Sex Differences in the Contributions of Appearance-Related Messages to Body Esteem and Perceptions of Thinness

Past research has indicated that satisfaction with one’s body shape is negatively correlated with mass media influence and appearance-related feedback from family and peers. The present research investigated sex differences in the contributions of those sociocultural factors to body esteem and perceptions of thinness. One hundred sixty-six women and 113 men completed questionnaires measuring body esteem, perceptions of current body shape compared to perceptions of desired and perceived ideal body shapes, extent of susceptibility to mass media model influence, frequency of teasing from family and peers, and frequency of body-related discussions with peers. Correlations among these variables indicated sex differences, and reinforced the importance of sociocultural influences on perceptions of the body for both men and women.

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The occurrence of low body esteem seems to have increased over the past 20 years (Rieves & Cash, 1996). Low body esteem can lead to excessive dieting and exercise, which in turn can lead to chronic weight problems, growth disturbances, and eating disorders (Davis, Kennedy, Ravelski, & Dionne, 1994; Pugliese, Lifshitz, Grad, Fort, & Marks-Katz, 1983). In fact, as the prevalence of eating disorders is on the rise (Nagel & Jones, 1992), the “ideal” body portrayed in the media has been getting thinner (Wiseman, Gray, Mosimann, & Ahrens, 1992). Because of these patterns, researchers have been actively investigating factors that may contribute to low body esteem.

Most of the studies regarding body esteem and body image only include women as participants. One reason for the wide exclusion of men is that women usually have lower body esteem than do men (e.g., Grogan, Williams, & Conner, 1996; Miller et al., 2000) and perceive their own body shape as more dissimilar to their desired body shape than do men (McKinley, 1998; Silberstein, Striegel-Moore, Timko, & Rodin, 1988). Additionally, women outnumber men when it comes to eating disorders by a ratio of 10 to 1 (Crisp, 1980). For women in the United States, thinness has become almost synonymous with beauty (Thompson, 1990). Furthermore, women are more popular candidates for body esteem research than are men because researchers believe that women experience greater societal pressures to be a particular size and shape, which is believed to affect their body esteem negatively (Delaney, O’Keefe, & Skene, 1997; Ogletree, Williams, Raffeld, Mason, & Fricke, 1990; Rothblum, 1990; Silverstein, Perdue, Peterson, & Kelly, 1986).

Sociocultural factors are thought to be the strongest influences on the development of low body esteem (Thompson, 1992). Researchers have been investigating the influence of the mass media as a...
sociocultural factor that contributes to low body esteem. Societal messages portrayed in the mass media help to define physical attractiveness and unattractiveness for the general public (Cash & Pruzinsky, 1990). However, these societal messages often portray an ideal that is unachievable (Fallon, 1990). Research has shown that individuals compare their own bodies to mass media models (Grogan et al., 1996). Sixty percent of girls regularly read at least one magazine that they consider to be an important source for information about ideal shape, diet, fitness, and beauty (Levine, Smolak, & Hayden, 1994). In addition, 22% of girls who regularly read magazines report high interest in imitating the fashion models (Levine et al., 1994). Researchers posit that the mass media restricts the range of physical beauty, promotes slenderness as the ideal for beauty and fitness, promotes slenderness as the path to social, sexual, and occupational success, and portrays fat as negative (Levine & Smolak, 1996). In a recent study, women viewed photographs of “ideal” (i.e., slender, attractive) female models to determine if viewing the photographs had an effect on their self-evaluations (Henderson-King & Henderson-King, 1997). Results indicated that after viewing the models in the photographs, thinner women evaluated their sexual attractiveness more positively, whereas heavier women evaluated their attractiveness more negatively, particularly when their body shape was more dissimilar to the “ideal” body shape. Additional research indicated that women who viewed fashion magazines containing images of the thin ideal body immediately felt less satisfied with their own bodies and desired to be more thin, than did women who viewed newspapers (Turner, Hamilton, Jacobs, Angood, & Dwyer, 1997). Similar research has shown that women who view magazines that contain more images of the thin ideal body are more dissatisfied with their current bodies (Stice, Schupak-Neuberg, Shaw, & Stein, 1994). Other factors that contribute to low body esteem among women are teasing about weight or body shape and other appearance-related feedback from family and friends (e.g., Levine et al., 1994). Negative appearance-related comments from family and friends are thought to be internalized and thus to relate to negative perceptions of one’s body. Appearance-related criticism as recalled during childhood is significantly related to increased dysfunctional body image in adulthood for women (Rieves & Cash, 1996). Women most often identified “peers in general” as the critics (62%) followed by friends (47%) and brothers (41%). In a similar study, researchers investigated three sociocultural influences—parents, peers, and magazines—as possible factors associated with girls’ body satisfaction (Levine et al., 1994). Results showed that direct parental pressure from mother and father to be thin correlated positively with weight concerns and dieting behaviors. Additionally, criticism from family members about weight or shape, body-related discussions with peers, and susceptibility to magazine model influence significantly contributed to body dissatisfaction and dieting behaviors. Results indicated that 42% of the girls reported talking with their friends about weight, shape, and dieting at least sometimes. In fact, some researchers suggest that peers may have greater influence on body esteem than mass media models, perhaps because verbal feedback from peers has a more direct impact than viewing mass media models (e.g., Cash, Cash, & Butters, 1983). Thus, exposure to appearance-related feedback from family members and peers and susceptibility to mass media model influence appear to play significant roles in the development of girls’ and women’s body esteem.

Although researchers have had empirical support for focusing on women, new findings suggest that men should also be included in studies on body esteem and body image. The prevalence of anabolic steroid use suggests that men are also dissatisfied with their bodies. One out of 15 male high school seniors report taking anabolic steroids, and 27% of those young men report taking steroids to improve their physical appearance (Fackelmann, 1988). Additionally, the 1999 “Monitoring the Future” study by the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) indicated that anabolic steroid use among young men has increased from 1.8% in 1991 to 2.7% in 1999 (NIDA, 2000). Grogan et al. (1996) claimed that men should also be included in studies on body esteem because Western attitudes about the male body are changing, and men are becoming increasingly concerned with body image. Whereas thinness appears to be vogue for women, men appear to be concerned with being too thin (i.e., “scrawny”). For instance, one study indicated that whereas 35% of men desired to be thinner, 43% desired to be heavier (Silverstein et al., 1988). Although recent trends indicate that men increasingly have body image concerns, some researchers posit that men’s body esteem would not be affected by portrayals of idealized male bodies because men are less likely to make appearance comparisons (Heinberg & Thompson, 1992).

In order to develop and strengthen the emerging evidence that men also experience body image concerns, some recent studies have included men in their samples. For instance, Grogan et al. (1996) examined the effects of viewing same-sex photographic models on women’s and men’s body esteem. In this
study, two groups viewed one of two types of photographs: attractive models or landscapes. The female models were thin and well proportioned, whereas the male models were well toned and muscular. The participants also completed a body esteem scale before and after viewing the photographs. Body esteem scores before viewing the photographs revealed that women, on average, had lower body esteem than men. However, after viewing the attractive models, all participants demonstrated a significant decrease in body esteem. In other words, this study demonstrated that both women’s and men’s body esteem is affected similarly by viewing attractive models. Subsequently, as Grogan et al. also point out, these findings do not support Heinberg & Thompson’s (1992) notion that men’s body esteem would not be negatively affected by exposure to mass media models. Grogan et al. offer one study to the body esteem literature on men, and it only focuses on the influence of mass media models. The subsequent step is to further examine men’s body image concerns by investigating the contributions of multiple sociocultural factors to men’s body esteem.

The purpose of the present study was to extend previous research on body esteem by further investigating sex differences in body esteem and their relation to susceptibility to mass media models and appearance-related feedback from family and peers. Past research has shown that when considering body esteem alone women tend to have lower body esteem than men (e.g., Grogan et al., 1996). Thus, a prediction of the current study is that women’s body esteem will be lower on average than men’s. In addition, past research has shown that women’s body esteem is negatively affected when women are exposed to mass media models or to body-related criticism from family and peers (e.g., Levine et al., 1994; Stice et al., 1994; Turner et al., 1997), and that men’s body esteem is negatively affected when men are exposed to mass media models (Grogan et al., 1996). Recent findings have also indicated that men are increasingly concerned about their bodies and that men’s and women’s body esteem is similarly affected by exposure to mass media models (Grogan et al., 1996). Thus, another prediction of this study is that a high susceptibility to mass media models, as well as a high rate of appearance-related feedback from family and peers, will be similarly associated with lower body esteem for both men and women. Additionally, a high influence of sociocultural factors is predicted to be associated with both men and women similarly perceiving their own body shape as more dissimilar to their desired and perceived societal ideal body shapes.

Method

Participants

Participants for this study were 279 students enrolled in introductory psychology courses at a mid sized midwestern commuter campus. The sample consisted of 166 women and 113 men with a mean age of 22.6 years (range: 17 to 48 years, SD = 6.85). The sample was predominantly Caucasian (88.1%), with 5.4% African Americans, 2.9% Hispanic Americans, 2.2% multiracial, 1.0% Asian Americans, and 0.3% Native Americans. The researchers recruited participants through posted sign-up sheets that indicated the topic under investigation, the procedure to be used, and possible risks of completing the project. The researchers treated the participants in accordance with APA guidelines for ethical treatment of human participants (APA, 1992).

Measures

For the purposes of this study, the researchers created a Sociocultural Factors Questionnaire. Although most items were adapted from subscale items created by Levine et al. (1994), the researchers added new items in order to obtain specific information regarding physical fitness, same-sex versus opposite-sex peer teasing and dieting, and childhood versus current appearance-related feedback. The original subscales by Levine et al. were Peer Diet (3 items), Peer Teasing (1 item), Family Teasing (5 items), Magazine Information (7 items), and Model (8 items). The final measure contained 42 items, which assessed (a) the extent to which appearance-related mass media messages influence participants’ notions about body image, (b) the extent to which participants receive appearance-related compliments or criticism from family and peers, and (c) the extent to which participants’ peers express body image concerns. Because new items were added to preexisting subscales, the researchers completed a new factor analysis. This exploratory factor analysis supported the existence of three distinct factors among 31 items that demonstrated acceptable internal consistency: Mass Media Susceptibility (α = .85), Family and Peer Teasing (α = .84), and Peers with Body Concerns (α = .73). Appendix A displays those items within each factor. Depending on the nature of the item, the participant chooses how many individuals he or she knows who fit the question asked (from 1 = none to 5 = all), how often the item occurs (from 1 = never to 5 = all the time), or how much he or she agrees with the item (from 1 = disagree to 5 = agree). Higher scores on each subscale reflect a greater susceptibility to mass media model influence, more appearance-related teasing from family and peers, and a higher frequency of...
exposure to discussions with peers about body concerns, respectively.

The researchers administered the Body Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults (Mendelson, White, & Mendelson, 1997) to obtain individuals’ perceptions and feelings about their bodies. The questionnaire contains 20 items, which Mendelson et al. (1997) found to have strong test–retest reliability and convergent validity. Examples of those items are “I’m happy about the way I look” and “I think about ways to change my weight.” Participants choose how often they feel the way the item describes (from 1 = never to 5 = all the time). Three of the original 20 items were dropped in the present study to maximize internal consistency. One average score was utilized from the remaining 17 items. The scale’s internal consistency, as measured by the alpha coefficient, was .95. Higher scores reflect more positive feelings about one’s body, or in other words, higher body esteem.

For the purposes of this study, the researchers created a Body Shape Questionnaire to assess pictorially individuals’ body shape perceptions in terms of thinness and roundness (see Appendix B). The researchers selected the male and female figure drawings from a larger continuum of figure drawings as presented by Stunkard, Sorensen, and Schulsinger (1983). Participants selected from a series of five figure drawings differing in thinness: (a) their perceived current body shape, (b) their desired body shape, and (c) the body shape they believe the media, family, and friends expect them to have (i.e., perceived ideal body shape). The actual number of the figure chosen for each item was retained as the score for that item, and thus could range from 1 to 5. A higher score reflects that the participant selected a thinner figure, whereas a lower score reflects that the participant selected a rounder figure. In order to assess the extent to which participants’ desired and perceived ideal body shapes differed from their current body shape, two difference scores were created (c.f. McKinley, 1998; Silberstein et al., 1988). These scores were calculated by subtracting the participants’ own perceived current body shape figure from their desired body shape figure and their perceived current body shape figure from their perceived ideal body shape figure. The absolute values of the resulting numbers were then obtained so that discrepancies in one direction of desiring to be thinner did not cancel out discrepancies in the other direction of desiring to be rounder (c.f. Silberstein et al., 1988). The absolute values reflect the degree, or amount, of body change desired. Therefore, larger absolute values reflect greater desired body change, whereas smaller absolute values reflect less desired body change. The following analyses only utilize the absolute values of the two discrepancy scores.

**Procedure**

Participants completed the packet of questionnaires in groups of 10 to 30 individuals. The researcher informed the participants that the study concerned how individuals feel and think about their bodies, how individuals feel about and perceive mass media models, and how often family and friends provided appearance-related comments. The researcher distributed blank envelopes containing the above three questionnaires, presented in random order. When the packets were completed, the researcher instructed the participants to put all materials back into the envelope, close the envelope, and turn it in. Thus, participants’ responses were anonymous. Sessions lasted approximately 45 min.

**Results**

**Sex Differences in Mean Body Esteem and Body Shape Discrepancy Scores**

A t test for independent samples was performed on men’s and women’s body esteem scores in order to determine the existence of sex differences. The test indicated a significant difference between the body esteem means for men (M = 3.99, SD = .64) versus women (M = 2.91, SD = .85), t(273) = 4.99, p < .001. In addition, t tests for independent samples were completed for both body shape discrepancy scores. The test for the absolute value of the desired-current discrepancy indicated no significant difference between the means of men (M = .57, SD = .58) versus women (M = .67, SD = .63), t(279) = −1.38, p > .05. Likewise, for the absolute value of the perceived ideal-current discrepancy, the test also indicated no significant difference between the means of men (M = .77, SD = .63) versus women (M = .84, SD = .77), t(279) = −.78, p > .05. Therefore, men and women report requiring a similar amount of body change to match their desired and perceived ideal body shapes.

**The Contributions of Sociocultural Factors to Body Esteem and Perceptions of Thinness by Sex**

Correlations between body esteem and the sociocultural factors were investigated separately for men and women. Both men’s and women’s body esteem was found to be significantly negatively correlated with susceptibility to mass media model influence, appearance-related teasing, and exposure to discussions with peers about body concerns (see Table 1 for correlations by sex). Although both sets of correlations for men and women were significant and in the same direction, Fisher’s r to z transformations.
(Daniel, 1995) were utilized to determine if their magnitudes differed significantly. A significant sex difference was found between body esteem and susceptibility to mass media model influence, \( z = -3.29, p < .05 \). However, no sex differences were indicated between body esteem and appearance-related teasing, \( z = -1.26, p > .05 \), or between body esteem and exposure to discussions with peers about body concerns, \( z = -1.76, p > .05 \). Thus, the current findings indicated that appearance-related teasing and exposure to discussions with peers about body concerns similarly affect men’s and women’s body esteem. However, the findings did indicate that women’s body esteem is related more strongly to susceptibility to mass media model influence than is men’s body esteem.

In order to examine whether the relations between the sociocultural factors considered and the absolute values of the two body shape discrepancy scores differed for men versus women, zero-order correlations among the two body shape discrepancy scores and the three sociocultural factors were conducted separately for men and women (see Table 1 for the correlations by sex). The analysis yielded only two pairs of correlations indicating that men and women might be similarly affected—those correlations between appearance-related teasing from family and peers and the absolute value of the desired-current discrepancy (for men, \( r[111] = .23, p < .05 \); for women, \( r[165] = .42, p < .001 \)) and the absolute value of the perceived ideal-current discrepancy (for men, \( r[109] = .31, p < .05 \); for women, \( r[165] = .37, p < .001 \)). Thus, the higher degree of teasing men and women experience, the greater amount of body shape change necessary to match their desired and perceived ideal body shapes. Although these four correlations for men and women were statistically significant and in the same direction, Fisher’s \( r \) to \( z \) transformations (Daniel, 1995) were again utilized to determine significant differences among the magnitudes. A significant sex difference was indicated for the relation between appearance-related teasing and the absolute value of the desired-current discrepancy, \( z = -2.22, p < .05 \). Thus, the magnitude of the relation for women is stronger than for men. However, no sex difference was indicated for the relation between appearance-related teasing and the absolute value of the perceived ideal-current discrepancy, \( z = -0.70, p > .05 \), indicating that the perceived ideal-current discrepancy scores of both sexes were affected similarly by appearance-related teasing. All other correlations for men and women indicated that women’s discrepancy scores were affected by the three sociocultural factors, whereas the men’s discrepancy scores were not. This sex difference was revealed by the non-significant correlations for men and the significant correlations for women. Therefore, a greater extent of susceptibility to mass media model influence and exposure to discussions with peers about body concerns was related to women needing a greater amount of body change to match their desired and perceived ideal body shapes. However, higher levels of the same sociocultural influences were not related in a similar way for men.

**Discussion**

The present study attempted to replicate and extend previous research findings by investigating the impact of multiple sociocultural factors simulta-
neously on men’s and women’s body esteem and on perceptions of current body thinness versus perceptions of desired and perceived ideal body thinness. First, we predicted that women’s body esteem would be lower on average than men’s body esteem. This hypothesis was affirmed as the current analysis indicated that women’s body esteem was, in fact, lower on average than men’s. These present results concerning sex and body esteem replicated past research (Grogan et al., 1996; Miller et al., 2000). Although men are becoming increasingly concerned with their body image, as shown by increases in anabolic steroid use (NIDA, 2000) and by recent research portraying negative effects on men’s body esteem due to viewing attractive models (Grogan et al., 1996), men continue to score higher, on average, on measures of body satisfaction. However, although a sex difference existed for overall body esteem, no sex differences were found among the absolute values of the body shape discrepancy scores. Because men desire a similar amount of body change with respect to perceptions of thinness as do women in order to match their desired and perceived ideal body shapes, the notion that men have increasing body image concerns was reinforced. Men desire to change their bodies just as much as women, but men do not report as low a body esteem as do women. This result can probably be explained by the notion that societal pressures on women to be a particular size and shape are still more pronounced than those pressures on men (Rothblum, 1990), and that women feel more pressure to conform to those societal ideals (Ogletree et al., 1990). Therefore, when a woman believes her body shape does not conform to her desired or perceived ideal body shapes, she is likely to feel more dissatisfied with her body than would a man who has the same beliefs. Furthermore, there may be a wider range of acceptable body shapes for men, which may enable them to feel more satisfied with their bodies even when their current body shape does not match their desired or perceived ideal body shapes.

Second, the researchers hypothesized that a high susceptibility to mass media model influence and a high rate of appearance-related feedback from family and peers would be similarly associated with lower body esteem for both men and women. The current results affirmed this hypothesis, as lower body esteem was associated with higher levels of susceptibility to mass media models, exposure to discussions with peers about body concerns, and appearance-related teasing from family and peers for both men and women. These results are consistent with past research that has indicated that women report lower body esteem when they also report higher levels of susceptibility or exposure to sociocultural influences (Henderson-King & Henderson-King, 1997; Levine et al., 1994; Rieves & Cash, 1996; Stice et al., 1994; Turner et al., 1997) and that men report lower body esteem after exposure to attractive models (Grogan et al., 1996). Thus, there is strong evidence supporting the proposition that sociocultural factors play a significant role in individuals’ perceptions and feelings about their bodies. It appears that individuals are internalizing the criticisms and other negative appearance-related feedback from close family members and friends, as well as mass media messages about the ideal body shape. Although all three sociocultural factors negatively affected both men’s and women’s body esteem, women’s body esteem was more strongly related to susceptibility to mass media model influence. This result is consistent with the notion that women face more societal pressures to be thin (Ogletree et al., 1990). However, this finding is inconsistent with past findings indicating that men’s and women’s body esteem is affected similarly by portrayals of ideal body shapes (Grogan et al., 1996), as the present findings indicated that women were affected more profoundly than men. However, men’s and women’s body esteem was affected similarly by appearance-related teasing by family and friends and by exposure to discussions with peers about body concerns. Although low body esteem may not appear on the surface to be a problematic issue for men, their body esteem is significantly affected by these sociocultural influences that idealize a thin body. Although Heinberg & Thompson (1992) suggested that men’s body esteem would not be negatively affected by exposure to body-related sociocultural influences, the present results indicated that men’s body esteem was inversely related to all three sociocultural factors. With respect to exposure to peers discussing body concerns and appearance-related teasing, the notion that men’s body esteem is affected similarly to women’s body esteem by sociocultural factors was replicated in the present study. These body image concerns of men may play a significant role in the recent increase of anabolic steroid use among men (Fackelmann, 1988; NIDA, 2000). Men also appear to have body image concerns and should be included in future studies on body esteem and body image.

Lastly, to further extend the findings of past research, this study also investigated sociocultural influences of discrepancies between men’s and women’s perceptions of current body thinness versus perceptions of desired body thinness and the body shape they believe most people want them to have in terms of thinness (i.e., perceived ideal body shape). We predicted that a high susceptibility to mass media
model influence and a high rate of appearance-related feedback from family and peers would be associated with both men and women perceiving their own body thinness as more dissimilar to their desired and perceived ideal body shapes. However, the data only partially affirmed this hypothesis; just one set of correlations indicated that men and women were similarly affected. Higher rates of appearance-related teasing from family members and friends was the only sociocultural factor associated with greater discrepancies between both men’s and women’s current body shapes and their desired and perceived ideal body shapes. This finding is consistent with the Cash et al. (1983) notion that appearance-related information from peers has a greater effect on body dissatisfaction than does mass media models. Apparently, the appearance-related criticisms from family members and peers have a very direct and salient impact on one’s internalized perceptions about the body. The remaining correlations among the sociocultural factors and the body shape discrepancy scores indicated the following sex differences: Women’s desired-current discrepancies were more profoundly affected by high rates of appearance-related teasing than were men’s desired-current discrepancies. Furthermore, whereas women’s desired-current and perceived ideal-current discrepancies were significantly related to high rates of exposure to discussions with peers about body concerns and susceptibility to mass media model influence, men’s body shape discrepancies were not. These current findings indicate that women desire changes in body thinness when confronted with exposure to mass media models and body-concerned peers, whereas men do not.

These results suggest that low body esteem and body image concerns remain problematic for women to a greater extent than for men. However, recent research (e.g., Grogan et al., 1996) and the present results also indicate that men have some body image concerns when considered in relation to certain sociocultural influences (i.e., exposure to pictures of “ideal” male bodies, appearance-related teasing). The present findings reinforce the prevalent notion that sociocultural factors strongly affect body esteem and body shape preferences, especially for women. Finally, although women’s body concerns appear to be associated to a greater extent with sociocultural influences, men seem to have increasing concerns about body image and body shape.

The present study is not without limitations. For example, the lack of cultural diversity in the predominantly Caucasian sample made it impossible for the researchers to adequately examine ethnic or racial differences. Ethnic or racial differences should be considered when possible, as some research has indicated that ethnic traditions are important elements of beliefs about body shapes (e.g., Collins, 1991; Mumford, Whitehouse, & Platts, 1991; Rucker & Cash, 1992). Furthermore, additional research might consider body image and body esteem along other dimensions of body shape besides thinness (i.e., physical fitness, muscularity) that may be related to sociocultural factors. Despite these limitations, the present findings replicate past research indicating that women’s body esteem is negatively affected by multiple sociocultural influences and also extend past research by demonstrating that men’s body esteem is also affected by multiple sociocultural influences. Whereas some sex differences exist among the associations of body esteem and body image with sociocultural influences, in some respects men and women are affected similarly, particularly when it comes to the influence of interpersonal factors, such as teasing and exposure to peers’ dissatisfaction with their own bodies. Thus, a better understanding of how individuals view and feel about their physical selves will likely result from studies that include men as well as women.

References


APPENDIX A

Subscales and Items from the Sociocultural Factors Questionnaire

Subscale—Teasing/Criticism From Others ($\alpha = .84$)

1. When you were younger, how often did same-sex peers tease you about being too fat or too thin?
2. When you were younger, how often did same-sex peers tease you about not being muscular and/or physically fit enough?
3. Now in your life, how often do same-sex peers tease you about being too fat or too thin?
4. Now in your life, how often do same-sex peers tease you about not being muscular and/or physically fit enough?
5. When you were younger, how often did opposite-sex peers tease you about being too fat or too thin?
6. When you were younger, how often did opposite-sex peers tease you about not being muscular and/or physically fit enough?
7. Now in your life, how often do opposite-sex peers tease you about being too fat or too thin?
8. Now in your life, how often do opposite-sex peers tease you about not being muscular and/or physically fit enough?
9. How often does your brother (or brothers) tease you about your weight or body shape?
10. How often does your sister (or sisters) tease you about your weight or body shape?
11. How often do you get criticized about your weight or body shape by an adult female family member?
12. How often do you get complimented about your weight or body shape by an adult female family member?
13. How often do you get criticized about your weight or body shape by an adult male family member?
14. How often do you get complimented about your weight or body shape by an adult male family member?

Subscale—Mass Media Influence ($\alpha = .85$)

1. I try to look like some of the models I see by purchasing the products they advertise.
2. If I diet or try to build muscle, I look to the models in magazines for inspiration (e.g., put their pictures on a wall in your room).
3. I compare myself to the models I see.
4. I would like to look like the models I see in magazine and TV ads.
5. I feel bad about my own body after seeing attractive models in magazines and on TV.
6. I am motivated to exercise or work out after seeing attractive models in magazines and on TV.
7. Magazines/TV influence my idea of the perfect body.
8. I think the models in magazines/on TV are confident and happy.
9. I think the models are among the best looking people I have ever seen.
10. When I read a magazine or watch TV, I enjoy looking at the models in the ads.
11. How often do you look at or read magazines?

Subscale—Peers Expressing Body Image Concerns ($\alpha = .73$)

1. Of the same-sex peers you know, how many would like to be thinner?
2. Of the same-sex peers you know, how many would like to be more muscular/physically fit?
3. Of the same-sex peers you know, how many are dieting/trying to lose weight?
4. Of the same-sex peers you know, how many talk about weight, weight loss, and/or building muscle?
5. Of the opposite-sex peers you know, how many would like to be more muscular/physically fit?
6. How often have you changed your appearance to look like an attractive, same-sex peer?
APPENDIX B

Body Shape Questionnaire

DIRECTIONS: This questionnaire asks for your opinions about the way your own body looks in terms of thinness/roundness, and how thin/round you think others think people’s bodies should look. Please answer the questions by looking at the drawings of male and female bodies below, and by circling the number that goes with the body that best shows your opinion (even if not exactly).

Questions 1–3 are for WOMEN ONLY:

1. Which of the female bodies above do you think you look like right now?
   1  2  3  4  5

2. Which of the female bodies above would you like to look like?
   1  2  3  4  5

3. Which of the female bodies above do you think everyone (friends, TV, magazines) wants you to look like?
   1  2  3  4  5

Questions 4–6 are for MEN ONLY:

1. Which of the male bodies above do you think you look like right now?
   1  2  3  4  5

2. Which of the male bodies above would you like to look like?
   1  2  3  4  5

3. Which of the male bodies above do you think everyone (friends, TV, magazines) wants you to look like?
   1  2  3  4  5