kate Upton Like Her Man's Body Styled?" advertisement. We see American supermodel Kate Upton lying on a white recliner chair outside. Upton is looking at the camera seductively with her eyebrows raised and only the right side of her face visible. Her straight blond hair appears to be blown backwards by wind or a fan and she uses her left hand to adjust some of her locks. Her right arm is positioned on the side of the chair allowing for her chest to be on display without obstructions. She is dressed in a long, flowing white dress with a floral pattern. As she is rested on her side, most of the dress drapes off of the chair and onto the ground. This also allows for her shiningly smooth legs to be almost fully visible. At the top of the ad, white writing asks, "How does Kate Upton like her man's body styled? Read her mind." Superimposed and emanating from Upton's face is a cartoon text bubble. Inside the bubble is a QR code – a barcode that can be scanned by a cellular phone's camera. It is suggested that scanning this code would allow the reader to "read her mind". At the bottom of the ad is an image of the Gillette ProGlide Styler and a short text: "The 3-in-1 tool to trim, shave and edge your body the way she likes it". The two other ads in the series are strikingly similar. The only major variation being that they feature either Hannah Simone or Genesis Rodriguez in place of Kate Upton.

What is immediately discernible in this ad is Upton's beauty and body language. She is positioned provocatively and invites readers to "read her mind". Grooming is

promoted as an activity to be done for the interest of women. This notion fulfills two different functions. First, it supports body grooming as something women are attracted to. This is a way to target a heterosexual market. The model is an advocate for male body grooming and exudes an enticing sexual seductiveness. Upton's bare legs are the focal point of the ad and her dress also allows for cleavage to be visible. Evidently, the sexualization and objectification of beautiful women remains pervasive in advertising for men's (and women's) consumer goods in Western culture (Steinem, 1990; Bordo, 1993; Kilbourne; 2000; Berger, 2011). Second, positioning grooming as something women *desire* is a technique to remove the feminine stigmas of using cosmetic products. Men are given a heterosexual rationalization for body grooming. This rationalization can be interpreted as a form of excuse for men. In this way, men are able then to be disembodied in their grooming practices through the use of such an excuse. Therefore, experiences of grooming can be similar to other bodywork (e.g. fitness, dieting, cosmetic surgery) where men define normative masculine behaviour through a negotiation of involvement and rejection, embodiment and disembodiment (Gill, 2005; Norman, 2011).

Another relevant example is a 2-page Gillette ad from 2012 that features American actor, Adrien Brody (AD 7 in Appendix). The viewer is first drawn to the large text spanning across both pages that reads, "Masters of Style". On the left page, one can then notice a question and answer transcription in small white writing taking up the top half of the page. The legend lists, "Name: Adrien Brody. Style: Anchor Mustache. Tool: ProGlide Styler". It should be noted that the choice of the word "tool" is likely significant. "Tool" is a simple and common way to label a cosmetic product with appropriate masculine language. Below this legend, there are three questions: 1)

How would you describe your personal style? 2) How does style impact your confidence? 3) Has a girl ever influenced your facial-hair styling? Under each question are Brody's answers that vary in length from 1 to 4 sentences. On the right page is Adrien Brody, whose body takes up the majority of the page. He is sitting on a ledge with one leg propped up. He is looking directly ahead and looks generally relaxed. His facial hair is artistically chiseled with a mustache and thin goatee.

Examining the textual features of this ad, it is communicated that Adrien Brody is a "master of style". The structuring of the text as a type of questionnaire functions as a self-help guide or advice column where Brody has been chosen as the 'master' or opinion leader for a stylish masculine image. The questions and his answers are presented as a candid, man-to-man conversation or confessional. Since we are told that he is a "master of style", we can interpret his words as a form of expert knowledge. And so, what is he talking about? Notably, Brody recounts how challenging and embarrassing it was to have to wear extremely tight pants for a film. This chosen example may assure readers that even a "master of style" is not comfortable in every type of clothing – namely, "tight pants". With tight pants being a common style choice among homosexual men, this dialogue may serve to affirm Brody's heterosexuality for readers. In a similar way, the last question is even more explicitly heterosexual. Brody admits that women directly influence his style. He even goes so far as to say that women affect "most decisions a man makes". Not only does this signify an implicit heterosexuality, it also makes reference to increasing influence and power of women. Instead of style management being posited as a solely individual endeavor, Brody's statement supports that women may play a large role in how (heterosexual) men choose to present themselves. This is a

similar message to that of the Kate Upton ad. Grooming and presentation is posited as something that men do, in large part, *for* the interest of women. Again, this allows for men to maintain a disembodied sense of masculinity.

Many advertisements from 2011 through 2013 have included text and imagery that signifies heterosexual attraction and promiscuity. Certain others, however, have emphasized heterosexual love and happiness. In Gillette's "Love" ad (AD 8 in Appendix), the central image is a close-up of a heterosexual couple. Visually, this ad is very straightforward. We see a man and a woman who are in love. They are happy, laughing and lying on top of each other. Superimposed on the woman's hair in the top left corner is a text that reads, "Love is never letting stubble come between you". In the bottom left corner, another slogan that states, "Stay Kissable With Gillette's Best Razor On Sensitive Skin". We can deduce that this is a couple either on vacation or in the comfort of their home, and that this photo was taken during a moment of intimacy. The affection that is displayed is not overtly sexual. In fact, the all white clothing and cushion evoke a feeling of virginity or sacredness. Furthermore, the featured texts allow for both apparent and ambiguous interpretations. The words "love" and "kissable" clearly reinforce the affection and warmth that is being portrayed. The word "stubble", on the other hand, is suggested as something that can come between a couple both physically and emotionally. Being unshaven is therefore a potential problem or hindrance in heterosexual relationships. It is implied that men need to take responsibility for the removal of their facial hair for the benefit of their relationships with their female spouse or partner. Accordingly, the statement "stay kissable" infers that being unshaven is "un-kissable". This contributes to constructing a particular image of a man that is said to be

desirable to all women. This man must be shaven, smooth and therefore, kissable. Not only does this statement undermine the possibility of women having different preferences in men, it stigmatizes facial hair as wholly undesirable. These types of advice texts instruct men that women, as a homogenized group, are attracted to a specific body aesthetic. Following the guidelines to achieve such an image will result in experiences of heterosexual love and happiness.

Summary. Ads in this thematic category display text and images that are unmistakably heterosexual and this is common among advertising aimed at men. As aforementioned, heterosexuality and heterosexual conquest are characteristics of the stereotypical, hegemonic male. By contrast, effeminacy and homosexuality have been historically stigmatized as less manly, unappealing and contradictory to 'real' manhood. 'Real' masculinity, in this discursive field, is therefore constructed in heteronormative terms. Using heterosexuality as the primary representation in an advertisement serves to remove any doubt surrounding the possibility of appearing feminine or queer. This is crystalized in a number of ways in this sample of advertisements. Most notably, grooming is often posited as a practice that men engage in to become more physically desirable to women. It is something that men are told they must do for the interest of their female partner or female love interests. In this way, masculine identity is constructed as deriving from women's expectations. As such, heterosexual interest can override any particular hesitations about using grooming products. While most ads use sexualized imagery of women to grab the attention of a heterosexual male reader, there are others that include more sensitive depictions of intimacy and tenderness. The implied

audience for these ads is most certainly heterosexual men, and there is rarely any ambiguity surrounding sexual orientation in the content.

4.4 “Work and Family” (21%)

FIGURE 13. Shea Moisture’s “Real Smooth Man” Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 160 / No. 5, December 2013

Theme Definition. “Work and Family”, found in 21% of this sample of grooming product advertisements, refers to associating roles and responsibilities surrounding work and family to expectations of masculinity.

Detailed Description. In FIGURE 13, we see Shea Moisture's "Real Smooth Man" ad from 2013. The ad shows a man with a small girl. In reading the labeling, the reader becomes aware that this man is, "Emmet A. Dennis Jr. Sundial Brands' CMO: Sheila's husband; Dylan and Dani's Dad". His head is tilted upward with his right hand over his mouth to signify that he is whispering something into this little girl's ear. She is seen smiling widely and looking ahead at the camera. The motto that says, "A REAL Smooth Man… as close as it gets" is written at the top of the page. It is easily identifiable that a depiction of involved fatherhood is being predominately communicated by this ad. The main image is of a man and a young child who are in physical contact with one another in a caring manner. The reader is explicitly told that the child in the photo is this man's daughter. Shea Moisture makes no attempt to parody or satirize fatherhood. Rather, this image exudes sincerity and displays love between a father and child. These sorts of depictions may be in response to the declaration of an American absent father 'crisis' in the 1990s (Synnott, 2009; Peberdy, 2011). This is an example of new media representing fathers in more nurturing roles in recent years. Furthermore, in combining textual and visual cues, these ads promote the notion that being a loving father is part of being a 'real' man. Indeed the word 'real' in the slogan is both enlarged and capitalized which draws the reader's eyes immediately to it. This slogan and the accentuation of the word "real" functions to position Dennis as an exemplar of a 'real man' and in turn may imply that not all readers are *as* real. Put differently, this ad strongly advocates involved fatherhood and reinforces that being a proud parent is part of being a 'real' man.

Another point of interest is concerning the photo labels. In each ad, we are told that the Dennis is *both* a qualified professional and a father. This is the combination of both work and family. It is implied that a 'real' man must be capable of balancing a high-class, elite profession with involved parenthood. As clearly identified in the text, Dennis is a CMO of a company – undoubtedly a powerful title and demanding position. This begs the question, why is it necessary for Shea Moisture to include this fact? Is a career-oriented professional with no children less of a 'real' man? What about an unemployed stay-at-home father? Perhaps the mention of each man's success level is a way to make this ad relevant to a larger audience. Readers can identify with these men *either* as fathers or as successful businessmen. That said, considering the amount of work necessary to be dedicated to your career and to your children, the requirements of being a 'real' man could be interpreted as pressure or intimidation. While on the surface these ads are representations of love, care and family values, they also project a very particular definition of 'real' manhood.

There was only one ad by Dove in the sample, but it was featured in multiple *Esquire* issues in 2013 (AD 9 in Appendix). In it, we see an enlarged antiperspirant stick in the center of the page. Cascading from either side of the page are two different liquids that crash against the antiperspirant in the middle. The liquid on the left is silver and labeled above as "48HR Protection". The liquid on the right is white and labeled above as "Plus Non-Irritating Formula". In the bottom right corner of the ad, we see American professional basketball player Dwayne Wade, who is smiling and holding a basketball in his right hand. Beside Wade is a short description, "Dwayne Wade. Tough Competitor

and Dove All-Star Dad". Lastly, in the bottom left corner is a slogan that states, "Tough On Sweat, Not On Skin".

This advertisement is particularly interesting in how it is focused on displaying dichotomies. Both textually and visually, this ad constructs a number of opposing forces. For example, labeling one of deodorant's components as "protection" and the other as "non-irritating", posits them as opposites coming together into one product. The emphasis on comfort and being a non-irritant is not surprisingly. Many previous campaigns by Dove for women's or unisex products have tended to highlight being comfortable in one's own skin – both physically and psychologically. However, Dove ads that are not targeted at men specifically do not present these notions of "protection" and "comfort" as explicitly opposed. We can see another dichotomy in the description of Wade. He is "tough" but also an "all-star dad". This categorization is strikingly similar to the ad by Shea Moisture above. Although both toughness and fatherhood are two traits entwined with traditional, dominant masculine behaviour, they are still positioned as opposites that need balancing. In a way, the elements of this ad accentuate various conflicting ideologies that need negotiation within performances of masculinity. Indeed, as was emphasized in previous chapters, cultural guidelines on "how to be a man" are often dissimilar, if not contradictory. As such, men are required to evaluate a variety of opposing characteristics and ideals. In doing so, they are constructing their own version of masculinity, based upon what they understand and value. Striking a balance between hegemonic masculinity and subordinate masculinity appears to be what Dove is emphasizing. Dwayne Wade is promoted as a male ideal type for the fact that he is both a professional athlete and a father. He is both tough and sensitive. Finally, although it is

expressed by a single word, the mentioning of Dwayne Wade as a father is significant. First, choosing to endorse Wade specifically may be because he is *both* African-American and an involved father. Over the past twenty years the issue of absent fathers within African-American communities has been stressed across North America. For example, on Father's Day in 2008, President Barack Obama addressed the subject of absent Black fathers in America. He proclaimed, "They have abandoned their responsibilities, acting like boys instead of men. And the foundations of our families are weaker because of it" (in McKeon, 2012). As a result, certain media, including this ad, have begun to display more constructive images of African-American fathers, with the hopes of reversing the trend of absent fatherhood.

There are other ads that have been included under this thematic category that have represented work, but not family. In Gillette's "Fresh + Clean" ad from 2011 (AD 10 in Appendix), we see a White, muscular, shirtless man exiting a shower. Superimposed over his body is a second picture that shows the same man but wearing a shirt and tie. He is talking on a cell phone and there is a construction site behind him. As a complete image, this man is shirted from the collarbone up, and shirtless from the chest down. This is a sort of juxtaposition between private and public, work and leisure. The contrast implies that having a shower with Gillette products is necessary for the workingman to have a successful workday later on. Within the short narrative, scientific/technological language reinforces the idea of work, and perhaps adds manly appeal. The body wash, for instance, is "engineered" to provide freshness that lasts through out the entire workday. It is implied then that it is the responsibility of a working individual to maintain freshness throughout the day and failing to do so could result in negative

outcomes concerning cleanliness and/or work ethic. Many other ads by Gillette, adopt a similar language of work through references to science, technology and statistics. These particular linguistic codes and conventions are consistent with Kirkham & Weller's (1996) analysis of Clinique products for men. Additionally, Gillette's 'ProGlide' electric razor, featured in over ten different ads of the sample, is labeled specifically as a "tool" (see FIGURE 12). This is not unintentional; "The naming and labeling of objects is an important element of their gender coding" (Kirkham & Weller, 1996, p. 200-201). The 'tool' classification acts as a reference to masculine forms of work, and also as a technique to remove the feminine stigma attributed to grooming products.

Summary. Various roles and responsibilities of work and family are, in a sense, often connected within expectations of masculinity. For instance, across the 20th Century, it has been commonly accepted and expected that the American man's primary role in the family is to be the financial supporter – to be the breadwinner (Hymowitz, 2010; Kimmel, 2012). This represents a convergence of work and family. A man's responsibility in the family is reliant upon a man's responsibilities at work, and vice-versa. However, these expectations have become muddled in more recent decades. Synnott (2009) records that "high divorce rates since the 1960s have facilitated the breakdown of the nuclear family" (p. 65). As a result, work and family responsibilities have become less interlocked and the latter being increasingly ignored or abandoned. By the 1990s, President Bill Clinton proclaimed that fatherlessness was the single biggest social problem in American society (Peberdy, 2011, p. 121). Given the profound impact that such a statement from the American President can have, it is likely that absent fatherhood remains a concern in present society. As such, media representations of involved fatherhood may be chosen

with hopes of avoiding a similar crisis in the future. Moreover, we can currently identify significant shifts in our society's gender roles and relations. With women rising to prominence in various sectors of the public sphere, men are increasingly more active in their involvement with their children (Doucet, 2006; Unger, 2010; Rosin, 2012). Though we lack widespread statistical data at this point in time, scholars have hypothesized an increase of breadwinning moms and stay-at-home dads in the West (Seidler, 2006; Smith, 2009; Unger, 2010; Rosin, 2012). Considering that the majority of ads in this category represent both work and family simultaneously, these texts may serve to communicate the message that men are capable of being concurrently masculine and nurturing. It should be noted, however, that while work and parenting are both considered inherent to male identities, they tend to be constructed as opposites – or, at opposite ends of the spectrum of manhood. Finally, although work and family roles are characteristic of traditional masculine ideals, these sorts of representations are contrary to many conventions of hegemonic masculinity.

4.5 "Nostalgia" (13%)

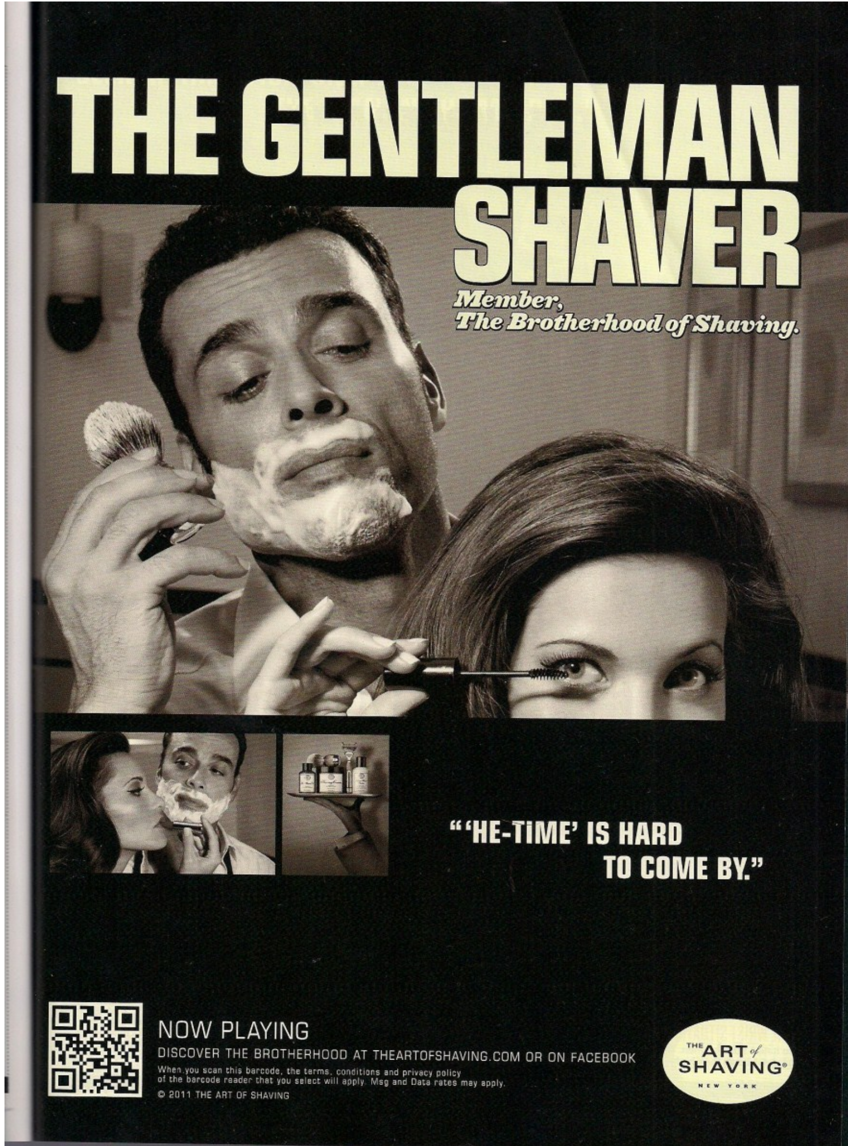

FIGURE 14. Art Of Shaving's "The Gentleman Shaver" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 156 / No. 4, November 2011

Theme Definition. "Nostalgia", found in 13% of this sample of grooming product advertisements, refers to reminiscence for a time where men were in a more stable position of power and gender relations were less muddled.

Detailed Description. FIGURE 14 displays Art of Shaving's "The Gentleman Shaver" advertisement. In it, we see large writing at the top of the photo that lists a particular male character – "The Gentleman Shaver: Member, The Brotherhood of

Shaving". Below this, we see a White man who has shaving cream applied to just over half his face. In his hand, he is holding a shaving cream brush. He is looking downward with eyes squinted and brows raised at a woman in front of him. She is looking straight ahead, applying mascara and it becomes clear to the reader that these two individuals are supposed to appear in front of a mirror in a bathroom. Below the image is a sentence that says, "He-Time Is Hard To Come By" and two smaller pictures. The first picture displays the couple again but with a very slight change in position. The second picture shows a number of grooming products on top of a tray that is being held up by a hand. This last picture is important. It shows that the goods are being *served* to the reader. On the one hand, this can suggest that Art Of Shaving products to be used by higher-class citizens. On the other hand, it can imply that using such products will endow a man with more class and prestige. Taken together, these images evoke nostalgia for traditional class structures and the dominance of White, Bourgeois men.

From the man's gaze and the incompleteness of his shaving cream application, it is suggested that the woman in the ad is interrupting or intruding in on his activity. It appears as if she managed to slip in front of him in order to use the mirror. This narrative connotes that grooming is more important to women or that women reserve priority to grooming needs. However, by the man's facial expression, he appears to be annoyed by this fact. Accordingly, the text reads, "He-Time Is Hard To Come By" and this asserts his frustration. He is no longer the master of his domain. His personal grooming rituals come secondary to those of women. This suggests that men do care about grooming and are met with certain socio-cultural obstacles to overcome. His glare expresses his malcontent with having to compete with this woman for bathroom space. This, in turn,

evokes a sense of anxiety surrounding competition within contemporary gender relations. However, The Art of Shaving does provide a solution to his problem; he could join the "brotherhood of shaving". Not only would a "brotherhood of shaving" provide him with the "He-Time" he needs, he would not have to worry about the interests of women interfering with him. This is particular a call to an earlier time when it was socially and culturally acceptable for men to have their own gender-exclusive associations. These particular products then perhaps aim to provide men with a sense of both unabashed, traditional masculinity and collective male camaraderie. However, this ad also signifies heterosexual male interest in grooming aesthetics, which is less of a traditional endorsement. In order to reconcile an interest in grooming, it must be framed within a narrative about traditionally masculine, homosocial involvement.

Another Art of Shaving ad from 2011 depicts this aforementioned "brotherhood of shaving" (AD 11 in Appendix). The ad features a text at its centre, which announces, "Join the Brotherhood of Shaving". Above and below the text are three square-shaped pictures of different men engaged in shaving their faces. Each of these six diagrams is labeled with a particular identity to classify the shaver. They are, "The Gentleman Shaver"; "The Reformed Troglodyte"; "The Incurable Romantic"; "The Shaving Savant"; "The Old Soul" and "The Ambassador of Smooth". 5 of 6 appear to be White and one of the men is Black. They are all engaged in different stages of shaving. From beginning to apply shaving cream, through to taking a final glide with a razor.

The focal point of this ad is on the word "brotherhood" and this incites thoughts of homosociality or male-exclusive activity. The old-fashioned visual aesthetics combined with a promotional statement about a brotherhood takes the reader back to a

time where things and places 'just for men' were more common. Moreover, the statement "join the brotherhood of shaving" featured in bolded font in the middle of the ad is reminiscent of older advertisements for military recruitment – a familiar site for male-exclusive activity and promotion of hetero-dominant masculinity. The textual and visual elements integrated suggest that this particular brand of products offers men access to an exclusive, high-class, "brotherhood" or club. In addition, the inclusion of 6 separate shaving identities is significant. It acknowledges and promotes a multiplicity of masculinities. While many of which may not be overly different from one another (e.g. gentleman vs. romantic vs. ambassador of smooth), these variations do allow for the de-homogenization of masculinity. This "brotherhood", while male-exclusive, is inclusive of multiple male identities, interests, and races. So, this represents a more modern spin on older male-only organizations that, in reality, may not have endorsed such variety and multiculturalism among members.

Certain other ads display nostalgia in arguably more subtle manners. For example, Gillette's "Movember" ad from 2013 (AD 12 in Appendix) uses a number of visual and textual elements to appear old-fashioned or adopt a 'vintage' aesthetic. The ad features a light beige background, similar to a shade of paper that has been left out in the sun. The chosen font for the larger slogan is cursive and resembles more traditional-style handwriting. As aforementioned, such handwriting is a common technique used to give advertisements a nostalgic, older feel (Leiss et al., 2005). In addition, the male caricature also contributes to constructing a representation of an earlier era. Most evidently, we see the mouth of a man with a large, curled moustache and below it he is wearing a suit with a bowtie. This is arguably an uncommon moustache and outfit in current society (except

when appearing on emerging 'retrosexual' men). Finally, the text from this ad addresses the reader as "sir". This linguistic choice contributes to the ad's vintage feel, as this type of speech was more colloquial in an earlier era of American history. Moreover, "sir" is an explicitly gendered term, and thus expresses a message of respect or obedience to a *man* – specifically and exclusively. In this way, the image and text of this ad suggests nostalgia not just for traditional moustache styles, but also for a time when most members in society typically addressed men as "sir".

Summary. In today's popular culture, it has become increasingly common to see a variety of 'period piece' media or in other words, representations of a historical past. In advertising, a feeling of nostalgia can also be achieved through textual elements such as a "handwriting" style font, and such ads function to communicate a message of authenticity or "craftsmanship" (Leiss et al., 2005, p. 545). The appeal and commercial success of such 'vintage' images and styles can be observed in daily life. In particular, many men have adopted a 'vintage' sense of style that is represented through clothing, accessories and grooming choices. Aptly dubbed as the "retrosexual", this new male archetype is described by fashion professor Jocelyn Bellemare as a man who appreciates taking the time to craft his image. He is a man who is into tailored suits, Italian goods and old cars – a Don Draper of *Mad Men* or more contemporary Humphrey Bogart (in Morin, 2014). Evidently, this style is also intersected with ideals of class and prestige. While aesthetic aspects may be easily observable and recognizable, considering the purpose or reasons behind the resurgence of retro-maleness is more complex. What are the functions of such historical transmissions and why have they become so popular? Certain scholars, such as Canadian sociologists Jackson, Nielsen and Hsu (2011), argue that viewing how we were

in a previous time allows for us to imagine how we should be in the future (p. 9). In this way, nostalgic representations let audiences reflect on aspects of life in an earlier era in order to think critically about social change. This insight is helpful when considering 'period piece' media like *Mad Men* or *Boardwalk Empire*. However, in terms of representing the 'retrosexual' male in advertising, nostalgia does not overly function to illuminate how men have progressively changed over time. In many of these ads, it is implied that men in our contemporary society have lost male-exclusive space and in turn, forgot what it means to be a man. Thus, a *desire* for the past is expressed. The ads are designed to reassert a sense of authenticity and position grooming under the guise of traditional male rituals.

Chapter 5

HOW DO THESE ADS COMMUNICATE?

This chapter is a secondary analysis that looks more specifically at the structural properties of the advertisements in this sample. The first section discusses the composition of the ads in terms of fonts, colours and settings. These aspects will be examined with regards to how they contribute to the construction and communication of masculinity within the ad. Next, the second section outlines the concept of 'intertextuality' and explains how these ads use celebrities, sport associations and other professionals as 'intertextual' components. The third section explores how different brands use conceptions of style and the varied ethnicities of male actors as means to construct different variations of masculinity. The last section demonstrates how particular ads include interactive or mixed-media properties. For example, a number of ads in the sample include links to online videos that serve to complete the advertisement as a whole.

5.1 Composition and Settings

In the previous chapter, slogans and photos were analyzed in order to understand how they construct representations of masculinity. In addition to such elements, the structural composition of these ads serves to communicate or give a sense of maleness. First, the choice and use of particular fonts contribute to the ad's overall theme. As aforementioned, many texts convey commands or orders. This is a mode of address that is characteristically male in how it implies a sense of authority, dominance and even

anger. While formulating the text as a command is primarily done through the linguistic content, it is also reinforced through font choices. For example, many ads have their main slogan written in bolded, capital letters (e.g. AD 2, 4, 9 and 10 in the Appendix). Such lettering allows for the slogan to be seen immediately and gives the words a sense of urgency. Other ads choose to capitalize specific words in their motto to emphasize their importance (e.g. FIGURE 11; FIGURE 13; and AD 5, 6 in the Appendix). Moreover, when combined with the language of the text, the font intensifies what is being communicated. It crafts the slogan as an order, rather than a mere suggestion. The reader is told directly and boldly to "man up", "join the brotherhood" or "keep your cool".

The use of colour in these advertisements is not insignificant. Indeed, the inclusion or exclusion of colour in ads contributes to communicating different messages about gender and masculinity (Kirkham & Weller, 1996). I will discuss two different ways that colour is used in this sample. First, as previously mentioned, ads whose dominant theme was "nostalgia" use particular colour schemes to provide a 'vintage' aesthetic. Ads put out by Art of Shaving (e.g. FIGURE 14 and AD 11 in the Appendix) use black and white images, and sepia-toned text to construct a retro look. Similarly, Gillette's "Movember" ad (AD 12 in the Appendix) has a beige background with faded black writing and illustrations. It is reminiscent of a 'wanted' notice typically seen in old Western films. Constructing this old-fashioned image may serve to make particular products appealing to a variety of audiences. Nostalgic devices are effective in communicating across a range of groups by drawing on shared and common sense understandings of history. Second, colour is used to accentuate ethnic differences – or, to represent different styles of masculinity across ethnicities. In Gillette's "Master Of Style"

ads (AD 7 and 13), we are shown two “masters” of style. The first is Adrien Brody who is White and the second is Andre Benjamin who is Black. Brody is dressed in a very simple, neutral-colored grey suit. The background is also entirely grey. Benjamin, on the other hand, is wearing a sweater with a number of bright orange stripes and numbers. He is wearing brown knee-high boots and sitting on a maroon, leather chair. In addition, the background is entirely white, which accentuates the colours of the sweater, boots and chair. So, while Brody and Benjamin are both “masters” of style, their styles are not similar. A notable difference is in colour. Brody, as an exemplar of White masculine style, is dressed in a drab suit with virtually no colour variation in the ad. Benjamin, as an exemplar of Black masculine style, is presented with vivid colours included. These examples will be further discussed in a following section.

Lastly, choosing particular settings can contribute to constructing an advertisement as necessarily masculine. The settings in a number of these ads are locations that are typically frequented by men or historically linked to masculinity. For example, in Nivea’s “Look Like You Give A Damn” ad (AD 5 in the Appendix), the male models are at a roulette table inside a casino. The setting of a casino is significant specifically because they were male-exclusive spaces in earlier eras. Gambling, more generally, is commonly considered a male or manly activity, as it is highly associated with money, risk and intimidation. In a similar way, Paul Mitchell’s second “Man Up” ad (AD 4 in the Appendix) is set inside a bar. As previously mentioned, bars, like casinos, were once male-exclusive and the consumption of alcohol is often considered a rite of manhood. A final example is Gillette’s “Give Everything” ad (AD 14 in the Appendix) where we see a muscular African-American man engaged in some sort of

physical training exercise. He is hanging by his arms high up on a chain-link fence – the type you would find marking the perimeter of an urban park or basketball court. However, behind the fence, we only see a large stone building with many windows and many blinds closed. While it is likely that this man is exercising in an urban basketball court beside a large school or office building, we are unable to see any proof of the park setting. As such, it is just as possible that this man is exercising in a prison yard. One can wonder; is it pure coincidence that the male model is African-American when the ad setting looks similar to a prison yard? This may be intended to be a snapshot of a Black man working out in an urban area, but the setting can also be read as a prison. Regardless, both of these two possibilities indeed reinforce advertising stereotypes that are commonly attributed to Black men and Black male culture. This image is a crystallization of what Soar (2002) calls a "mediated notion of urban black maleness. This commodified vision is athletic, industrious and disciplined (either through self-will or adherence to the rules of the game), tinged with a strong, latent hint of aggression" (p. 51).

5.2 Intertextuality: Celebrities, Sport Associations and Other Professionals

I wish to briefly discuss how the advertisements of this research include 'intertextual' content. Intertextuality, in this context, refers to the use of popular culture references within advertising (Leiss et al., 2005). It is increasingly common for contemporary advertisements to include specific devices designed to marry together various areas and aspects of culture. Leiss et al. (2005) call such representations a "cultural array" and advertisers are "clearly and overtly capitalizing on this wider cultural array through their multi-ethnic person-codes, intertextual references to pop culture, and

eclectic depictions of group activities, fashions, and music tastes" (p. 499). In this sample of ads, three types of interextual references were made. The first instance of intertextuality can be seen when ads depict popular celebrities in place of unknown models. For example, Gillette has used celebrities to endorse their products in 22% of their advertisements in this sample. They have shown images of American supermodel Kate Upton; American actress Genesis Rodriguez; Canadian television hostess Hannah Simone; American stock car driver Denny Hamlin; American actor Adrien Brody; American musician Andre Benjamin; and Mexican actor Gael Garcia Bernal. Additionally, Dove ads feature American professional basketball player Dwayne Wade, and Head & Shoulder's only ad displays American professional football player Troy Polamalu. In this way, the use of celebrities serves to associate these products and practices to other sorts of media and popular culture. More specifically, celebrities act as a bridge to connect these ads to television, film, music, fashion and professional sports. Next, the second form of intertextuality can be seen through official endorsements made by American professional sports associations. While this was not overly common, there were specific ads that include crests of notable athletic organizations. For example, the advertisement for Head & Shoulders prominently displays the National Football League logo and proclaims that they are the "Official Shampoo of the NFL". In another Gillette ad, the emblem of the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing is shown beside a similar endorsement that states, "Official Male Grooming Products of NASCAR". Lastly, intertextuality is also performed through making reference to other, less-famous professionals. In particular, all ads released by Shea Moisture include textual labeling that removes the anonymity of the featured models. As previously mentioned, they

explain that the men in their ads are elite professionals in high-powered positions of successful businesses. While arguably more subtle than the use of celebrities, this is still a clear intertextual device that draws a link to another aspect of our culture. In this case, Shea Moisture ads are explicitly connected to corporate businesses and high-class social formations and therefore carry with them fantasies of upward social mobility.

5.3 Pluralizing Masculinity by Age, Class and Ethnicity

A major finding of this research is that men and masculinity are represented in a variety of dissimilar ways. Instead of constructing masculinity in a rather one-dimensional manner, multiple masculinities can be seen within these advertisements. The pluralizing of masculinity is done through a number of techniques. First, representations of masculinity are constructed differently by different brands. There is significant divergence in the content of ads released by separate grooming product companies. In turn, one can deduce that brands do not necessarily share the same implied and target audiences. For example, Paul Mitchell's ads (FIGURE 11 and AD 4 in the Appendix) feature male models that appear to be in their early-to-mid twenties. They look young, tough and are configured in a group within a public setting. In the text of such ads, it is made clear that Paul Mitchell products are available for sale at 'salons' – rather than pharmacies or supermarkets. Based on this campaign, one can assume that these ads are targeted towards a younger audience of higher-class men. Conversely, ads by Shea Moisture and Art of Shaving (FIGURE 13 and FIGURE 14) depict older men. The "Gentleman Shaver" in Art of Shaving's ad is seen as having to share a bathroom with a woman. This scene constructs a heterosexual domestic setting. Shea Moisture ads

show fathers with their children, and this functions to create a similar domestic atmosphere. As outlined earlier, both campaigns make reference to higher classes through text and imagery. Taken together, these brands likely target older men who have careers and families. Furthermore, certain ads for Axe and other Unilever products feature a prominent "Available at Walmart" crest. This makes clear that these goods are less expensive than other salon-grade products. Their products can be considered affordable even for teenagers, and are available in family-friendly department stores like Walmart and Target. And so, Axe provides boys and men with a cost efficient and easily accessible way to practice grooming.

It should be noted that masculinity is also pluralized *within* particular brands and campaigns. It is not the case that Gillette only constructs and targets 'Man Type X' and Nivea only 'Man Type Y'. Rather, varied men and masculinities are represented within a single brand's ad campaign or even advertisement. For example, Art of Shaving's "Join The Brotherhood of Shaving" ad (AD 11 in the Appendix) displays six different men labeled as six different caricatures. This suggests that the "brotherhood" is inclusive to and made up of men with varied interests and styles. What is more, this ad depicts men of various ethnicities. Ethnicity is, in this sample, the primary means of pluralizing masculinity within an ad campaign. Another example previously mentioned is Gillette's "Masters of Style" series (AD 7 and AD 13 in the Appendix) from 2012. It is very clear that Adrien Brody and Andre Benjamin, although both "masters of style" have a different sense of fashion and style. Notable differences include the use of colour, stylish accessories and the content of either text. It appears that the ethnicity of Brody and Benjamin is likely an influential factor on their conception of style. One can surmise that

Brody is a White "master of style" targeted to a White audience and Benjamin is a Black "master of style" targeted to a Black audience. Similarly, in 2013, Gillette released another set of ads that featured three men of different ethnicities whose moustaches consist of verbal slogans in place of hair (AD 15 in the Appendix). Although these three ads appear very similar at first glace, there are salient differences in terms of facial expressions, slogans and the ethnicity of the male models. The shape and style of facial hair is displayed as an expression of personality and masculinity. Concerning the facial expressions, it is clear that the White man is happy, the Black man is angry and the tanned man is somewhere in between. At a most basic level, the reader sees a decrease in positive attitude as skin shade becomes darker. Visually, this ad series suggests Whiteness as happiness and success, and Blackness as unhappiness and aggression. Moreover, the moustache slogans in these ads are notably dissimilar. The White man's moustache expresses a playful pick-up line. The second man's line may imply gloating about a car or set of cars. The Black man's slogan is a demand of entry into a concert venue. Collectively, this series uses ethnicity as a central conduit for constructing men of different styles, personalities, attitudes and thus, masculinities.

5.4 Mixed-Media Advertising and Interactive Properties

It was very interesting to notice how not all advertisements in this sample were solely print media. One might think: how is this possible considering that these ads are taken from *Esquire* magazine? Well, this is indeed a possibility in our current technophile society. A number of ads could be considered to be examples of 'mixed-media' – a consolidation of print and video. This process has been undoubtedly

facilitated through the technological advances of the Internet and Smartphones. Beginning in the 1990s, "advertising was entering a period of mixed-media campaigns, as messages were coordinated across media and promotional platforms" (Leiss et al., 2005, p. 563). This coordination between media can be achieved in different ways. Mixed-media can refer to an ad campaign being released in print and on television (or the Internet) simultaneously. However, it can also refer to a more direct, literal linkage between a piece of print media and a video. Unlike traditional print advertising, some campaigns include an innovative, state-of-the-art communicative function where readers are actually able to participate with this ad in a way other than just viewing. For instance, Art of Shaving ads tend to include a small QR barcode in the bottom right corner. This code is designed to be scanned by a reader's Smartphone. When this is done, he or she is brought to the Art of Shaving website where he or she can watch videos about the company's grooming products. This is perhaps a fairly common and subtle example of mixed-media, but other campaigns have used this technique in a more blatant, obligatory and interactive manner.

In Gillette's "Read Her Mind" series from 2013 is a noteworthy example (e.g. FIGURE 12). As aforementioned, this set of three ads invites viewers to read the minds of Kate Upton, Hannah Simone and Genesis Rodriguez. In scanning the large, conspicuous QR barcode with a Smartphone, the reader is brought to an online video of the model speaking about her preferences in men. In print alone, the advertisement is essentially incomplete. To find out Upton, Simone and Rodriguez's answers, one is invited to complete the advertisement through scanning the barcode. The text ad evokes curiosity in the reader, and then he (or she) must engage with the ad through scanning the

code in order to solve the mystery behind the model's desires. As such, this technological technique very pragmatically creates a dialogue between the reader and each woman. Moreover, the transition of image to video also makes the image seemingly come alive. What was once a mere photograph and text transforms into a living, speaking video that addresses the viewer in a very candid and personal manner. Because this is a code that can *only* be scanned by a cellular phone (rather than a computer), the video of Upton is likely to be viewed privately by each reader. Although, the same video can be found on public sites such as www.youtube.com, the communicative structure of this ad creates a dialogue between the individual viewer and a model that is simultaneously real and fictional. It is fictional for the obvious reason that one is not actually candidly speaking to Upton, Simone or Rodriguez. However, it is real in the active processes it requires. Not only is this a unique, creative and timely advertising technique, the invitation and link to the online video allows for Gillette to profit from online viewing hits.

It is worth noting another type of interactive property that was featured in an Axe advertisement from 2013 (AD 2 in the Appendix). We see three Axe products – a shampoo, a deodorant stick and body wash. Below is a picture of a large blue and white ice cube with a text that reads, "Rub the cube. Get the chill". This ice cube with the invitation to "rub the cube" is actually a fragrance sample. When the reader rubs the cube, he or she is then able to smell the new "Black Chill" scent. The ad is therefore highly participatory and allows for the reader to try the fragrance before buying it. This opportunity to experience the product without required purchase rejects the notion that advertising is purely one-sided propaganda to strengthen consumer capitalism. Instead,

the consumer can exercise his or her choice through engaging with this ad. Before spending any money on the product, individuals are invited try it and decide whether or not they would like to purchase it. Therefore, it is suggested that the producers of this ad acknowledge the personal agency of consumers and do not assume that they are easily manipulated. Indeed, by the 1990s, advertisers became increasingly aware of the public's capability to 'decode' advertisements. This Axe ad is arguably an example of a "new format" to try and reach "savvy audiences" (Leiss et al., 2005, p. 430). Nevertheless, the interactive feature of providing a 'free trial' is still likely used with the intention of increasing sales and gaining new customers.

CONCLUSION

Before concluding, it is necessary to mention particular limitations of this study and provide some suggestions for future research. First, while this project addressed intersections of gender, race, class, age, and the politics of heterosexuality, it does not thoroughly consider a queer perspective. More specifically, scholarship on "gay window advertising" has not been integrated into the research. This concept, outlined by Sender (1999), explains how queer audiences tend to read and identify advertisements differently than heterosexual audiences. So, the dominant themes developed in reading these grooming product advertisements may be dissimilar when analyzed from a queer perspective. However, as the analysis has made clear, a large number of these ads are overtly heterosexual and rarely ambiguous in their representations of sexual orientation. Moreover, there is a lack of discussion on how gay males have played a key role in the alteration of heterosexual male lifestyles and consumer practices in recent years. Briefly, the commercial exposure and success of media such as *Queer Eye For The Straight Guy* (2003) has propagated the ideology that gay men are cultural experts who can help reform and fix heterosexual men who may be suffering a 'crisis' of masculinity (Sender, 2006). Proper grooming, in particular, can be considered a part of gay male expertise. Thus, it would be beneficial for similar studies to further explore the ways in which gay men and queer culture influence contemporary heterosexual male identities, cultures and practices.

Another recommendation for future research would be to perform a study of audience reception. As this analysis has been limited to the interpretations of a single

researcher, investigating how different audiences read these advertising texts would allow for a more varied and far-reaching consideration of themes. Participants can be placed into focus groups that are divided by a chosen demographic. For example, one could compare and contrast how heterosexual and non-heterosexual males read these ads. Or, one could use the variable of age to examine how different groups of men interpret these images. There are a number of other grouping combinations and empirical directions that are possible and relevant. Such studies of audience reception could provide quantitative data on the 'decoding' of grooming product advertisements and therefore, would be fruitful accompaniments to this research.

In closing, I wish to briefly reiterate some of the main findings of this research project. A thematic discourse analysis has been performed on an exhaustive sample of 62 grooming product advertisements found in *Esquire* Magazine from 2011 to 2013. The purpose of this analysis was to uncover what and how these texts communicate about contemporary men and masculinity. Five generalized thematic categories were developed in order to elucidate what was predominately constructed within the ads. The most prevalent theme, found in 40% of the sample, was "Body Responsibility and Control". Ads in this category use text and images to represent grooming as a form of controlling one's body. Such control is posited as a responsibility for men to uphold. Failure to comply with this grooming imperative may endanger men's reputations as masculine and as proper citizens. This notion of body responsibility and control is complimentary to Michel Foucault's concept of biopower and disciplinary practices in modern society. The second theme, found in 23% of the sample, was "Manning Up". This term refers to the emphasis for men to reassert or rediscover a sense of dominant,

hegemonic masculinity. Ads communicate that sentiments such as hostility and virility are integral to natural manhood and thus, should be championed. The resurrection of traditional manly expectations from earlier eras can be considered a form of retaliation against the influence of women in men's lives and/or growing acceptance of 'softer' masculinities such as the 'new man'. The third theme, taking up 21%, is "Explicit and Implicit Heterosexuality". Many ads in this category depict explicitly heterosexual content or are implicitly directed towards a heterosexual audience. These two characteristics are also often included within a single ad. Such content is a technique to help eradicate certain feminine or homosexual stigmas that are attached to grooming and grooming products. The fourth theme, also featured in 21% of the sample, is "Work and Family". While some ads choose to represent either work *or* family, many actually use text and image to link work *and* family. Both these roles are traditionally considered essential to masculinity. However, in this context, they are constructed at opposite poles on a continuum of maleness. It should also be noted that the high frequency of ads centered on the theme of fatherhood in 2013 might represent a break with particular ideals and stereotypes commonly used in advertising targeted at men. Finally, the last theme is "Nostalgia" which is found in 13% of the ads. This theme is transmitted through textual and visual elements that serve to make an ad appear as though it is from an earlier historical era. Ideologically, these ads communicate a longing for a time when gender roles and relations were less muddled. The proliferation of such nostalgic or 'vintage' representations likely corresponds with the rise of 'retrosexual' or 'dapper' male style in Western culture.

In terms of how these ads communicate these themes, there were a number of noteworthy structural properties. Particular fonts, colours and settings were used strategically to construct the advertisements as unmistakably masculine. Moreover, many ads included 'intertextual' devices to draw a connection between the ad (or brand) and another aspect of culture. For example, the use of celebrities was common and they are considered to be a channel to connect advertising to other facets of popular culture like film, music and professional sports. Another major discovery was how masculinity was pluralized within and across different brand's ad campaigns. Often, companies use age, class and ethnicity as variables in the representation of different masculinities, and for addressing varied target audiences. Lastly, certain ads are a part of a 'mixed-media' campaign. Through the use of state-of-the-art QR barcodes, print media can become linked to videos on the Internet. As such, these ads include a very direct, dialogic property in which the reader's engagement is necessary to complete the ad as a whole.

Evidently, these advertisements do include fragments of a historically dominant ideology of men and masculinity. In many respects, these ads continue to draw upon long withstanding ideals and stereotypes that reinforce the concept of hegemonic masculinity. It has been argued that grooming product ads tend to simultaneously bolster and alleviate anxiety surrounding male grooming and bodywork. In doing so, traits of hegemonic masculinity are manifested in order to ensure reception from implied and target audiences, and to remove feminine stigmas surrounding these products and practices. However, there are also significant fractures in this prevailing ideology. Representations of sensitivity are frequent and constructed through imagery of family and fatherhood. This break with expected media images of masculinity is likely reflective of

larger societal changes in traditional gender roles and relations. As we come to acknowledge masculinity as a fluid and historically contextual concept, we can more easily recognize how men and manhood change and *adapt* to socio-cultural shifts. Another 'fracture', so to speak, is how masculinities have been constructed in a pluralized way. Would all men represented in or targeted by this set of advertising fall under the umbrella of hegemonic masculinity? Or, even within the archetypes of 'new men', 'new lads' and 'retrosexuals'? No, they would not. Masculinities were not represented under the guise of homogeneity, universality and innateness. Rather, they are varied across lines of age, class, ethnicity, sexuality, style, culture and subculture. This diversity, or what John Benyon calls a 'bricolage' of masculinities, can be considered progressive and helpful. As declared by Concordia University sociology professor Marc Lafrance, "this multiplicity is a moment of opportunity for men to redefine themselves" (in Morin, 2014). Certainly, earlier in Western history, men were subject to more rigid, uniform understandings of what it means to be a man. At this point in time, men are able to create and reinvent their identities and bodies in a variety of new ways that are now accepted by our society and culture. While this shift does not wholly avoid or resist past and current contradictions and contentions, men are certainly in an age of possibility surrounding the construction, performance and representation of masculinity.

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APPENDIX: Additional Advertisements

AD 1: Gillette's "Sweat Stain" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 157 / No. 1, January 2012

AD 2: Axe's "Keep Your Cool" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 60 / No. 1, August 2013

AD 3: Clinique's "Erasing The Past" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 158 / No. 2, September 2012

AD 4: Paul Mitchell's "Man Up" Advertisement (Ver. 2), *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 157 / No. 6-7, June/July 2012

AD 5: Nivea's "Look Like You Give A Damn" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 155 / No. 6-7, June/July 2011

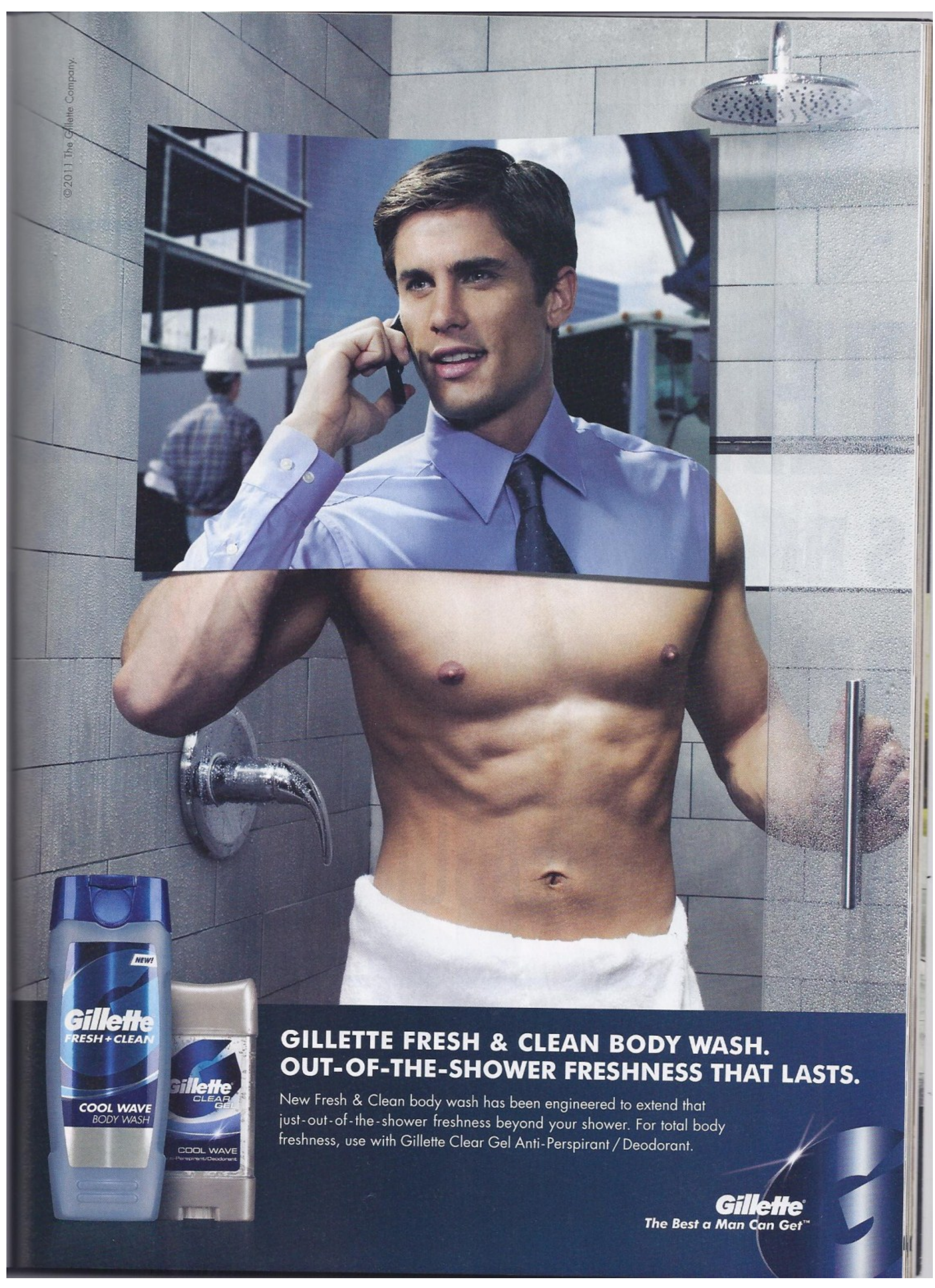
AD 6: Con Air's "Be The Better Man" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 159 / No. 6-7, June/July 2013

AD 7: Gillette's "Masters Of Style: Adrien Brody" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine
Vol. 157 / No. 3, March 2012

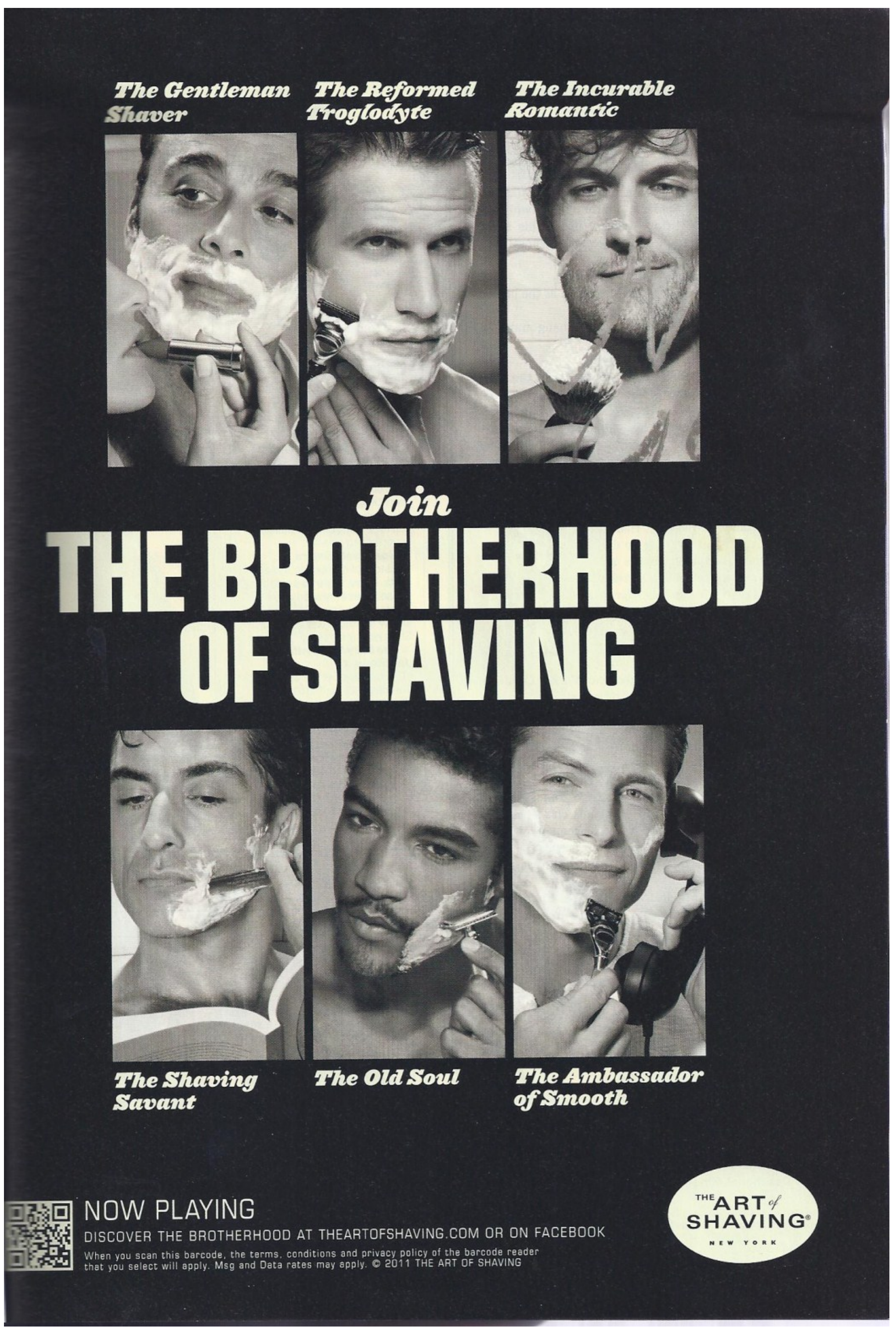
AD 8: Gillette's "Love" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 159 / No. 2, February 2013

AD 9: Dove's "Dwayne Wade" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 159 / No. 6-7, June/July 2013

AD 10: Gillette's "Fresh + Clean" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 155 / No. 5, May 2011

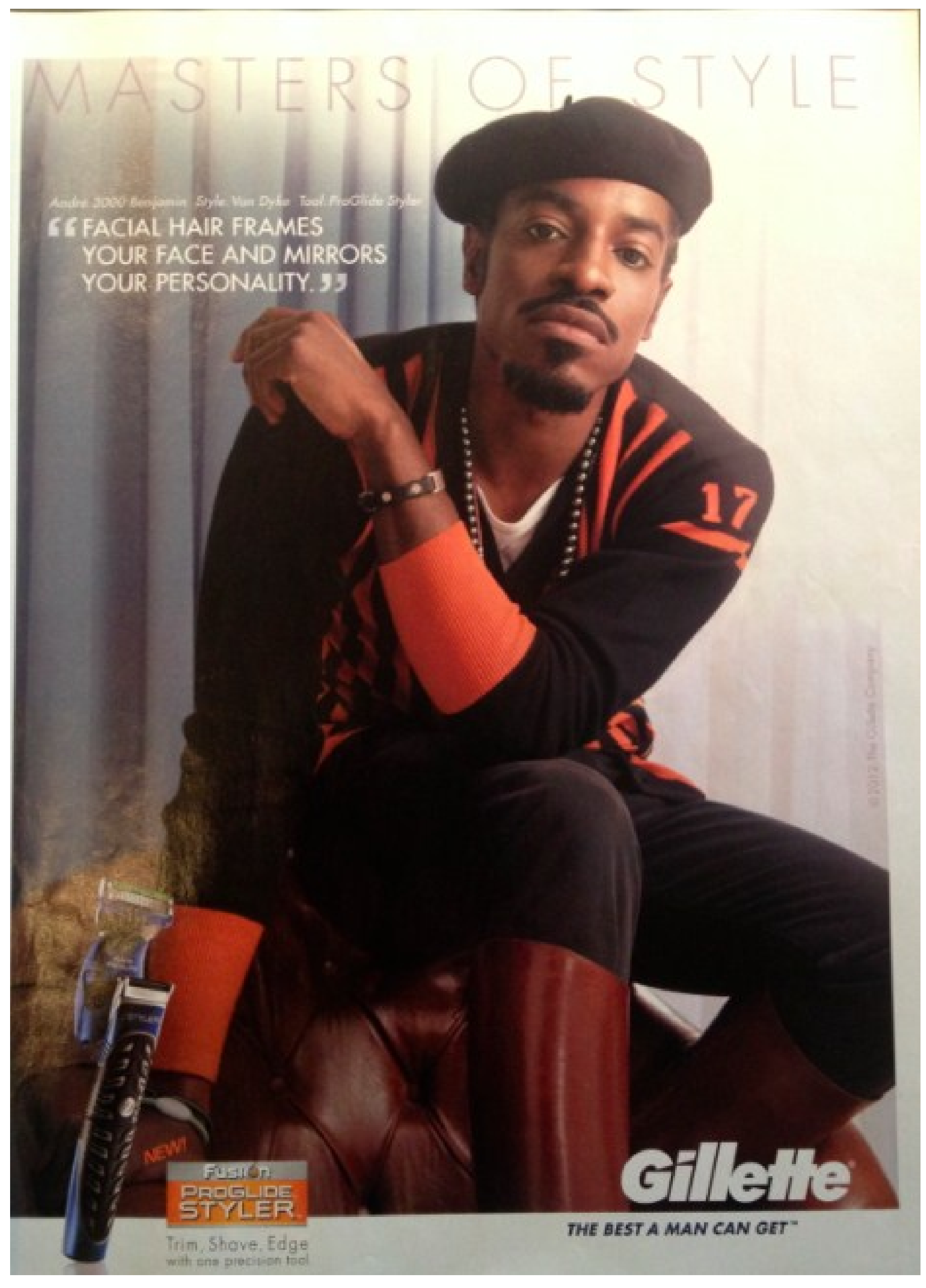


AD 11: Art Of Shaving's "Join The Brotherhood of Shaving" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 156 / No. 5, December 2011



AD 12: Gillette's "Movember" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 160 / No. 4, November 2013

AD 13: Gillette's "Master Of Style: Andre 3000" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 157 / No. 5, May 2012



AD 14: Gillette's "Give Everything" Advertisement, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 158 / No. 1, August 2012

AD 15: Gillette's "Moustache" series, *Esquire* Magazine Vol. 159 / No. 1, January 2013