性別、体像と社会変革・日本女性誌1970年代と1980年代

著者

会議概要（会議名・開催地・会期・主催者等）

ページ数

シリーズ

URL

http://doi.org/10.15055/00001586
SEXUALITY, BODY IMAGES AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN JAPANESE WOMEN’S MAGAZINES IN THE 1970S AND 1980S

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Introduction

The occurrence of the first mass demonstration of the women’s liberation movement in 1970 is widely recognized as the beginning of the second wave of feminism in Japan (Buckley 1997: 317; Inoue 1989: 3; Terasaki: 211), which saw women working for the elimination of discrimination and traditional gender-role differentiation (Inoue 1989: 3). The changes that have since taken place in politics, working law, public debate, education, and social awareness reflect women’s evolving place in Japanese society, as well as currents opposing gender equality in society such as those occurring in the late 1980s.

For measuring social change, an analysis of media images is very useful. Women’s magazines as a part of mass media and popular culture are valuable gauges that mirror perceptions of social reality. Though magazine contents are not a pure reflection of social reality, they do contribute to the construction of it. So how did the demands of second wave Japanese feminism affect a women’s medium? I believe social changes with respect to women’s issues are reflected, overtly and covertly, in the content of commercial women’s magazines, as well as in their publication history and in the development of the entire women’s magazine market since the 1970s. A direct overt influence can be seen when the magazines cover any of the significant events and social changes for women in society in the articles, while more subtle, covert influences may be found in the overall selection, structure, dominance, and appearance of certain types of images, articles, and advertisements in the magazines. The sheer existence of a very diversified magazine market generally can be said to reflect the larger trend toward an ever-broadening circle of life for women in Japanese society relative to their once very narrowly-defined life courses. In fact, in the case of many women’s magazines, their very existence on the newsstand would not have been possible without the pre-existing social changes necessary to bring them to life.

The point of this paper is to use the themes of body image and sexuality in women’s magazines to pursue some broader questions about social change for women in Japan. Because these themes can be found extensively in Japanese women’s magazines, they make a good medium to study. The question is how the occurrence of sexual images and body images is affected by both social change and the growing influence of feminism since the 1970s. What values did Japanese women’s magazines offer the readers, particularly in terms of sexuality, as the new feminist movement made “sexual liberation” the central theme of its philosophy, and
as the influence of the West became significant due to the Japanese collaboration with European
and/ or American publishing companies?

This analysis combines the field of media research with the fields of sociology of the body
and the sociology of sexuality, a connection which is still greatly underrepresented in academic
research. Body images and sexuality are fundamental structural markers of gender relations
and basic elements of the identity construction of women. Body images are the most basic
common denominator connecting all women, no matter what their life stage or how diverse
their lifestyles may be. The way women perceive themselves, how they construct their body
images, and how they deal with their sexuality, all distinguish and influence the reality of their
lives. A deeper analysis of these fundamental areas thus contributes to a deeper understanding
of both Japanese women and their identity constructions.

The women’s magazine Croissant was founded seven years after the onset of the second
feminist movement in Japan. I picked this particular magazine to serve as the basis for a qual-
itative and quantitative analysis over the ten-year time period from 1977 to 1987. I looked for
depictions of body images, sexuality, sexual images and the broad range of possible sub-topics
and patterns these themes may inspire, in order to see how they reflect changes over time. The
quantitative component is based on a content-analysis of visual images in all occurrences
regarding body images presented in Croissant over the course of a decade. Visual images in
the mass media often serve as role models for the readers and therefore deserve special atten-
tion.

As the magazine over the ten years of my analysis turned more toward feminist issues, I
expect the occurrence of sexual and body images to reflect that change. Because sexual images
are mainly constructed from the male perspective — the male “gaze” objectifying women —
my hypothesis is that a women’s magazine with a feminist agenda will be very careful in
trying to eliminate these devaluing images in its editorial section. An analysis of sexuality and
body images in Japanese women’s magazines allows, both through the selection of these par-
ticular topics as well as by selecting this particular mass medium, to give insights about
alternatives presented to women which are contrary to the publicly accepted male dominated
gender-construction. Regarding the structure of the paper, I will first present a review of the
literature concerning the way sexuality and body images are presented, followed by a brief de-
scription of the development of the Japanese women’s magazine market since 1970. Proceeding
the methods section is a description of Croissant, the magazine that I selected for the content
analysis, as the editorial changes of the magazine have a significant influence on the outlook
and approach of the magazine. The paper ends with a presentation of the findings of the quan-
titative analysis of visual images.

Background

Only fairly recently has there been a shift in Western studies of Japanese culture and society
Sexuality, Body Images and Social Change

to the analysis of more contemporary Japanese women’s magazines. Previously, if women’s magazines were considered worthwhile enough to be paid attention to at all, the focus centered on early women’s magazines of the Meiji (1868-1912) and Taisho (1912-1926) periods. Articles by Nancy Rosenberger (1996), Brian Moeran (1995), Edith Rau (1980), John Clammer (1997), Ochiai Emiko (1997), and Japanese monographs by Inoue Teruko (1989) and Morohashi Taiki (1993) are good examples of the new trend. However, the medium of women’s magazines is still far from being fully explored. Moreover, the thematic treatment of sexuality and body images in Japanese women’s magazines has scarcely been analyzed. Two notable exceptions are Clammer’s *Contemporary Urban Japan: A Sociology of Consumption* (1997), which analyzes women’s bodies and their consumption in women’s magazines versus their consumption in men’s magazines; and Allison’s *Permitted & Prohibited Desires* (1996) about the phenomenon of mother-son incest, which was heavily reported upon for a short period in the 1980s, mainly by the women’s magazine *Fujin kôron*. With the exception of Inoue Teruko’s study (1989), these analyses are all qualitative analyses, but even Inoue’s work does not go beyond very basic descriptive analyses. No study to date has ventured into more advanced statistical work.

The topic of sexuality, as it is dealt with in contemporary Japanese women’s magazines, includes such diverse topics as abortion, contraception, impotence, dating, marriage, extramarital and broken relationships, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), *kataomoi* (one-sided infatuation), love, married sexless couples, sperm banks, divorce, sexual practices, sexual problems, sex toys, and sexual desire. The topic diversity here depends on the magazine and its target group. I conducted a pilot study, a synchronic content analysis of twelve different women’s magazines for the year 1996. The results of this study indicate that women’s magazines for young women from the ages of 15 to 20, such as *An an*, idealize sexuality, combine sexuality with consumerism (e.g. fashion advertisements) and display it in a romanticized context of love. On the other hand, women’s magazines for middle aged women (aged 40 and older), like *Fujin kôron*, report about sexuality very openly and directly. This type of magazine also has the broadest range of thematic diversity regarding sexuality and is principally focused upon marital and sexual problems. In my sample, I noted such topics as impotence, extramarital affairs, and sexlessness among married couples. Women’s magazines for middle-aged women deal with sexuality realistically and in a problem-oriented fashion. In contrast to the usual public discourse, in these magazines the claim can be made for sexual satisfaction, and female sexuality is moved to the center of attention. A survey of about 2,000 households shows that women are much more likely than men to seek help and advice from outside of the family to resolve marital problems. Almost 50 percent of all women seek marital advice from their parents, and approximately 40 percent seek advice from friends (Hoshii 1986). Women’s magazines can serve as a medium of outside counsel by providing helpful articles on these topics or to which women may confide through letters to the editor.

In terms of sexuality in Japan, most academic research to date has focused on a few select areas. Among them: pornography; *mizu shôbai* (the “water trade,” or prostitution, from his-
terical analyses of the Yoshiwara pleasure quarters to “participant observation” – studies of the life of hostesses; 2 the relationship of the yakuza (the Japanese mafia) with nizu shôbai (Bornoff 1991); and subjects related to geisha (Morley 1985; Dalby 1983). Studies on birth control, abortion (Coleman 1983), teenage sexuality (White 1993), sex tourism (Kelsky 1996) and AIDS (Domenig 1998) in Japan have also been carried out. But such topics as STDs, homosexuality, “sexlessness,” sexual harassment, domestic violence, and rape have been left relatively untouched by academia, even though they are essential and important factors in the life of Japanese women. In the same way, the male-dominated mass media of Japan has yet to provide the space to give women their own voice, especially in regard to their sexuality beyond the reproductive function:

There was what amounted to a taboo that prevented any public discussion of women’s sexuality beyond the reproductive function. The exception is the “after-eleven” television shows, which specialize in bare breasts and suggestive jokes, but this is a negative sexuality that is the product of male fantasies. What has always been denied and silenced is women’s right to express their self-determined sexuality. There has been some minor improvement in the media, but on the whole we still live in a society largely determined by male sexuality. (Freelance writer and critic Miya Yoshiko in Buckley 1997: 160)

Thus, women’s magazines may provide a forum that offers women a chance to take up the subject of their own sexuality.

Sexuality is also closely linked to body images and the concept of beauty. This is especially the case since the 1970s in Japan. Ochiai Emiko’s article titled “Decent Housewives and Sensual White Women — Representations of Women in Postwar Japanese Magazines” (1997) describes the growing American influence since the 1960s as well as the influences of the women’s movement since the beginning of the 1970s as crucial to this linkage of sexuality with body images and beauty in Japan. It had started as early as 1950, during the American Occupation, with the beginning of the worship of Western beauty ideals. Japan’s third place score in the Miss Universe Contest in 1950 year helped to shift Japan’s focus from the female face towards paying attention to the entire proportions of the female body in order to determine feminine beauty (Ochiai 1997: 153). In her analysis Ochiai describes the social changes and their reflection in changes of visual images of Japanese women: their faces, their makeup, their outward-appearance, and changes in the ethnicity of the models. Ochiai Emiko’s study is therefore an important source for my own analysis. Her insightful longitudinal study over four decades of several Japanese women’s magazines has many revealing conclusions. However, she has done only a qualitative, not a statistical analysis, which I think would be important in this context. Thus, I administer a quantitative analysis in this study.

The topic of body images includes a long and diverse list of subtopics, such as fashion, dieting and eating disorders, ethnic differences in the models, sexual explicit versus submissi-
ness gestures in poses, and aspirations towards beauty ideals. All these topics are subject to change over time, be it in importance or actual content, and are very helpful in paralleling to changes that happened in society.

Regarding the treatment of ethnicity in the Japanese media, authors such as Rosenberger, Clammer, Miller, and Kelsky have all pointed out the fascination which the Japanese have with Western bodies. The Western ideals of light, white skin, big eyes, and rounder body shapes are perpetuated through Japanese women’s magazines in two principal ways: (1) through the popularity of Western models or at least so-called “halfs” (half Japanese, half something else), who don’t look “typically” Japanese and hence distinguish themselves from the masses through particular physical characteristics; and (2) through a strong focus on an array of cosmetic products which offer “whiteness” in the most diverse forms. So as the beauty ideal of whiteness becomes more overpowering in Japanese society over time, I expect a higher occurrence of Western women to become visible in advertisements in women’s magazines.

Whether it is through TV, the “serious daily press,” or magazines, women’s bodies in advertisements are presented as consumer items, as products, with which other consumer items are presented and offered.

The body is presented multiply through these forms — the ritualized pose of pin-ups, the idealized pose of the fashion model, [...] and through discourse on diet, health care, body decoration and maintenance in the text. (Clammer 1997: 115)

Mass media use airbrushed pictures and other technological means to create an impossible ideal or “template” of what a woman’s body should look like. Cosmetic ads, dieting ads, ads for cosmetic surgery and others make women believe that, with enough effort, discipline, and financial sacrifice, those ideal bodies actually can be attained. Women’s magazines are no exception in this respect. Within any given issue, prototypical women’s bodies are shown in abundance throughout a combination of several different genres — from editorials to advertisements, pictures, advertorials and letters to the editor. I expect these bodies to depict higher levels of nudity over time, as societal norms regarding how much of the body may be shown became more relaxed, especially since the 1970s.

Idealized female body images are obvious forms of social control and gender suppression of Japanese women, particularly as men are not exposed to this degree of idealization of male bodies (however, lately similar trends are starting to develop for men as well). Japan’s women in recent times seem to become further enslaved by an exceptional dieting craze that makes them extremely self-conscious about their bodies and makes them work very hard on their bodies in order to achieve the skinny ideal.
Historical Context

A short analysis of the developments of women's magazines and their markets from 1970 forward will illustrate the evolution of the women's magazine market parallel to the broader context of the social history of Japanese women over the past three decades.

The founding of the fashion weekly An an in March of 1970 by the publishing company Heibonsha (which changed later to Magajinhausu), and of the bi-weekly fashion magazine Non no in 1971 by the Shueisha publishing company, can be seen as significant factors in triggering a major shift in the women's magazine market. These two magazines, which came to be known as “Annon-tabi” shi (Annon-tabi magazines), influenced the fūzoku torendo, the lifestyles of young women, for quite a long time. It is said that with the publication of these two magazines a new age of the world of Japanese women's magazines dawned (Inoue 1989: 19-20). The name “Annon-tabi,” (meaning ‘annon’ – travels), resulted from the fact that these magazines promoted a new, liberated, free way of young women traveling alone. This had been unknown in Japan. The magazines served almost as travel guides, and soon young women’s groups could be seen all over the country enjoying themselves in onsen, hot springs, hiking in the countryside or shopping for souvenirs.

An an was clearly oriented towards Europe. The first issue featured a special report on model Tachikawa Yuri traveling to Paris and London, supposedly “on her own,” showing the readers exciting adventures and activities to do for a woman in these foreign cities (see also Ochiai 1997). This European influence was probably due to the magazine’s collaboration in its early years of publication with the French women’s magazine Elle.4 The women’s magazine Croissant, about which I will talk in more detail below, was first published in 1977 in collaboration with the ELLE group as well (Okatome 1990; Inoue 1989). But once both An an and Croissant had established themselves firmly on the market, they became independent. Non no, being one of the bestselling women’s magazines in Japan with circulation numbers of 1.3 million, in the beginning also collaborated with an international women’s magazine, the American magazine GLAMOUR.

The second half of the 1970s sees the beginning of what is generally termed “zasshi izon no jidai”, or the “age/period which is dependent on magazines.” The publication of new women’s magazines increases significantly after 1970, and in the year 1980 alone, 230 new magazines are published. This year was later dubbed the zasshi no toshi, or the “year of magazines,” and the boom itself was defined as “daiichiji sōkanshi bāmu,” or the “first boom of magazine foundations.” The year 1980 also sees the publication of the first issue of the magazine Torabayu (the title originating from the French “travaille”), a magazine of employment listings for women, which falls into the newly-founded category of “shokugyō zasshi,” or ‘workplace magazines’ (Inoue 1989: 5). This magazine was immediately successful, the very first issue selling over 70,000 copies, (Buckley 1997: 322). This may be explained by the fact that more Japanese women were starting to work outside the house, even choosing a career
over marriage.

Only three years later, in 1983, 257 new magazines were published, making this year of the "second boom of new magazine publications." This trend of a large number of new publications continued in 1984, with 267 new magazines appearing on the market; in 1985 it was 250 new magazines, and so forth. However, it should not be forgotten that it had been the new publication of women's magazines such as An an in 1970, Non no in 1971, JJ in 1975 and Croissant and MORE in 1977 that had sparked such an overall development. The importance of Croissant in this development is one of the major factors that made me select this magazine for an in-depth quantitative and qualitative diachronic analysis.

The new magazines after the 1970s have in common that they were directed toward target groups, which became more specific and segmented over time, based on their age-groups, their occupations, be they students, office-ladies ("OL"), full time housewives (sengyō shufu), or career women. This diversity is a major contrast to the prewar magazines with circulation numbers of over a million which targeted women in one broad sweep, trying to have as general a character as possible. The new magazines of the 1970s indicated with catch phrases their specific target market. Examples are categories such as "fashion shi," fashion magazine, "ningen jōhō shi," information magazine for people, or they specifically state the age group they tried to target such as "around 20 years of age," "for women of around 25 years," etc. After 1970, the magazines also started targeting women with different lifestyles and from different financial backgrounds. Examples would be the target group of tokaiha misesu, the group of young urban women, or the shiteiha gyaru, the "group of girls living in the city." The magazines started to offer their readers quite heterogeneous lifestyles, differing from the magazines of previous times. Singles, unmarried mothers, divorced women, women living in same-sex relationships, and women co-habitating with their partners are only a few examples of the entire range of contemporary female lifestyles being recognized by the different women's magazines, even though the heterosexual, married, part-time working woman or full-time housewife are still a majority among those women (Inoue 1989).

These certainly were positive trends, recognizing women's individual differences and diverse lifestyles by trying to provide specifically for each group. In addition, the diversity of magazines might also lead to its readers empowerment. Their choice as to which magazine to buy and which not to buy gives them power over publishing companies and advertizers. However, it should be remembered that the magazines' catering to all of these different target groups is mainly driven by economic motivations. These target group specifications are not only designed for the readers to pick their appropriate magazine, but mainly for the advertizers, promoting the magazine's uniqueness in order to draw more advertising. The role of advertizers becomes more influential as magazines have to fulfill a double role: they have to advertise themselves to both the readers in order to be bought, and to the advertizers in order to sell pages.

All this makes evident that since the 1970s, mass consumption and consumer culture, "a
culture based increasingly on desire rather than need," (Clammer 1997: 9) have gained the upper hand; and women, who had been central to consumption since the 1910s (Clammer 1997: 10), are becoming ever more the focus and main target of advertising strategies. In the 1980s, mass media starts to frequently use the catch-phrase onna no jidai, meaning the era of women. Yet this is not meant to promote any real liberation of women, for which it might be easily mistaken. Rather, it is a way for advertisers to show their recognition of women's importance to consumerism, and thus the phrase is solely meant to sell products. (Fukunishi 1995; Terasaki 1989; Inoue 1989). This trend of commercialization also involved the area of sexuality. This was reflected, in the 1980s, in a general dramatic increase of sex on television dramas, and an overall increase of sexually suggestive behavior in the media in general (Fukunishi 1995). However, later on in the paper, this generalization will have to be more carefully scrutinized and specified. As sexuality experienced an extreme commercialization, the catch phrase sei no shōhinka ("the commercialization of sexuality") became popular in Japanese. A general acknowledgement of this phrase started in the 1970s with the beginning of the feminist movement. Yet an all-time high in the sei no shōhinka discussion was reached in the 1990s — times during which the sex industry got more and more diversified and public space got more and more sexualized through the influences of the mass media (Domenig 1998: 26).

The increasing impact of the sheer number of new publications as well as their immense success had severe consequences for the big, traditional women's magazines such as Shufu no tomo, Fujin gahō, and Fujin koron, that had been on the market since the Taishō period (1912-1926). They were quickly driven out of their market-leading positions as their circulation-numbers dropped greatly, and their publishing companies were forced to change their concept and to adjust to the extreme segmentation of the target groups if they did not want to go completely out of business. They were forced to conform to the diversified market by publishing not only one magazine, as they had done in the past, but several different magazines targeting different reader-groups. A good example is the publishing company Kōdansha, which, even though they had to cancel publication of the women's magazine Fujin kurabu in the year 1988 (the magazine was founded in 1920), today publishes four women's magazines for four very different target groups (ViVi, with, MINE, and SOPHIA).

However, several formerly prestigious traditional women's magazines could not be saved and went out of business. Thus, the majority of today's women's magazines began publication after 1970. A comparison of a list of Japanese versus American women's magazines makes the different trends of both countries' magazine markets obvious (Inoue 1989). As Inoue states, among Japanese women's magazines with circulation number of at least 100,000, the oldest magazine dates back to the year 1903, and the total number of magazines founded before 1970 is relatively small compared to the number of magazines founded since 1970. On the other hand, in the US, a list showing the status quo of 1980 includes 18 magazines with circulation numbers larger than 100,000 that were first published before 1970, dating as far back as the year 1846. This is a much larger percentage when compared to the overall women's magazine
market in the US than in Japan. It can be said that the women’s magazine market in Japan is faster-changing and younger than its American counterpart.

The Magazine Croissant

Among the broad range of Japanese women’s magazines, I selected the women’s magazine Croissant as the object of the following content analysis. The following factors make the magazine valuable for academic research and for gathering valid data for a quantitative analysis. The magazine has a continuous publication history from its first publication in April 1977 up to the present and in these two decades has gone through a lot of significant changes in its perspective. Croissant was very popular and influential among Japanese women through the end of the 1980s; it was voted most popular magazine among the age-group of women in their late 30s in 1987 (Matsubara 1988). However more recent surveys show that Croissant lost much of its popularity in the 1990s (Matsubara 1988). Another factor informing my choice of Croissant was the existence of previous, Japanese studies on that magazine, even though these studies are controversial and have some clear flaws in their statements about the magazine’s changes over time. Overall, this magazine has played an important role on the women’s magazine market and can be seen as a representative of the market, its changes and the general social changes during the time of its existence.

At the onset of its publication, Croissant defined its target group as the “nyū famiri.” It became the first “new family” type magazine, with the majority of its female readers in their mid- to late- twenties. The new family type is exemplified by one representative visual image, a picture in a fashion-article from 1977 (Croissant 5/1/77: 175) entitled “La mode familiale. Kita-Kamakura e kajuaru na higaeri ryokō” (‘Family fashion: a casual daytrip to North-Kamakura’). The title of this article shows the French influence, due to the early cooperation of Croissant with ELLE parents (a cooperation that ceased a few years later). The family values, expressed in this picture, the close friendship-like relationship of husband and wife, spending their leisure time together, appear to be highly influenced by European role models. In the picture, the wife is leading the family walking along, and her husband and son are following her. — This may be called revolutionary with regard to the typical Japanese family of that time, in which the husband would normally lead the way (something that can still be seen today in contemporary Japan, watching middle-aged couples walking). The wives’ clothes, and in particular her jeans, are underline the image of “newness,” as skirts were still a wife’s and mother’s customary dress at that time.

Over the following two decades of its existence, Croissant went through drastic changes and shifts in its content. After only a few years on the market, the magazine shifted away from the “new family” focus towards feminism and feminist issues, including issues of singlehood. Inoue, in her analysis from 1988, equates Croissant as well as the women’s magazine MORE (which was founded the same year as Croissant), with the American women’s maga-
zine *Ms.* and the British women's magazine *Spare Rib*. Inoue seems to be going a little too far in her comparison because these two Western magazines are clearly and outspokenly feminist, something that was not the case with the Japanese magazines (at least not to that degree) (Inoue 1989). And while *Ms.* and *Spare Rib* have consistently espoused left-of-center, feminist agendas to this day, contemporary issues of *Croissant* are far too conservative to be termed “feminist.” As times have changed and people have become more conservative in the late 80s and 90s, *Croissant* has also changed again, turning 180 degrees to promote a traditional, conservative housewife’s lifestyle. Again, women are promoted as caretakers of the home and family, their worth measured in how well they please their husbands and families. Articles promoting a new lifestyle, such as reports about equal partnerships appearing in the early years, cannot be found anymore in today’s version of the magazine. By looking at contemporary issues, it is hard to imagine that the magazine ever could have been anything more than a housewife’s cooking publication. In due course, these changes raised the age of the target group, making the current audience mostly women around forty years of age.

These shifts toward greater conservatism became the main focus of an analysis and critique by Matsubara Junko in her book on *Kurowassan shōkogun*, the “Croissant-Phenomenon” (1988). Her book is not an academic source, but it was widely read and even inspired the publication of another book soon after, a rebuttal written in defense of the magazine. Matsubara complains that the magazine’s once-progressive, feminist phase was only for commercial reasons; that staying single, for example, was the “thing to do,” and that this was why *Croissant* promoted those new, liberated values, without being really committed to them. Matsubara values a magazine as a very important agent of change with a responsibility toward their readers. And that does not allow drastic shifts in their agenda. But this is exactly what *Croissant* did. Matsubara states that readers felt like they had been deserted. They had needed the magazine’s to help give them strength to withstand society’s pressures to conform to the expected norms about getting married. Before long her study provoked the “anti-” book, mentioned above, titled *Anchi “Kurowassan shōkogun” — kekkon shinai onnatachi no sugao*, the “Anti — *Croissant* Phenomenon — the true face of unmarried women,” written in response to Matsubara’s study by the so-called *Waifu henshubu* (1989), the wives’ editorial group. This book is of the opinion that if women feel like they need a magazine and cling to it and praise it like a bible, then the women are not yet really liberated, even if they chose a liberated lifestyle of single life. Its authors did not believe in a magazine’s responsibility.

This controversial debate about *Croissant* shows that the magazine provides rich material to answer my questions about the correlation of social change with changes in the mass media.

My hypotheses in this paper are:

1) The changes of *Croissant*’s stance on women’s issues should be reflected in its coverage of body image and sexuality.

2) As the target group of the women’s magazine *Croissant* has aged by about ten years
since its first publication in 1977, I suspect that the women depicted in the articles will appear older. However at the same time, I hypothesize that women in the advertisements become younger over the course of time due to the known global trend in industrialized countries making models ever younger and thinner over time, and in which advanced means of computer airbrushing are increasingly used in order to transform every woman and her body in advertisements into some kind of ‘Superwoman.’ So I expect two opposing trends going on in Croissant.

3) As mentioned earlier, Croissant in its first years was published in collaboration with the French magazine Elle parents. I believe that it was the French association that gave Croissant more latitude to discuss certain topics in the field of sexuality more openly, including several topics of sexuality, body image, and more frequent discussions about feminism than was usual in Japanese women’s magazines at that time. Articles printed in Croissant were often literal translations from the French, including a number of articles about the pill, sexual practices, and pregnancy. The appearance of nude children and pregnant women, very unusual for a Japanese women’s magazine at any point in time, were also shown in Croissant, either taken from the French original, or specifically produced for Croissant, but clearly influenced by Elle. My guess is that some topics would not have been written about at all, and pictures, sometimes very explicit photos, would not have been printed, if it were not for the French influence.

4) As whiteness seems to be a desire of many Japanese women, I expect the depicted women in articles regarding body images and sexuality to be in the majority Western women, as they embody the aspired ideal.

5) I posit a correlation between women’s liberation and their openness with regard to issues of sexuality and their own bodies. I therefore expect Croissant during its feminist period to be more open about sexuality and displaying women’s bodies less dressed than during its conservative phase.

Methods

I selected the women’s magazine Croissant to administer a content-analysis over a ten-year period, from 1977 to 1987. For the purpose of this paper, I selected the months of January, March, June, and September of each year. I picked these months in order to cover at least three seasons, as women’s magazines are heavily influenced by the particular season in which they are published. From this sample I systematically selected all articles and selected advertisements, which have to do with the topic of body image. These cover a broad range from advertisements for tampons and condoms to articles on dieting and sexually transmitted diseases. Under this category fall all articles, ads and advertorials concerned with the follow-
ing subtopics: eating disorders, dieting, sports, cosmetic surgery, cosmetics, beauty devices, psychological problems with the body, clothing, body weight, menstruation, menopause, aging, and health. From among this pool, I coded all visual images appearing in these articles and advertisements. The unit of analysis, which will constitute my cases, is therefore any person in a picture within an article, an advertisement, a letter to the editor or an advertorial in the pool of body-image materials that I extracted from three months per year of Croissant. The unit of analysis constitutes 333 cases.

I coded for thirteen variables. They are eleven independent variables and two dependent variables. The independent variables are: age, gender, ethnicity, time, magazine category, Western versus Japanese clothing, gaze, type of clothing, style of clothing, smiling and body size. With these I ran several univariate and bivariate analyses, as well as running two separate logistic regression models. I formulated two dependent variables. One is the "sexual image" of a depicted person, and one is the "level of exposure amount of clothing." Both are set up as dichotomous variables. Factors such as the level of exposure, gaze, the clothing style, age, posture, and possible suggestive text associated with the person in a picture (in an article or advertisement) have influenced my coding decisions in that respect. A frequency analysis shows that only 17.9 percent among the depicted women and men in articles/ads regarding body images carry a sexual image. The frequency distribution of the second dependent variable, "level of exposure" of the depicted person, correlates with these findings: 84.2 percent are dressed, 9 percent wear underwear, and 6.8 percent are naked. A dressed person is less likely to be coded as having a sexual image. Therefore the level of clothing is also an important factor in the determination of coding for "sexual image."

Of the eleven independent variables coded, for the logistic regression models, however, I am only using demographic and descriptive variables: age, gender, ethnicity, time (date of issue of the magazine), and magazine category (article, advertisement, etc.), as these are mainly value judgment-free. The other variables are partially value-influenced and are contributing factors to the judgment about the sexual image of a person, influencing the dependent variable. Thus, they cannot be used together with the dependent variable of 'sexual image' in the same regression model.

The variables used for the regression models are as follows:

a) Age: The highest frequency in this dataset occurs in the group of women aged 23 to 27 with 23.1 percent, closely followed by women age 28 to 32 with 19.1 percent and women age 33 to 37 with 18.8 percent. The other age groups are evenly distributed of around 12 to 13 percent each: women under 22, women 38 to 42, and women over 43.

b) Magazine category/ genre: I coded all cases into five different sub-categories: "article," "advertisement," "advertorial," "letter to the editor," and "other." The most frequent categories were articles and advertisements, with articles making up almost 71 percent.
c) Ethnicity: I accounted for three categories: "Japanese," "ambiguous," and "Western," with Japanese making up the majority (62 percent of the total cases), versus Westerners, who comprise 34.7 percent.

d) Gender: 82.4 percent of all coded persons are women, 17.6 percent are men.

e) Time: I coded 39 issues of Croissant over the ten-year period. The amount of persons coded for each issue varied quite widely. An overall trend towards the declining number of depicted persons in articles concerning body images is noticeable. As major content-shifts of Croissant were happening, a parallel shift in body image-related occurrences over time can also be observed.

In addition to the systematic quantitative coding I also was attentive to qualitative factors in the articles and advertisements in order to be able to present a combination of qualitative and quantitative findings.
Findings

1) Body Images

What can be clearly seen through this graph and the subsequent table is that there have been high occurrences and low occurrences of articles, ads etc. regarding body images in Croissant between 1977 and 1987. Very broadly speaking, between 1978 and 1982 the occurrence of the topic of body images was high in the magazine, but declined in the second half of the 1980s. The period of high occurrences of body images correlates with the peak of the feminist agenda in Croissant.
Several of the articles/ads of the dataset also relate to the topic of sexuality. The second column in the table refers to the percentages of occurrences of sexuality among the data-pool of body image articles/ads. The topic of sexuality among body image related articles does not show a completely parallel development to the overall body images themselves. Even though the overall number of sexually related body images declined over the years, no tendency can be distinguished, in part because the number of cases is too small to analyze by year.

The visual images were coded from among the pre-selected data-pool of body image-related articles/ads. The table shows that the raw number of cases of visual images regarding body images is much higher than the raw number of articles/ads coded for body images, respectively, also and also sexuality. This results from the fact that the unit of analysis of the visual images is a person in a picture and often several persons in one article or ad are depicted, and each is individually coded in the visual image category resulting overall in 329 cases.18

The quantitative analyses have resulted in several relevant findings about the demographic characteristics of the people pictured in Croissant.19 The differences between the mean ages of people depicted visually in articles and letters to the editor versus in advertisements and advertorials is significant.20 Whereas the mean age of persons in articles lies at 35.3 years, and close to 34 years mean age of persons in the category “letters to the editor,” the mean age of persons in advertising and advertorials is almost ten years lower, lying at 25.7 years. Hence, the category of the magazine is a highly influencing factor on the age of the depicted person in the editorial section. The depicted persons in advertising are much younger, a trend similar to the West. The purpose of advertising is to sell through women’s bodies. It is a medium that globally plays on the attributes of youth and beauty.

Concurrent with these findings is that the mean age of the depicted Japanese persons is 35.67, the mean age of Western persons is significantly less, lying between 27.99. This can be explained by the fact that Western women are more often used in Japanese advertising related to the body, using the female body to sell the product, than Japanese women. Yet my analysis shows that over the years there has been a gradual decline of the use of Western models in Croissant’s advertisements. This decline ends with absolutely no occurrence of Western models in ads at all in the years 1985, 1986, and 1987. This finding correlates with two major trends in Japanese women’s magazines in the 1980s, pointed out in Ochiai’s study. One is the move away from using Western models in the magazines toward what is now termed “halfs:” Japanese models who have mixed ethnic backgrounds, usually Japanese and European or American. So the ideal has shifted from a never-to-be reached blond, blue-eyed Western woman to women such as Umemiya Anna or Miyazawa Rie, both from parents with different ethnic backgrounds.

Besides advertising, the question is where else Western models were used in Croissant and whether this changed over time. It seems that Western models may have been used whenever the magazine dealt with delicate sexual issues — in part because the material itself was coming initially from France, due to the collaboration of Croissant with Elle parents, but perhaps also
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as a way of handling potentially sensitive issues and depersonalizing them for a Japanese audience. For example, photos in several articles regarding sexuality show Western women naked. Most of these articles are translations from Elle parents. A look at the title pages of Croissant shows the same phenomenon: a title page from 1982 features two pictures side by side, which may also be probably taken from Elle parents. They are depicting two naked Western children holding hands, a boy and a girl, approximately three or four years of age (Croissant 1/25/82). In the first picture, the girl grabs at the boy’s penis while he is laughing, whereas in the second picture, he touches his penis and the girl laughs openly and without inhibitions into the camera. The mood of the picture is that of two happy, uncomplicated children, who have not yet developed shame regarding their own bodies or the bodies of the opposite sex.

Another title page from 1979 (Croissant 1/10/79) shows a Western, highly pregnant woman sitting, her partner kneeling in front of her, his hand protectively on her stomach. Contrary to Erving Goffman’s general findings in Gender Advertisements (1979), here the woman dominates the picture. She is “above” her partner, and she takes up much more space in the picture than he does. Usually, in the 1970s, the time of Goffman’s analysis, women were depicted smaller and “below” the man, gazing adoringly at the ‘strong’ man. The Croissant title page, then, reverses prevailing gender roles and power relations. On the other hand, the “positive,” liberating aspect of this picture might be reduced again, if one takes into consideration what the woman represents, motherhood. So this rather powerful female image may merely be generated by the woman’s pregnancy.

Returning to my demographic findings, it can further be stated that the mean age of persons wearing Western clothing is much lower than the mean age of persons wearing Japanese clothing. Persons wearing Western clothing have a mean age of 32.55; persons wearing Japanese clothing are, on average, ten years older: 42.78. Japanese clothing, meaning mainly kimono or yukata, is considered traditional clothing and therefore tends to be used by older Japanese women and men, who are still accustomed to that dress. However, it is interesting to note that in some advertisements in the early 80s, Western models were shown in Japanese settings, or even dressed in a Japanese kimono, resulting in an interesting mixture, a kind of “Japanization” of Western models. Also, the older the depicted person in Croissant, the lower is her level of exposure, meaning the more likely she/he is to be dressed. Further, Japanese people were significantly more likely to be dressed than Western people. Even though statistically non-significant, it was found that in pictures in articles people are more likely to be dressed than in the pictures of advertisements, and men are more likely to be dressed than women.

However, these are generalizations. For example, an article from 1978 (Croissant 6/10/78) entitled “A Mother, 7 Days Before Giving Birth” depicts a naked Japanese woman. This article features a very sensual picture, the approximately two year-old daughter stroking her mother’s highly pregnant belly. That both are naked is unusually explicit for a Japanese women’s magazine of that time, and would still be considered unusual today, not only in the Japanese context, but in the West as well: the portrait of the highly pregnant American actress Demi Moore
on the cover of the American magazine *Vanity Fair*, in the beginning of the 90s, provoked a heated discussion.

*Croissant’s* content changed over the decade first toward but then away from feminist issues and started to target older readers. The increasing age of the target group is reflected by the increasing age of the depicted persons in the editorial section. My hypothesis, that an opposite development would be seen in advertisements was refuted, however. Both categories show the same trends. The age of the persons in advertisements and advertorials was increasing as well, even though on a lower age-level than in articles. The age of persons coded with and without a sexual image was slightly increasing over time. This finding about the aging of the depicted persons in *Croissant* runs contrary to the second trend Ochiai claims to be occurring in Japanese women’s magazines in the 1980s in general: the trend of “young girlization” (Ochiai 1997: 161). Part of Ochiai’s error is a measurement error as her sample itself is biased because she chose a magazine for young women for her analysis for that particular period of the 1980s. She did not take into account, however, that there are significant differences among the women’s magazines, depending on their target readership. She first chose a traditional magazine for the early years of her analysis; for the 1960s, a weekly gossip magazine for housewives; and for the time after 1975, a girl’s magazine. Therefore, her results were already naturally predetermined. *Croissant* does not fit into that extremely generalizing explanation model of a “girlization” trend influencing all body images in all women’s magazines. *Croissant* focuses on mature women, in their late 20s, and 30s, and showed no signs of ‘girlization’. This demonstrates how crucial it is to specify target groups and to be extremely careful with broad, sweeping generalizations when talking about women’s magazines.

Further, contrary to Ochiai’s described girlization, with its frilliness of dresses, etc, is the fact that the women in *Croissant* show influences of the feminist movement in the magazine’s treatment of fashion in its early years. In the late 1970s in *Croissant*, women were often portrayed wearing pants. This was lost again in the early 80s, when the majority of women were depicted in skirts. Pants may be seen as a sign of emancipation or liberation, as pants give a woman greater freedom of movement than a skirt, and make her sexually ‘less available’ and more equal to men. The habit of wearing pants seems to have developed in a curve. Up to the 70s, hardly any pants were worn by women (which might be an indicator of their low social status), then, in the 70s, the curve rises (correlating with the rising social status of women, the women’s movement and its influences), and then decline again throughout the 80s into the early 90s. (which might be explained by the backlash movement of conservatism, confining women back to their homes and kitchens, which not only happened in the United States). Yet in the second half of the 1990s, a shift toward the wearing of more pants can be detected again. Pants, now, are even starting to be allowed at the work-place which is certainly a very new and liberating, positive trend in Japan.

The qualitative findings of the increasing age of the depicted persons in *Croissant* are also supported by numerous qualitative data. For example, the age-increase of the readers, the shift
to more mature women over time is reflected in the fact that aging was written about more often in the magazine. A lot was written on wrinkles, with wrinkles being compared to “human tree rings,” hence connoting them positively. Articles were published on how to accept oneself, and how to be happy if the beauty ideal of thinness could not be reached. In terms of beauty, experience was said to be more highly valued than youth. Croissant had from its beginnings featured articles that put more strength on the inner worth, the inner beauty of women. It stated that women without wearing make-up were more beautiful, and introduced women who openly despised makeup: “O kesho suru notte daikirai” (Croissant, 6/10/78). And in an article from 1981, entitled “Watashi no sugao,” (“My real face”) five women were interviewed and shown with and without makeup. They talked about their “double identities,” depending on wearing or not wearing makeup, stating that the face without make-up reflects the true, inner self — one’s “kokoro.”

Summarizing one can say that in the early 1980s, messages regarding body images were in the style of “be yourself and don’t wear makeup.” But such messages disappeared from the repertoire of Croissant. Looking at the November issue of Croissant ten years later, in 1995, we find that its feature topic is on how to win in the war against aging. The age of the target group of the magazine has stayed approximately the same since the mid- to late-80s, but now there is a shift toward trying to “refresh” one’s entire body through cosmetics, diets, and fitness, towards striving desperately for the prevalent beauty ideal. This correlates with the shift away from feminism.

The increase in scrutinizing body awareness is further illustrated by the fact that models displayed in advertisements in Croissant have gotten visibly thinner over the years. This underlines the fact, that the beauty ideal has become more and more extreme and the ideal body weight constantly decreased since the 1970s — a trend that has been going on not only in Japan, but also in the West as well. However, it is important to note that a difference in body size of persons depicted in advertisements and articles is clearly visible. The body size of women shown in articles increased, which is the opposite development from that of the advertisements. One explanation for this phenomenon might be the increasing age of the target readership. Further, in the late 1990s, an increase in the amount of dieting and weight-related articles and advertisements is clearly noticeable in the magazine. Nevertheless, their frequency is still far lower than the massive amount of dieting and other weight reduction devices promoted in young women’s magazines such as An an. In these magazines, even fairly extreme methods to lose weight seem to have become a normal and well-accepted means of reaching the beauty ideal, be it the full-body wrapping to induce sweat, or “esthe devices,” such as electrical massage bands, to be tied to thighs, hips, or arms.

2) SEXUALITY

Whereas in the decade of analysis of the magazine Croissant every year shows at least one occurrence of sexuality among the pool of body image related articles/ ads, a small sample
from *Croissant* from the mid 1990s makes obvious that contemporary issues of the magazine no longer feature articles about sexuality neither in body image related articles nor in any other article or advertisement. This marks an interesting development in the frequency of sexuality occurrences in *Croissant* in the now twenty-two years of its existence.\(^{24}\)

The articles and ads from 1977 to 1987 dealing with sexuality were selected from among the pool of articles and ads regarding body images. The total number of sexuality-related occurrences in the 1980s in body image articles/ads surprisingly does not show very similar shifts to the total number of body image occurrences. In the first two years of the magazine, only approximately 30 percent of body image articles had to do with sexuality. Yet, from 1979 to 1984 (with the exception of a drop in 1981), approximately 50 percent or more feature very liberal, free reports on diverse topics. Whereas after a peak in 1982,\(^{25}\) an overall decline in body images in *Croissant* sets in, and sexuality related issues, declined as late as 1985, dropping to 20 percent. 1987 sees only two occurrences of sexuality; but this represents 67 percent of the entire sample.

Two examples may illustrate the diversity of topics regarding sexuality that occurred in *Croissant* in its peak year of body image occurrences of 1982. An condom advertisement to be found in the June 10 issue deserves mentioning, as it is unusual to find condom advertisements in Japanese women’s magazines at any time at all. Even in today’s women’s magazines, they are scarce. However, despite the overall boldness of a condom advertisement in itself, the restraint of that advertisement is very remarkable. That is, it does not explicitly promote a condom’s positive features, such as preventing pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases. The name of the condom brand is “Skinless Skin,” written in the *katakana*\(^{26}\) syllabary. The picture is that of a Western woman in a skin-tight leotard — a “body-condom” — who smiles directly into the camera. On one side of her, in the corner, an obviously male leg in an upright, standing position and male hands can be seen. It is interesting that he is only hinted at, but not shown with his face or upper body. Thinking in Goffman’s (1979) terms, if the man would be fully shown, he would be dominating the picture.

Another example regarding sexuality in 1982 is a very long article on contraception, entitled “*Kanzen na hinin wa aru no darōka*.” (“Is There Something like Absolute Contraception?”). It touches upon topics that women in Japan will rarely talk about in public or even in private, introducing, among other things, a circle of women openly discussing contraception, a survey of women whose contraceptive means failed for diverse reasons, and a medical doctor explaining how a pregnancy really happens and different kinds of contraceptive means besides *coitus interruptus* or condoms.

A quantitative analysis of the depicted person’s sexual images and their demographic characteristics in the coded articles and advertisements over the ten-year period from 1977 to 1987 shows that people in their 30s, and even more so in their 40s, are less likely to have a sexual image. Further, Japanese are less likely than Westerners, and women are less likely than men to have a sexual image. Persons depicted in articles are less likely to have a sexual image com-
pared to persons in advertisements. Contrasting the decline in the treatment of sexuality, sexual images are slightly increasing over time — in advertisements as well as in the editorial section.

Coleman explains that social change in the last couple of decades, which has affected premarital sexual behavior to a high degree, however did not affect marital sexuality much. Social change regarding premarital sexuality resulted in “youth [being] accompanied by more assertiveness and candor in sexual matters” (Coleman 1983: 165). Therefore, women’s magazines for younger target groups contain more explicit instructions regarding sexuality. Examples are the “Kissing-guide,” published in MORE in September 1996, or an article on how to keep a lover for more than “one season.” Marital sexuality, on the other hand, implies, according to Coleman “the women’s inability to demand — and get — more sexual gratification from their husbands” (Coleman 1983: 165), the subordination of the wife, of her orgasms and enjoyment to her husband’s, her emotional suffering from her husband’s extramarital relationships, and her difficulty in being assertive regarding contraception (Coleman 1983: 174-179). Coleman also mentions that “[i]n recent years women’s magazines have taken up the issue of women’s orgasm, an important step in exploring women’s potential for sexual satisfaction in marriage” (Coleman 1983: 165). This is true for today’s Fujin kōron but obviously not for today’s Croissant. However, in early issues of Croissant, published during times when it had a fairly strong feminist stance, articles and advertisements assertive of women’s sexuality and sexual needs may be found.

In its first issue in May 1977 (Croissant 5/1/77), Croissant features an advertisement for ‘Tampax’ tampons with applicator. The marketing strategy is to tell the women that they won’t dirty their hands by using that tampon. The advertisement compares the tampon with applicator with a lipstick in its covering, which one also can use ‘without dirtying oneself.’ This sales-strategy is very interesting and has to be understood against the background of the low use rate for intravaginal contraceptives as well as menstrual tampons in Japan; a phenomenon that is still prevalent in Japan today. Coleman gives the following analysis:

The low use rate for intravaginal contraceptives in Japan is also due, in part, to female sexual inhibition. Physicians and family planning specialists universally agree that women reject diaphragms and spermicides because they dislike having to handle their genitals. [...] Very low use rates for menstrual tampons in Japan are one sign of such inhibitions. In the mid 1970s, tampons claimed only about 10 percent of the feminine hygiene product market in Japan, in contrast to over half of the United States market. [...] women experience emotional resistance to tampon use in the form of anxiety about inserting something into their vaginas. Japanese women also have a much lower rate for experience of masturbation than American women. Recent figures for adolescents show a reported incidence of masturbation for Japanese females that is less than half the rate for United States female adolescents. (Coleman 1983: 158)
In this respect *Croissant*'s running this particular advertisement in its first issue seems quite progressive. This progressive approach can partially be explained with the French influence in *Croissant* through the cooperation with *ELLE parents* in its first years. The French influence can be seen in several topics regarding sexuality. As mentioned above, in general it can be said that certain topics in the field of sexuality were able to be discussed more openly than if *Croissant* would have not been working together with the French magazine.

**CONCLUSION**

The influence of feminism in commercial mass media has shifted over time and parallels underlining social change. In 1982, when the feminist magazine *Onna Eros* ceased publication (see Germer's article in this book), *Croissant*'s feminist agenda was at its peak. The more feminist the magazine's viewpoint, up to the mid 80s, the more openly it discussed sexuality, the broader became its focus topics regarding sexuality, and the less it was concerned with dieting and issues of body weight. So we see two opposite linear regressions occurring. Further, the body was openly discussed in *Croissant* in its beginning years, a woman's inward qualities being promoted as superior to her outward appearance. Not to wear make up was advocated. Women's acceptance of themselves and their bodies was encouraged. But this trend declined over time, resulting in today's strong focus on outward appearance, which entailed an increase in the amount of articles and advertisements regarding cosmetics, dieting, and other weight reduction methods.²⁸

The results of my analysis point to the growing influence of commercialization regarding the body in the magazine market, and in *Croissant* specifically. A shift from rejecting cosmetics as beauty devices in *Croissant*'s early years to an intense focus on purchaseable beautifying products signifies an increased commercialization, which went hand-in-hand with a decrease in the feminist commitment of *Croissant*. Thus, commercialization can be said to have an influence on the change in topics in the magazine.

As Patricia Steinhoff says in her foreword to Samuel Coleman's work on *Family Planning*,

> [1] arge-scale social changes often creep up unnoticed because a certain dominant pattern of behavior is still followed by the mainstream of the society, while alternative ways of behaving appear around the fringes and gradually become more common. If researchers keep looking only at a mainstream that is defined by that dominant pattern of behavior, they will not notice the change until it has revolutionized the society. (Steinhoff 1983: xvi)

For the same reasons, broad, sweeping generalizations regarding women, the feminist movement of the 1970s, the women's magazine market and its readership have to be carefully scruti-
nized, and should be avoided. The market, the women, and the agenda of the magazines are, upon close examination, quite distinct. Ochiai’s generalizations about women’s visual ideals resemble those of Sumiko Iwao’s in her book The Japanese Woman (1993), which recognizes hardly any diversity among Japanese women, seeing only middle class women, and therefore repeating existing stereotypes. This tends to make research results biased and not diversified enough. This paper intends to raise awareness in regard to such generalizations. It is insufficient to generalize and say that sexuality was discussed more frequently in the mass media, and that body sizes declined over time. With regard to Croissant, this is too broad a statement, because the last three decades did not show a linear development in one direction; and because it is crucial to specify which target group is being talked about when discussing the audience of the mass media in general. In the case of Croissant, it is important to keep in mind that the target group aged significantly during the time-span analyzed in this paper.

NOTES
1 Japanese names are written in Japanese order, family name followed by given name.
3 The word Annon itself is a simple combination of both of the magazine titles of An an and Non no.
4 It was not until 1982 that ELLE came out with its own edition of ELLE Japan. The women’s magazine Croissant, about which I will talk in more detail below, was first published in 1977 in collaboration with ELLE group as well, but in that case with ELLE parents (Okatome 1990; Inoue 1989).
5 A good example is the publishing company Kodansha, which had to cancel publication of the women’s magazine Fujin kurabu in the year 1988 (the magazine was founded in 1920), and today publishes four women’s magazines for four very different target groups (ViVi, with, MINE, and SOPHIA).
6 Croissant was the first of the category of “new family” -magazines. In the first year of its publication, three more magazines were founded, that fit into this category, however, two of them had to stop publication soon, and so only Croissant and MORE survived until today. (Matsubara 1988)
7 The magazine was first published monthly, but in June 1978 changed to twice monthly appearing on the 10th and the 25th of each month. It was first published in April 1977. Therefore for the first year, only one issue, the June issue was selected. Starting with the June 1978 issue we already can denote two issues per month.
8 Time limitations prevented me from including the month of September into the study as well, which would have given the study more strength since all four seasons would have been presented. Further research will have to include this and ideally all months of that decade.
9 As this sample was already gathered during a field research this in the summer of 1997, and having had limited funds for copying, limited time for research, and only a very limited knowledge on the correct form to conduct a content-analysis and the subsequent coding, the sum of advertisements are “interesting” in relation to body images. As the same advertisement campaigns oftentimes appear in several issues, I also did not recode the same ads. This limits the number of ads that entered the sample further. A complete, objective, thorough data-collection still needs to be administered. But as the data, the women’s magazines, is only available in Japan (only selected or most recent issues are available abroad), a further and longer field trip will have to be done in the future.
10 Women’s magazines attempt to fulfill various needs of its readers, including consumer advice, help in personal matters, and general information. The editorial section of women’s magazines tends to cover the topics of fashion, cosmetics, jewelry, food, diets, travel/ vacation, sexuality, health and fitness, employment/ work, and lifestyle/ trends. These topics appear among the most diverse journalistic genres, such as reports, interviews, help columns, services, and letters to the editor. However advertisements and advetorials are also extremely significant factors due to their high occurrence and
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thus also have to be included in a thorough analysis.

Advertorials are the 'infomercials' of the print media. They are make-believe articles presented in the style of an article, even though they are purely advertisements.

Because I was unable to guess the age of four of the people in this group (mainly because the head of the person in the picture was not shown), only 329 cases are used for the statistical analyses. If a person in a picture in an article/ad/advertorial/ letter to the article appeared several times, e.g. fashion articles often do this, then this person was counted only once throughout.

These variables are:

a) Western versus Japanese clothing (93.2 percent of the persons wear Western clothing, 6.8 percent wear Japanese clothing)

b) Gaze (this is a term that was deemed very important by Erving Goffman in his study on Gender Advertisements (1976) in which he analyzed gender role distinctions and gender role stereotyping.)

c) Type of clothing: the categories formed are 'long skirt', 'normal skirt', 'mini skirt', and 'pants'. Pants are taken to symbolize a woman's liberty, as she is given liberty and freedom of movement compared to the restricting clothing of a skirt. Therefore, this category was set up to measure the impact of the feminist movement onto the magazine Croissant. The frequency distribution shows a fairly equal distribution: 47.1 percent wear pants, 52.1 percent wear some kind of skirt.

d) Style of clothing: In a range of categories of 'uniform', 'conservative', 'elegant', 'casual', 'fashionable/modern', 'very fashionable', and 'sportive/exercise', conservative, old-fashioned clothes account for the highest frequency, making up 37.7 percent of the total.

e) Smiling: Almost twice as many persons smile than not smile. A total of 204 persons, meaning 62 percent were coded smiling, versus 38 percent (125) cases of non-smiling.

f) Body size: The categories range from 'pregnant', over 'very big' to 'very thin'.

The youngest person coded is a little girl, four years of age, and the oldest person is a woman of age 79. The difficulty with this variable is that most of the time, the age of the depicted person had to be guessed. Only in some articles is the person's age revealed, and of course in advertisement, one never learns the age of the model. This contributes to a certain level of uncertainty about the correctness of this data, as I often had to rely on my own subjective judgement about a persons' ages.

Sometimes I could not tell, if the depicted person or model was of mixed or other Asian ethnicity. I coded these cases (3.3 percent of the cases) "ambiguous." This makes this demographic variable to a certain degree based on subjective judgement. The popularity of so-called halfs, meaning half Japanese and half another ethnicity, makes it over the years increasingly hard to distinguish between these categories clearly.

No occurrences of transgenderism (androgynous presentation of gender, where men or women incorporate elements of both masculinity and femininity into their appearance), transsexualism (men or women who live as members of the other sex), cross-dressers/transvestites (men wearing women's clothes) or butches (homosexual women dressing in masculine attire) could be observed.

Nonetheless, some issues show a high occurrence of visual images: e.g. in the March 1978 issue, the January 10, 1981 issue, and the March 10, 1982 issue.

I left out the four cases in which I could not determine the age of the depicted person.

Always limited to the sample drawn from only body image-related material from Croissant.

Below, for convenience, the magazine categories letters to the editor will be subsumed under the categories 'article' and 'advertisement' respectively.

Even though Goffman's study analyzes Western, American advertisements, his findings are acknowledged to be valid for describing general, global trends of advertising strategies in the late 1960s and 1970s.

Time does not show a linear relationship. In 1979/80, people were more likely to be dressed than in the other years.

See also Bush and London (1965) for an analysis in the field of the sociology of fashion regarding the correlation of restricting social roles with restricting fashions.

The analysis here has its shortcomings, because the sexuality related articles/ads are only selected from the already limited pool of body image-related articles. There are several articles that I did not code for body image, but are specifically about sexuality. This again shows that a more advanced, expanded
data-pool will help to strengthen the argument in my future research continuation.

25 1982 is also the year in which the feminist magazine *Onna Eros* went out of business. See Andrea Germer's article in this book.

26 The Japanese language consists of two writing systems: *kanji* and *kana*. *Kanji* are Chinese characters, *kana* are the syllabic writing system. Two set of *kana* are used: *hiragana* and *katakana*, with *katakana* as the non-cursive form that is typically used for loanwords form foreign languages.

27 Condoms are still the most common contraception device.

28 To support this, a substantive quantitative analysis for the time from 1987 to the present will have to be done.

29 For example blue-collar women do not appear in Iwao's book.

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Schmidt.