

**VISUAL DEPICTIONS OF GENDER
IN PARENTING MAGAZINES**

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by
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VISUAL DEPICTIONS OF GENDER
IN PARENTING MAGAZINES

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And hereby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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DEDICATION

Thank you Mom, Dad, and Liz. You all knew I'd someday "be a scholar."

A special note of gratitude to my mom, who is my sounding board for everything I do:
Thank you for the many hours you spent to help shape this project.

A group of intelligent, inspiring, and generous friends made my graduate education experience all the more enjoyable. I will carry fond memories of Wednesday nights with me always.

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ACADEMIC ABSTRACT

This study examines gender-behavior modeling in the photographs of parenting magazines. This magazine category has been largely ignored in the corpus of research on gender depictions in the media, even though the content may have primary media effects on adult readers and secondary effects on the children under their care in terms of gender behavior expectations. The social acquisition of gender theory asserts that people continue to shape gender attitudes into adulthood and the social learning theory has shown that viewers adopt behaviors modeled in the media. Thus, parenting magazine readers are susceptible to internalizing gender behaviors modeled in photographs. The goal of this study is to understand the scope of visual gender depictions that a reader encounters in the magazines. A quantitative analysis of photographs from the editorial content of *Cookie*, *Family Fun*, *Parenting*, and *Parents* explores whether the behaviors, activities, and attributes of 2,479 characters were linked to gender. The findings revealed that, although boys and girls exhibit slight difference in activities and behavior, the depictions of children tend to be gender egalitarian. In contrast, parenting roles are gender disparate. Fathers are vastly underrepresented, and the magazines resort to conventional definitions of mothering (nurturance, care) and fathering (direction, playfulness) in the photographs. A post hoc qualitative study of fathering depictions reveals that fathers adopt the traditional feminine roles of expressing affection and showing care, but maintain stereotypical male inclinations to be their children's teacher and playmate.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Babies don't come with instruction manuals, so parents must turn to a variety of resources for advice on caring for and raising their children. Family, friends, and doctors serve as reliable primary sources, but secondary sources such as magazines, books and the Internet also play a role in informing caregivers. On the newsstands, parents can find magazines that guide them through all stages of child development, from pregnancy to the teenage years. Judging from the circulation numbers provided by the Audit Bureau of Circulation, parenting magazines are widely read. Three such titles, *Parents*, *Parenting*, and *Family Fun*, are ranked 31, 39, and 40 in the list of top 100 magazine circulations in 2006 (Magazine Publishers of America, 2007). *Parents*, the most popular parenting title, reported a circulation of just over two million and a readership of nearly 15 million.

Because parenting magazines serve as guidebooks on the development of children, one of the many reasons readers turn to the magazines is for cognitive purposes, as defined by the uses and gratifications theory (Blumler & Katz, 1974). That is, the caregivers read the magazines in order to learn parenting skills and become more knowledgeable about children's growth. Indeed, there are many overt lessons parents can learn from these magazines: how to eat healthy during pregnancy, where to find the best educational toys, what qualities to look for in a pediatrician, etc. These are lessons with clearly defined problems and clearly stated suggestions. Other lessons in parenting

magazines are more covert, such as what a normal family looks like and how responsibilities are divided between mothers, fathers and other caregivers. These lessons are not transmitted through a single article or photograph, but rather through the collective experience of the magazine. This study intends to explore one such covert message that might be communicated to readers who routinely consume parenting magazines: gender behaviors and attributes in children and parents.

Understanding how gender is presented in parenting magazines is important when considering the social cognitive theory of gender development and social learning theory (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Bandura, Ross & Ross, 1961). The former theory suggests that adults are still able to change their attitudes about gender roles and expectations, and the latter asserts that parents and the media serve as pervasive models of gender behavior. Thus, if parenting magazines present gender in a certain way, readers might internalize these ideas about gender and pass them on to children. Although this research will not study such effects of parenting magazine content, it will explore the extent to which magazines do or do not prescribe different behaviors and attributes to males and females. A content analysis of the editorial photographs and text of four titles provides insight into how the magazines describe male and female behavior.

The literature on media representations of gender shows improvement in the last half-century in terms of equal representations of males and females. Over time, females have more frequently been shown outside the home and in a greater variety of activities and roles. Males over time have been increasingly depicted in parenting and household responsibilities as well as in decorative roles in advertisements and on magazine covers. Despite the movement toward more egalitarian depictions, however, disparities still exist

between the depicted roles and behaviors of males and females. The polarized construction of gender has been found in children's media, as well, which continues to overrepresent males and show females as being less capable, active and versatile than their male peers. This content analysis aims to contribute to the literature on the representation of gender in magazines by exploring how four parenting magazines present gender behaviors of boys and girls and men and women in the photographs within the editorial content.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In studying gender, many theorists draw a distinction between the terms sex and gender. A person's sex is prescribed by the biological makeup of his or her anatomy and hormones (Lorber & Farrell, 1991; West & Zimmerman, 1991). Gender is a result of one's behavior rather than physiology. Researchers, however, vary in their opinions on what determines sex and gender. Biological essentialists believe that qualities of maleness or femaleness are defined by biology, whereas social constructionists see maleness and femaleness as a result of contrived social realities. Although both perspectives are applied to the determinant of sex and gender, scholars often suggest that biological essentialism dictates sex and social construction shapes gender.

Biological essentialism provides a base for Bem's (1981) three lenses of gender: 1) androcentrism, or male-centeredness, which defines males and male experience as the standard and females and female experience as a deviation of that norm; 2) gender polarization, which posits men and women as fundamentally different from one another; and 3) biological essentialism, which legitimizes the first two lenses by treating them as

biological inevitabilities. The scholar confronts the feminist assumption that if androcentrism and biological essentialism were eliminated, only physiological sex differences would remain; she asserts that discarding these two lenses is not enough to rid the effects of gender polarization, “the ubiquitous organization of social life around the distinction between male and female” (Bem, 1981, 80).

In their development, children in a gender-polarizing society internalize the gender-polarization lens (Bem, 1981). They become gender schematic in adopting behaviors rendered appropriate by cultural definitions of gender and reject behaviors that do not align with their sex. It is here that Bem’s discussion of gender lenses strays from its initial roots in biological essentialism toward the perspective of social construction of reality and gender.

The concept of social construction of reality was born in 1966, when Berger and Luckmann argued that social order is not a biological given or an innate quality for humans. Rather, it is a product of human activity (Bryant & Miron, 2004). Sociality is essential to our specific humanity, and the habitual practices of social interactions become institutionalized and form social realities. The patterns set forth by social habits and institutions aid individuals in the cognition and categorization of the social world (Bryant & Miron, 2004).

Gender is considered one such institution of social reality. Theories on the social construction of gender can be divided into two types: 1) materialistic theories that emphasize how the structural features of a social world confine men and women to distinct pathways in terms of social relations, work, family and sexuality; and 2) discursive theories that emphasize the meanings attached to being male or female that are

assigned in language and culture (Alsop, Fitzsimons & Lennon, 2002). This study, rooted in media and mass communication studies, focuses on the latter category of theory.

Social constructionists look to culture and the language and ideology embedded in the history of that culture as the creators of gender and gender roles (Schwartz, 1994). For Foucault, the discourses of language, images, stories, scientific narratives and cultural products are normative and define appropriate or desired gender behaviors. The discourses, anything that carries meaning, are not reflections of an ordered reality but rather are responsible for ordering reality and are the means by which differences between people are created (Alsop, Fitzsimons & Lennon, 2002). Thus, gender becomes the activity of managing conduct in response to normative attitudes and behaviors appropriate for one's sex (West & Zimmerman, 1991).

In looking at the social construction of gender, Hacking (1999) lists six constructed elements: the idea of gendered humans, the gendered people themselves, words or language, institutions, bodies, and the experience of being female or male. In Erving Goffman's view, these constructions of gender result in a socially scripted dramatization of ideal feminine and masculine traits (Goffman, 1979; West & Zimmerman, 1991). Human cognition facilitates the ability to learn and produce these masculine and feminine scripts. Similarly, Bem (1981) notes that gender polarization first defines mutually exclusive scripts for being male and female and then defines any behavior deviating from these scripts as problematic.

These gender scripts are composed of symbolic forms — fundamental units of meaning expressed through words, gestures and graphics. Together, the symbols shape our action, identity, thoughts and sentiment and, thus, communication is the process of

building and reaffirming culture through symbols (Christians, 2003). This construction of culture and social realities can take place in real life interaction or can be observed indirectly in the media.

Just as the social construction of reality organizes social interactions into cognitively digestible categories, framing in media presents information in a structure that organizes the world and guides the perceptions of reality. As Gamson et al. (1992) suggests, “Frame plays the same role in analyzing media discourse that schema does in cognitive psychology – a central organizing principle that holds together and gives coherence and meaning to a diverse array of symbols” (p. 384).

The act of framing, according to Entman (1993), is “to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (p. 50). As a result of making some aspects of a reality more prominent, frames simultaneously direct attention away from some aspects; these omissions may be just as critical as the inclusions in shaping the audience’s perception of reality.

Theorists use two types of analogies to describe the media frame. The first likens a media frame to the construction frame of a building (Gamson et al., 1992). As such, the analogy emphasizes the structural components of the media frame. Goffman (1974), however, introduced the analogy of the media frame as a picture frame. The boundaries of the frame include the salient features of a reality and leave out other features of that reality. The scholar also argues that frames, or ritualized expressions, are not created by the media but rather draw on the same collection of rituals of all humans in society.

Entman (1993) suggests that framing occurs in four steps of the communication process: 1) the communicators, who make intended or unintended framing judgments based on the schemata that organize their beliefs; 2) the text, which contains frames through the presence or absences of keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, etc., that reinforce clusters of ideas; 3) the receiver, whose conclusions may not align with the text frame or the communicator's frame; and 4) the culture, which is a demonstrable set of common frames in the discourse of the majority in social groups.

Because the four steps of Entman's framing process are interrelated and can communicate with one another, social realities presented in the media are not fixed, but malleable. In terms of gender, this fluidity means that gendering can be seen as a process rather than a role (Alsop, Fitzsimons & Lennon, 2002). When gender is a process and not a role, meaning can be reproduced continuously and negotiated through culture and language, such as the media's verbal and visual messages. Media messages can act as teachers of values and ideologies and can provide images for interpreting the world, whether or not the creators of the messages intended to do so (Gamson et al., 1992).

This idea — that audiences can learn social practices through the viewing of media — was introduced by Bandura, Ross, and Ross's (1961) social learning theory. The researchers found that children internalized and replicated modeled behavior, even when this modeled behavior was in a video as opposed to real life. As a result, they argued that behaviors exhibited in the media are socially learned. As Bussey and Bandura (1999) note, "By drawing on these modeled patterns of thought and behavior, observers can transcend the bounds of their immediate environment." Thus, it seems fair to assume

that repeated observations of a medium such as parenting magazines might have the power to transform thoughts and attitudes.

The occurrence of media effects on a parent has indirect consequences for the child. Bussey and Bandura's (1999) social cognitive theory of gender development asserts that parents and the mass media are important and pervasive models of gender behavior. Thus, a parent's attitudes about gender can be passed on to his or her children. The scholars note that although most gender development theories focus on the childhood years, their theory takes a life-course perspective and asserts that determinants of gender attitudes will span the entire age range. This aspect of the theory tells us that even adults, who have been exposed to decades of gender observations and might have firm expectations or habits regarding gender roles, have the capacity to change their views on gender-appropriate behavior. Thus, it seems reasonable to assume that reading and viewing of parenting magazines might shape readers' perceptions of gender norms and stereotypes.

Because both the social learning theory and the social cognitive theory of gender development believe first that media have an effect on attitudes and behaviors and second that the media is a dominant model of gender norms, the results of this content analysis carry implications for how children develop a sense of gender. Of course, what this content analysis cannot tell us are the effects of the media under examination. It can only tell us the ways in which gender roles and behaviors are framed in the photographs of these magazines.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although most of the studies on gender depictions in the media relate to theory of framing — making certain aspects of a perceived reality salient and omitting others to promote a particular definition of a reality (Entman, 1993)— only a small percentage directly refer to and/or use the theory as a framework. Examples of studies that do cite framing theories analyze women in politics (Bystrom et al., 2001; Carroll, 1999; Fontaine & McGregor, 2002; Winfield & Friedman, 2003) or women in sports (Eastman & Billings, 1999; Hardin et al., 2002; Fink & Kensicki, 2002). Perhaps media coverage on gender roles on the campaign trail and the athletic field are more receptive to a framing analysis because both are, historically speaking, a man’s domain and both include the polarization of winner and loser that mirrors the traditional gender polarization of dominant, aggressive males and submissive, weak females.

Even if framing is not cited, however, studies on media gender depictions tend to analyze what features of maleness and femaleness are made salient (and what features are omitted) and how the emphasis of particular aspects promotes traditional or more egalitarian relations between the genders. In narrowing the examination from the broad topic of gender depictions in the media to depictions of parents’ and children’s gender roles, I hope to provide a basis for understanding how parenting magazines frame gender.

Gender Depictions of Adults

Much of the literature on gender depictions in magazines for adults revolves around the idea of superiority and power. In his 1978 landmark study, *Gender Advertisements*,

Erving Goffman describes how the power functions in male-female interactions are similar to those in parent-child interactions. The implication of this finding is that women have the vulnerability, capability, and innocence of a child, and they rely on men to be their guides. Two benchmark studies in sex-role portrayals in magazines also found women to be depicted as unemployed, as possessing limited purchasing power, and as decorative and idle objects (Belkaoui & Belkaoui, 1972) in addition to being dependent on a man's protection, staying close to home, and serving as a man's sexual object (Courtney & Lockeretz, 1971).

Over time, however, women have been shown in more activities outside the home (Coltrane & Allan, 1994; Ferrante, Haynes & Kingsley, 1988) and as holding a greater variety of occupations (Ferrante et al., 1988). Women and men also begin to appear equally as primary characters in advertisements (Bretl & Cantor, 1988). Whereas females in children's literature were shown to adopt masculine traits but males did not adopt feminine traits, men in magazine advertisements have taken on the qualities that in the past were more associated with women in ads. From the late 50s to the late 70s, depictions of men in working roles decreased while men in non-working roles increased; men in decorative roles doubled in number (Skelly & Lundtrom, 1981; Wolheter & Lammers, 1980). Through the 1980s and 90s, men were increasingly portrayed as sexual objects in the same fashion that women had been (Ingrassia, 1994; Lippert 1997).

Children and Gender

Gender inequality is evident in children's television programming and advertisements. Males and females are often represented at much different frequencies and are shown to possess contrasting behavioral traits. When examining the six favorite television shows of

a group of first- and second-graders, Aubrey and Harrison (2004) found that lead characters were male 70% of the time; 65% of the minor characters were male. Males were also more represented in adventure cartoons (Leaper et al., 2002) and FCC-mandated educational programming (Barner, 1999). The implication of these skewed gender proportions is that the activities of males are seen as important, noteworthy, exciting or entertaining enough to tell through stories, whereas the activities of females are not.

More telling differences are discovered in the dichotomy of males' and females' behavior and personality traits. Barner (1999) noted that in addition to being seen more often on television, boys also tend to exhibit more behaviors per scene, which aligns with the stereotype of the active male and the passive female. The scholar found that boys' behavior centered on making and carrying out plans and seeking attention. Male personality traits included aggressive, active, and dominant. Likewise, other studies found males to be more likely to demonstrate ingenuity (Aubrey & Harrison, 2004); to be the users and victims of aggression (Leaper et al, 2002); and to exhibit action, destruction, agency, control, and competition (Johnson & Young, 2002).

Larson (2001), too, found that male portrayals emphasized competition while female representations featured cooperation. Females were more than three times as likely as males to be placed in a home setting (Larson, 2001). While action and aggression characterized male behavior, females were portrayed as dependant, deferent, and nurturing (Barner, 1999); more likely to show fear, act romantic, and be polite and supportive (Leaper et al., 2002); and more likely to show feelings, nurture others, and be capable only of limited activity (Johnson & Young, 2002).

Gender behaviors on television were not only expressed through the representation of characters but also through the production of the programming or advertisement. Rajecki et al, (1993) found that advertisements targeting males were practical in tone, whereas female-targeted ads had an emotional tone. Chandler and Griffiths (2000) noted that editing techniques in advertisements differ between those targeted at males and females. Ads for boys used shorter scenes (1.23 seconds versus 1.73 seconds) and tended to use fast, abrupt cuts as transitions, whereas ads for girls utilized soft dissolve transitions. Girls were more likely to be framed in a close-up shot. Voiceovers, as well, were found to exaggerated male and female traits (Johnson & Young, 2002). Voices in male-targeted ads were characterized by intense volume and aggression while voices in female-targeted ads tended to be high-pitched and sing-songy. These studies suggest that gendered behavior is not only expressed through overt relations between two or more characters but also through the more covert elements of pace, editing style, and tone.

Although much of the findings in research on gender representations in children's television find differences between male and female representations, there were several studies that found increasing equality between the genders. One scholar found that the number of advertisements aimed at boys versus girls was relatively equal, but the male-targeted ads were repeated more often (Chandler & Griffiths, 2000). Similarly, Larson (2001) noted that although male-targeted advertisements are seen more frequently, there was no significant difference in the number of male and female characters seen within these commercials. Although male characters outnumbered female characters more than 4:1 in adventure cartoons, virtually equal numbers of males and females were represented

in nontraditional adventure series and the ratio of males to females in educational cartoon series was only 3:2 (Leaper et al., 2002). In a qualitative study on gender and feminism in Nickelodeon programming, Banet-Weiser (2004) discusses the strong female characters in shows like *Clarissa Explains It All* and *As Told By Ginger*. The scholar notes that these central female characters are defined by empowerment and agency rather than helplessness and dependency. In addition, Calvert et al. (2003), found that both boys and girls identified with the female central character and heroine of another Nickelodeon program, *The Wild Thornberrys*.

A similar mix of traditional gender stereotypes and more progressive representations is found in children's literature. Comparable to findings in research on children's television, female characters are historically underrepresented in children's books. A content analysis of Caldecott Award-winning books from the late 60s and early 70s revealed that 261 of the pictures included males, while only 23 pictures included females (Weitzman et al., 1972). Another study of Caldecott books found inequalities between the number of males and females in pictures, but the results were not as extreme as the previous study. Females were found in 40% of the pictures (Davis & McDaniel, 1999). The difference between the number of male and female representations is even greater when personified nonhumans are included in the analysis. Several studies noted that if animals are prescribed a gender, it is more than likely to be male (Gooden & Gooden, 2001; Oskamp et al., 1996; Weitzman et al., 1972; and Wharten, 2005).

Depictions of children's gender traits in literature are comparable to those found on children's television programming. Males are characterized as independent and creative (Oskamp et al., 1996) and are rewarded for cleverness, demand independence,

and take on more varied pursuits (Weitzman et al., 1972). In one study, males were seen in 25 roles while females were seen in 14. The female roles were mainly traditional, but also included occupations such as doctors and chefs (Gooden & Gooden, 2001). In general, females were dependent and submissive (Oskamp et al., 1996) and praised for their attractiveness (Weitzman et al., 1972). When females were given power (particularly in fairy tales), they tended to be ugly or evil (Parsons, 2004). Such a relationship sends the message to children that a female voice of authority does not correlate with beauty or good intentions.

Whereas Larson (2001) found that males in TV advertisements were competitive and girls were cooperative, several studies in children's literature noted the pattern of women working independently. Weitzman et al., (1972) found that males were seen as companions working together, but females often worked alone. Parsons (2004), too, found that females in traditional fairy tales rarely worked together, which intensifies their submission and lack of power. From the scholar's perspective, "The lack of feminine collaboration perpetuates patriarchal values by separating women from men and from other women as well" (p. 138). These findings contribute to the message that males have agency to help others and contribute to a community, whereas females are either powerless in helping others or undeserving of receiving help.

Several studies note that even literature described as nonsexist as well as educational television programs contain traditional gender representations. Barner's (1999) study of FCC-mandated educational programming found that males were represented more often and as exhibiting more action. Females tended to receive no

consequences for their actions, which makes them seem invisible and ignored. Diekman and Murnen (2004) assert that:

Nonsexist books succeeded in portraying female characters as adopting the characteristics and roles identified with the masculine gender role, but they did not portray male characters as adopting aspects of the feminine gender role or female characters as shedding the feminine gender role.

Banet-Weiser (2004) discusses how a “cross-over” audience seems to work in favor of boys: boys and girls will watch boys on television, but boys will not watch girls on television. Flerx et al. (1976), characterizes this phenomenon through the gratifications of each gender; a shift toward egalitarianism has contrasting effects for males and females. Females gain greater freedom and self-esteem when relinquishing traditional gender stereotypes. For males, however, moving away from stereotypes means they must relinquish their previously perceived superiority (Flerx et al., 1976). These assertions contribute to the prevailing idea that males (and, as a result, masculine traits) are valued more than females and feminine traits. Hence, the path to gender equality becomes a unidirectional one in which only females must adopt new traits in order to be valued and to enable a more gender egalitarian environment.

Despite the many differences found between males and females in children’s literature, some study results point to progress in terms of representing gender equality. Over time, children’s books were found to be more likely to feature a female as the central character (Oskamp et al., 1996; Turner-Bowker, 1996). Female playtime was shown to increase over a 50-year period, and the largest proportion of non-stereotypical depictions of gender activities was observed in books from the 1970s — most likely an effect of second wave feminism (Jackson & Gee, 2005). Although still underrepresented

in numbers, females were presented as active and capable in elementary curriculum reading books (Wharton, 2005) and were shown dressing up as pilots, ambulance drivers, and scuba divers in notable books published between 1995-1999 (Gooden & Gooden, 2001). Similarly, males were more likely than in previous studies to be seen as dependent, cooperative, and emotional in preschool picture books (Oskamp et al., 1996) and to be shown using household artifacts in Caldecott award books (Crabb & Bielawski, 1994).

As with children's television programming and literature, gender disparities persist in children's magazines. Few studies, however, have examined this type of media for gender depictions. Duncan and Sayaovong (1990) performed a content analysis of the cover and feature photographs in first six issues of *Sports Illustrated Kids*. Males were seen in 62% of the photographs and females were seen in 28% of them. Females were featured in team sports in 5% of the analyzed photos and in individual sports in 25% of the photos. Overall, the scholars found only a few photographs that challenged sport stereotypes. Hardin et al. (2002), found similar results in their study of all editorial photographs within *Sports Illustrated Kids* from 1996 to 1999. Males were seen in 76.3% of the photos. Approximately 58% of the photos displayed active males; 15% showed active females. Females outnumbered males in involvement in aesthetic sports (such as gymnastics and diving) and males dominated strength and team sports. Of the photos that depicted a person in a leadership role, 97% featured men. Cuneen & Sidwell (1998) found, too, that females were more likely to play supporting rather than leading roles. Although this study looked at advertisements in *Sports Illustrated Kids* from 1989-1995

rather than editorial photos, the results were still consistent with the others in terms of gender imbalance. The ratio of male to female depictions was 12:1.

The Gender of Parenting Roles

Images in children's magazines also presented a gender divide in terms of parenting roles. Within the low representation of females in the pages of *Sports Illustrated Kids*, many of the female characters played the role of a mom cheering for, nurturing, and serving children (Cuneen & Sidwell, 1998). When it comes to representing parents in award-winning and bestselling children's books, females are depicted more often (Anderson & Hamilton, 2005). Mothers were seen in 64% of top-selling or award-winning children's books, and children characters mentioned mothers twice as often as they mentioned fathers. Babies were 10 times more likely and children were two times more likely to be cared for by a mother rather than father in the books. Mothers were the disciplinarians while fathers were shown to be unaffectionate and indolent in feeding and caring for babies and talking to children. Men in children's books were seldom seen caring for kids, grocery shopping, or doing chores (Gooden & Gooden, 2001) and displays of male incompetence were most often depicted within the home. Because mothers in these studies were shown to be highly competent in domestic and family settings, children's literature seems to perpetuate traditional gender roles in which women are the authority figures in the home and men are the authority figures outside the home.

Qualitative analyses or commentaries on media such as those by Lippert (1997) and Ingrassia (1994) offer greater distinctions between past and present depictions of fathers than quantitative studies, which reveal little change in the representation of male

family roles over time. As Coltrane and Allan (1994) put it, “The salience of a few men cuddling babies creates the impression that things have changed drastically.” While portrayals of a man changing a diaper or bottle-feeding an infant in advertisements are indeed progressive relative to the pre-1990’s depiction of fathers, fathers in caring and nurturing roles are statistically rare (Coltrane & Allan, 1994). Although these studies show that there are still differences in male and female parenting roles, the trends in these instances indicate that the path to gender equality is a multidirectional one in which both genders (instead of only females) take on new attributes and behaviors to foster more egalitarian roles.

Research has shown that, although men are appearing in family scenes with greater frequency, there is still a clear division in parenting roles. Fathers are depicted as teachers or playmates of their children, and mothers are the caregivers and the nurturers. In a content analysis of network television commercials from 1995, 41% of men with children were depicted as teaching or reading to their child or children while just 14% of women with children were depicted in these activities; 18% of men were shown providing care for their children compared to 35% of women (Kaufman, 1999). A woman’s role as the caregiver is reaffirmed in over-the-counter medicine commercials on prime-time network television (Craig, 1992). In 65% of such commercials, a woman was the primary character. Men and children were often portrayed as needing the advice or assistance of a wife or mother in administering the medicine.

Depictions of women waiting on their husbands and children appear in other circumstances as well, like at the dinner table or in the laundry room (Kaufman, 1999). Men in advertisements are shown as being unqualified when it comes to household and

care-giving duties. In many portrayals, a father can complete a chore only if he follows step-by-step written instructions left by the mother (Greer, 1999). Men in home settings are typically engaged in no contributing role or are portrayed as incompetent or childlike (Goffman, 1976).

This last point — men are depicted like children in advertisements — parallels one made earlier in this review. In *Gender Advertisements*, Goffman clearly recognizes the characterization of woman as child when a female appears with a male in a non-home setting. He does not, however, clearly recognize the counter circumstance. Men are characterized as children in home settings, implying that the woman is the authority voice of that domain. Each gender is, at some point, depicted as passive and incompetent relative to the other.

As the definitions of femaleness transformed over the past several decades in response to the Women's Liberation Movement, the media seemed unsure about how to portray women or what messages resonate with them — especially mothers (Johnston & Swanson, 2003). The result is an overall contradictory message about the role of a woman or a mother. In Johnston and Swanson's textual analysis of women's magazines, four maternal contradictions were identified:

- 1) Mothers are selfish vs. mothers are selfless
- 2) Mothers should foster independence in children vs. mothers should foster dependence in children
- 3) Mothers succeed in the domestic sphere and fail in the public sphere vs. mothers fail in the domestic sphere and succeed in the public sphere
- 4) Mothers are intuitive vs. mothers need expert help

In citing Foucault, the scholars suggest that these double bind statements preserve hegemonic power. Because roles of men are more defined than those of females, male success is more easily evaluated and, thus, easier for society to acknowledge. In terms of parenting roles, however, it might be argued that the roles of fathers are difficult to define because depictions of fathers are relatively absent in the media compared to images of mothers. Very few studies have examined parenting roles as they are presented in parenting magazines, but the studies that do exist tend to focus on this absence of fathers. The main purpose of Barker and Dozier's (1996) study was to determine if the level of exposure to parenting magazines correlates with the cultivation of traditional views of motherhood. First, a content analysis of articles, advertisements, and visual images in parenting magazines found that such magazines manifest traditional and stereotypic images of motherhood. Second, a survey of 396 mothers revealed that exposure to parenting magazines did not correlate with views of traditional motherhood; the research disconfirmed cultivation effects. This study's focus on women illustrates the reality that, although the publications are referred to as parenting magazines, the target and actual readers tend to be mothers instead of fathers. Sunderland (2006) examined three parenting magazines in order to see whether the texts suggested that 'parenting' is synonymous with 'mothering.' After analyzing the language, visuals, voices, gendered stereotypes and gendered discourses, it was clear that fathers are not being fully addressed by these publications.

Only one additional study was found that examined the texts of parenting magazines (Luke, 1994). The analysis of Australian, U.S. and British parenting magazines suggests that the publications reinforce traditional gender values and prepare

parents to reproduce gendered experiences with their own children. Unlike many of the other studies, girls were shown more frequently and in a greater variety of activity than boys. The activities for both male and female depictions, however, were traditionally gendered. Boys were more likely to be outside and were associated with reading, sports and computers. Girls were shown inside and as being interested in fashion and hair. Luke (1994) situates her findings with a nod to framing and the social construction of reality:

“Many women at some point in their life trajectories, will assume the positioning and practices of mothering: the way in which the texts and artifacts of mainstream culture construct motherhood and childhood serve as a powerful normalizing discipline with and against alternative and feminist constructs” (p. 301).

This quote, along with the above discussion about the social acquisition of gender and social learning theories, posits that the media do affect ideals and behaviors on both individual and societal levels. Identifying and analyzing media messages about gender is necessary in order to understand how the media teach people to be male or female.

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

After reviewing the literature on gender depictions in the media, it is clear that stereotypic portrayals of males and females persist. Continuing studies on gender in the media are necessary in order to gauge the progress toward egalitarian gender depictions. Studies of this type have rarely examined parenting magazines, even though the publications might have primary effects on parents and secondary effects on children in terms of learning gender behaviors. The social cognitive theory of gender development asserts that we continue to shape our ideas about gender roles into adulthood (Bussey & Bandura, 1999) and the social learning theory identifies both the media and parents as prominent models of gender behavior (Bandura, Ross & Ross, 1961). Although it does not test for the effects that parenting magazines have on readers' gender attitudes, this study explored how the editorial content of four parenting magazines presents males and females. The analyses focused on the photographs rather than textual depictions of gender because visual images serve as more direct models of a reality. In viewing photographs, readers can instantly situate themselves as a participant in the scene or even envision themselves as the photograph's subject. Although verbal texts can also bring readers into a simulated reality, this modeling is not as immediate as it requires an additional step from the reader to translate the meaning of words into the corresponding physical actions. In addition, magazine readers are more likely to view all the

photographs — if only for a second — than they are to read all of the text. Thus, photographs are more salient models of behavior in parenting magazines. This analysis is guided by the following research questions:

***RQ1:** Do the editorial photographs in these parenting magazines frame boys and girls as having distinct gender behaviors and roles?*

***RQ2:** Do the editorial photographs in these parenting magazines frame mothers and fathers as having gendered parental behaviors and responsibilities?*

Framing occurs when a communication text simultaneously directs attention toward some aspects of reality and directs attention away from other aspects (Entman, 1993). The most obvious frames in the history of media research on gender — the male breadwinner frame and the domestic female frame — resulted from the consistent depiction of men succeeding in the workplace and women excelling in the home and the general absence of reverse depictions. More subtle examples, such as the “unattractive powerful female” frame (Parsons, 2004), have been identified when features of males and females are highlighted or hidden. The following hypotheses, then, draw from previous studies’ findings on what features of maleness and femaleness the media make salient.

Many studies on gender in the media find that males were represented much more frequently than females, which sends the message that the activities and roles of males are more interesting or worth more recognition than those of females. In one study on parenting magazines, however, girls were found more frequently than boys in photographs (Luke, 1994). Analyses of these magazines have also shown that fathers are generally not represented, and the term “parenting” is framed as being synonymous with

“mothering” (Barker & Dozier, 1996; Sunderland, 2006). In general, mothers are shown far more frequently than fathers in all types of media (Anderson & Hamilton, 2005; Cuneen & Sidwell, 1998; and Kaufman, 1999). Due to these findings, the following results are expected:

***H1:** The photographs will contain more girls and mothers than boys and fathers.*

Certain attributes have been linked to gender through prevalent depiction in the media. Females are more likely to be shown as weak, prone to illness, nurturing, and interested in appearances, whereas males are described as independent, active, aggressive, and clever (Aubrey & Harrison, 2004; Barner, 1999; Belkaoui & Belkaoui, 1972; Johnson & Young, 2002; Leaper et al, 2002; Rajecki et al., 1993; and Weitzman et al., 1972;). Based on these findings, it is expected that:

***H2:** Females will be shown more often than males in photos that accompany stories about health, social development, and fashion/lifestyle. Males will be shown more often than females in photos that accompany articles on physical development, education, and play/entertainment.*

***H3:** Males will be more likely than females to be shown engaged in play/recreation and learning activities. Females will be more likely than males to be shown as posed, sitting/standing/lying down, or engaging in communication activities.*

***H4:** Males will be more likely than females to be engaged in high-intensity activity; females will be more likely than males to be engaged in low-intensity activities.*

***H5:** Males will be portrayed more often than females as being in competition with one another; females will be portrayed more often than males as being in cooperation with one another.*

In addition to being depicted with contrasting behaviors and attributes, males and females are often depicted in different environments and as using different sets of tools. Females were more likely than males to be shown in a home setting (Larson, 2001) and as using domestic tools, such as those used to cook, clean and care for children (Crabb & Bielawski, 1994). Males were more often depicted with non-domestic production artifacts. Thus, the following hypotheses were formulated:

***H6:** Females will be more likely than males to be shown indoors at a home setting. Males will be more likely than females to be shown outdoors.*

***H7:** Females will be depicted more often than males with artifacts used in household chores, cooking, and health and hygiene. Males will be depicted more often than females with general tools or tools for play or sport.*

When looking at the interactions between parent and child, several studies have noted differences in the ways media present the responsibilities of mothers and fathers. Fathers are depicted as teachers or playmates of their children and mothers are the caregivers and the nurturers (Craig, 1992; Gooden & Gooden, 2001; Kaufman, 1999).

These findings prompted the following hypothesis:

***H8:** When parents are shown interacting with children, mothers will be more likely than fathers to be expressing affection or caring for a child.*

Fathers will be more likely than mothers to be playing with or instructing/directing a child.

METHODOLOGY

In order to understand how the visual images in these parenting magazines frame gender, a content analysis of the magazines' editorial photographs was performed. Quantitative content analysis is the predominant method used in previous research on gender representation in the media. The method allows researchers of gender in media to study symbols systematically in order to describe the communication and make inferences on its context of consumption (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 2005). This method is particularly important in the current study on gender frames in parenting magazines, as few studies on the topic can be found in the existing literature. Describing the communication messages through content analysis is a necessary step before proceeding with surveys or experimental tests on media effects of gender messages in parenting magazines.

Content analysis does have limitations, however. It can only tell us the extent to which messages are communicated in the media. It cannot tell us what effects these messages have on an audience. If one were to find that parenting magazines depicted boys as active and girls as polite, the researcher cannot state that parents are internalizing these gender messages. Although content analysis is meant to be an objective exploration of media content, researcher bias can arise in the creation of the content categories and definitions (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). To address this concern, this analysis draws content categories from several studies in the existing literature.

Because the goal of this study is to understand the types of visual gender frames parents might regularly encounter in magazines, the content analysis utilizes a purposive

sample of titles: *Cookie*, *Family Fun*, *Parenting*, and *Parents*. These titles were chosen to represent four different publishers (Condé Nast, Disney, The Parent Group, and Meredith, respectively) and a range in editorial focus. The content of *Parents* and *Parenting* focuses mainly on raising children. *Cookie*, a relative newcomer to the parenthood magazine market, is a lifestyle and fashion magazine for parents that also includes parenting advice. *Family Fun* provides tips and ideas for crafts, travel, and games for children and families. According to the Audit Bureau of Circulation statements from June 2007, the circulation rates were 2.2 million for *Parents*, 2.15 million for *Parenting*, 2 million for *Family Fun*, and .5 million for *Cookie*. In addition, *Parents* and *Parenting* boast high pass-along readership rates of 14.9 and 11.2 million. Some parenting magazines readers consume more than one title. The *Parenting* media kit lists a 33.7% duplication rate of readers for *Parents* and *Parenting*. The readers of *Family Fun* duplicated those of both *Parents* and *Parenting* by about 10%. Because many parenting magazine readers consume more than one title, they are regularly exposed to a high number of photographs that model family behavior. As a result, they might be more apt to internalize the gender models, as suggested by the social learning theory.

The researcher used random selection to obtain a magazine sample composed of three issues from 2006 and three issues from 2007 of each of the four titles. The photographs from every editorial page within these 24 issues were submitted to analysis. Exceptions to this are the table of contents pages, which often present the same photographs that accompany the article in later pages. For coding purposes, the unit of analysis was each character within the photographs. This allowed for a comprehensive recording of all events and behaviors in each image, especially for photographs that

contain a mix of male and female characters that are involved in a range of activities and exhibit contrasting attributes. In total, the analyzed photographs contained 2,479 characters. The researcher coded each of these characters for nine variables.

First, the gender and age group of the character was recorded. Maleness or femaleness, for this study, was determined using conventional social constructions of gender, taking cues from qualities such as hair length and clothing in addition to information from photo captions or other text aids. In cases where a character's gender was impossible to ascertain (which mainly occurred when newborns were dressed in gender-neutral clothing), the gender was coded with the value of "unknown" and was not included in the statistical analyses. The three values of male, female, and unknown do not account for a continuum along a male/female scale, but these restrictive definitions of gender were necessary in order to provide clear and replicable standards in the coding protocol. The characters were then assigned to one of five age groups: infant, toddler, child, teen, and adult. The groups of toddlers, children, and teenagers were combined into a single category for some statistical analyses. Second, the character was coded for the topic of the story that the photo accompanies. During the coding process, this variable contained 18 values. For analysis, however, these 18 story topics were grouped under five values: Physical Well-being (*physical growth and development; health and safety of children*), Mental Well-being (*social development; brain development and education*), Recreation and Lifestyle (*play, recreation, and entertainment; fashion, lifestyle, and travel; food; crafts and holiday celebrations*), Family and Parent Issues (*employment and child care; spousal relationships; adult friendships; parent health; family planning; being a parent; finances*), and Other (*editor's letter; parent-submitted tips, stories, and*

photos; NA - cover photos with no clear link to a story). Third, the character was coded for the environment in which they are presented: indoor home setting, indoor non-home setting, indoor indiscernible setting (including obvious studio shots and solid color backgrounds), or outdoors.

Next, the type of activity in which the character is engaged was recorded. Each person was coded as being engaged in or associated with either play/recreation activities, learning activities, work/housework activities, communication activities (talking, listening, thinking, or gesturing) or as at rest (simply sitting, standing, lying down, or sleeping) or deliberately posed (the character recognized that a camera is capturing his or her activity). The latter three values (communication activities or being posed or at rest), for which people tended to be stationary, were grouped for data analysis. The character was then coded for the activity level using a three-value scale ranging from low (limited movement and/or no indication of a task) to moderate (moderate movement and/or taking measures to carry out a task) to high (engaging in strenuous activity, such as playing basketball or shoveling snow). This interval scale should not be confused with the measure of low, moderate and intense athletic exercises. Instead, the three activity levels used for this study are based on the relative intensities of daily-life tasks.

Then, the character was coded for the implements or artifacts he or she was shown to be using. One study of images in children's books found that females were more likely to use domestic tools and males were more likely to use production tools (Crabb & Bielawski, 1994). The types of objects used by characters in these parenting magazines, however, do not fit neatly into these two categories. Because of this, the values for this variable were determined through emergent coding. During the coding

process, any object being manipulated by the character was recorded by name. After all characters and their artifacts had been coded, 15 sub-values were defined and then grouped into 4 values of tools: At Home (*kitchen gadgets, eating implements, indoor household chore tools, and health and hygiene aids*), At Play (*art supplies, books and learning tools, electronic media equipment, toys, and musical instruments*), On the Go (*sporting equipment and transportation devices, such as bikes, boats and cars*), and Other (*carrying devices, general tools, outdoor home chore tools, and other*). Characters who are not actively manipulating a tool or artifact were coded as such.

For characters that appeared in a photo with at least one other person of a similar age (for example, two adults in one photo or several siblings in a scene), peer interaction style was recorded. The character was coded as being either competitive (such as running a race or participating in spelling bee), cooperative (such as helping others with homework or playing on the same athletic team), or neither competitive nor cooperative. For photos presenting at least one parent and at least one child, the adult was coded for parenting style. This variable was adapted from Coltrane and Allan's (1994) study of gender roles in television commercials. The researchers identified two broad parenting categories: Nurturing/Supportive and Playful/ Directive. Both of these categories contained four parenting styles, for a total of eight. In the current study, four of these eight behaviors were used when coding for parenting style: expressing affection, caring for a child, instructing/directing a child, and playing with a child. The first two behaviors fall under Coltrane and Allan's parenting style of Nurturing/Supportive; the latter two fall under the style of Playful/Directive.

The resulting data for these nine variables were submitted to chi-square tests to analyze whether there is an association between gender and behavioral, circumstantial, or activity-related attributes. In order to test the reliability of the data collection, an additional coder was trained in the coding protocol. This second coder analyzed one randomly selected issue of each of the four titles, which yielded a character count of 398 or an approximately 16% subset of the sample. Cohen's *kappa* was calculated to determine the intercoder reliability for each of the nine variables (see Table 1).

Variable	Kappa value
Gender	.869
Age	.896
Article type	.798
Environment	.762
Activity Type	.843
Activity Level	.88
Artifacts	.703
Peer Interaction	.824
Parenting Style	.721
AVERAGE	.811

Values for six of the nine variables fell between .79 and .89. In most research situations, *kappa* values of .80 are acceptable (Neuendorf, 2002; Wimmer & Dominick, 2006) and values between .75 and 1 are considered to show excellent agreement (Fleiss, 1981).

Three variables fell short of this standard: environment (.76), parenting style (.72), and artifacts (.72). Even so, these values are considered to represent good agreement (Fleiss, 1981). The average *kappa* score obtained from the nine variables is at an acceptable value of .81.

CHAPTER THREE

FINDINGS

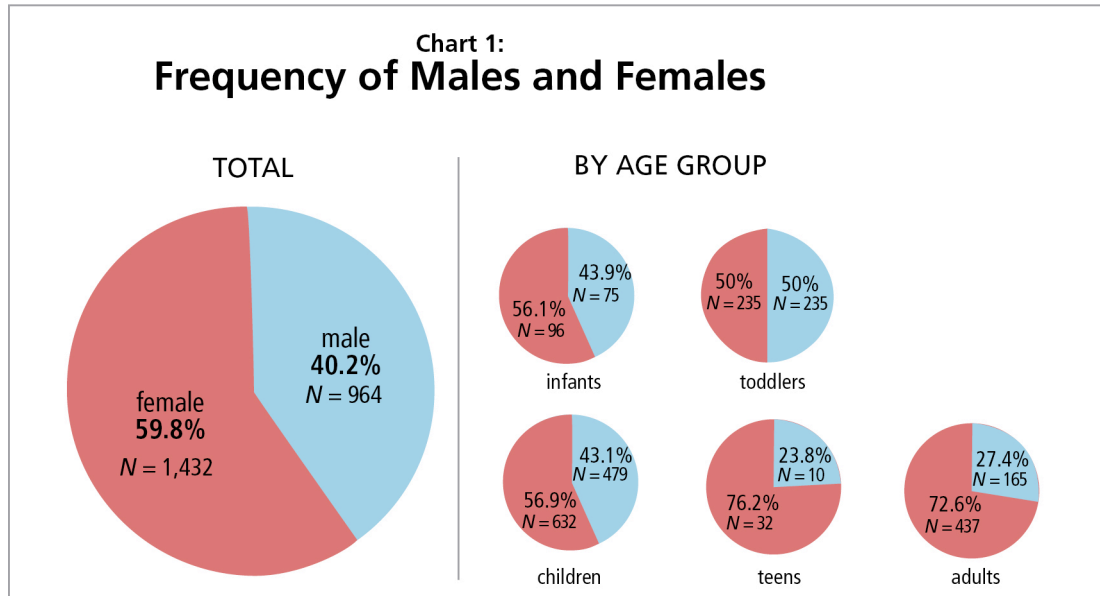
After the 2,396 male and female characters from the editorial photographs in *Cookie*, *Family Fun*, *Parenting*, and *Parents* were coded for these eight variables, the data were submitted to statistical analysis. A one-way chi-square test was used to describe the frequency of males and females within the sample. Chi-square tests of independence using two-way contingency tables were used to analyze whether gender — being male or female — is independent of the values in the other eight variables. Two tests showed statistically significant results at the $p < .01$ level, two tests had p values less than .05, and two tests had p values less than .1. Two tests (those for activity level and environment) were not statistically significant and therefore failed to reject the null hypotheses for H4 and H6. The results supported four of the hypotheses (those for frequency of males and females, parenting style, artifacts, and peer interaction style) but did not support two of the hypotheses (those for article category and activity type). Because the chi-square tests of independence can only tell us whether or not a relationship exists between gender and the other eight variables, Cramer's measure of association, V , was calculated to estimate the strength of these associations. The following guide was used to judge the magnitude of the effect size: .1 = small, .3 = medium, and .5 = large. No results in this study indicated a large effect size. Two tests

(gender with age and parenting style) found a small-to-medium effect size, one test found a small effect size, and three tests found a very small effect size with a V smaller than .1.

Frequency of Male and Female Depictions. As predicted in H1, the photographs in these parenting magazines displayed more females than males (see Chart 1). These statistically significant results, $\chi^2(1, N = 2,396) = 91.41, p < .001$, from a one-way chi-square test showed that females comprised 59.8% ($N = 1,432$) and males comprised 40.2% ($N = 964$) of the total sample. A two-way chi-square test of gender and age revealed a small-to-moderate association between the variables, $\chi^2(4, N = 2,396) = 69.30, p < .001, V = .17$. Although four of the five age groups contained more females than males, this ratio was smaller for the youngest three age groups. For teens and adults, there were approximately three females for every one male. In contrast, the toddler group contained equal numbers of males and females ($N = 235$), and the infant and child age groups exhibited female to male ratios of approximately 6:4.

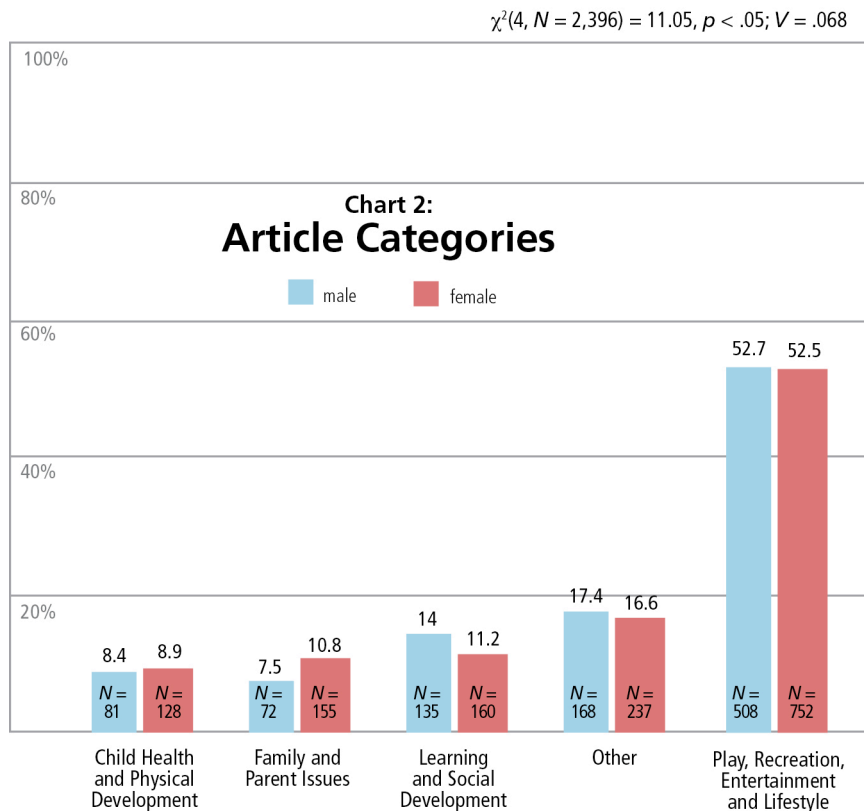
ONE-WAY: $\chi^2(1, N = 2,396) = 91.41, p < .001$

TWO-WAY: $\chi^2(4, N = 2,396) = 69.30, p < .001; V = .17$



Analysis of gender and age by magazine title reveals that *Parenting* presents the greatest difference in the numbers of males (34.1%, $N=191$) and females (58.2%, $N= 326$). The gender division among adults in this title was even more extreme. Mothers comprised 80% ($N = 144$) and fathers comprised 20% ($N=36$) of the adult characters. *Family Fun* presented the least gender disparity of the four titles, but images of mothers (62.8%, $N = 54$) were still much more frequent than images of fathers (37.2%, $N = 32$). More equal numbers of males (42.3%, $N = 245$) and females (57.7%, $N = 334$) were seen in the total sample from *Family Fun*.

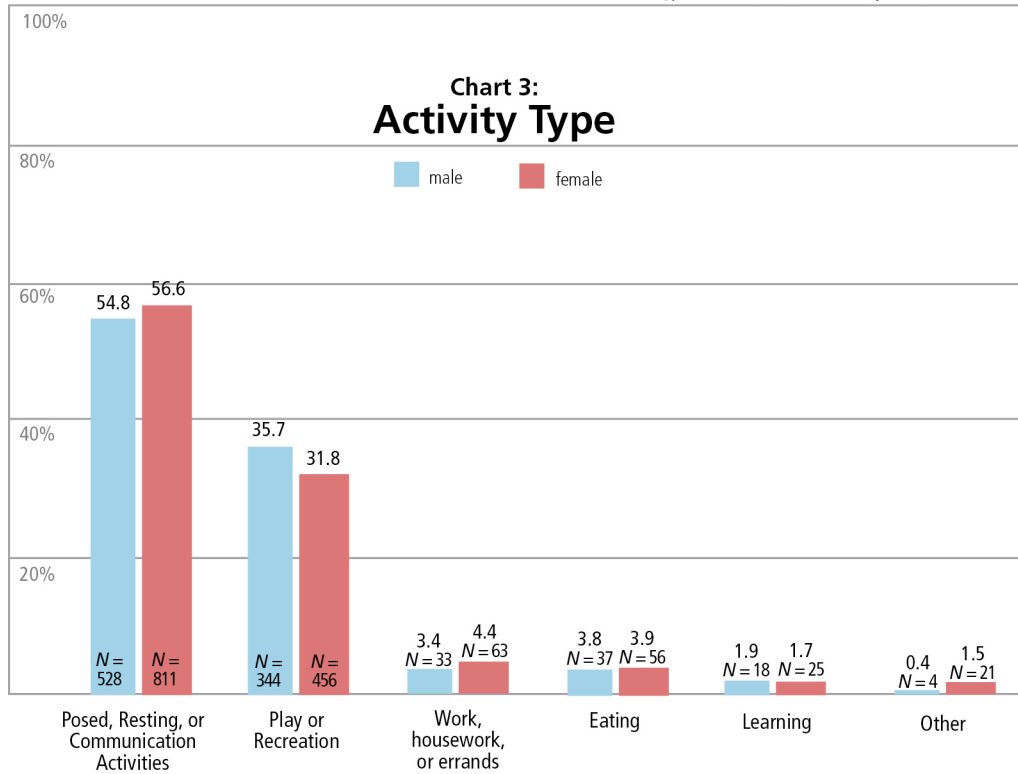
Article Category. The results for gender and article category were statistically significant, $\chi^2(4, N = 2,396) = 11.05, p < .05$, but there was a very small effect size, $V = .068$, in the relationship between these two variables. Indeed, Chart 2 shows that there were no major gender differences in terms of article category.



H2 predicted that females would be more likely than males to be found in photos accompanying stories about health, social development, and fashion, lifestyle, and travel. Contrary to these expectations, nearly equal percentages of all females (7.5%, $N = 108$) and all males (7.1%, $N = 68$) were paired with health stories, and a greater proportion of males (11.7%, $N = 113$) than females (9%, $N = 129$) were seen with articles on social development. In line with predictions, females (29.8%, $N = 427$) were slightly more likely than males (27.2%, $N = 262$) to be depicted with fashion, lifestyle and travel stories. The hypothesis also predicted that males would be more likely than females to accompany stories about physical development, education, and play/recreation. This was only true for the latter category, with which 11.3% ($N = 109$) of males were associated compared to 7.8% ($N = 112$) of females. The percentages of males and females seen with physical development and education stories were extremely similar, differing by only one-tenth of a point. Analysis of gender and article category by age group did not reveal significant results.

Activity Type. Overall, males and females performed the six activity types at similar rates (see Chart 3). Characters were most likely to be posed, at rest (sitting, standing, or lying down), or engaging in communication tasks (54.8%, $N = 527$ of males and 56.6% $N = 811$ of females). Play and recreation activities were also popular. All other activities accounted for about 10% of the total characters. These similarities between males and females were reflected in a very small effect size, $V = .066$, between the variables of gender and activity type. Although the results were statistically significant, $\chi^2(5, N = 2,396) = 10.44, p < .05$, three of the predictions about activity type in H3 were correct, but two of the predictions were not. Thus, H3 is not supported.

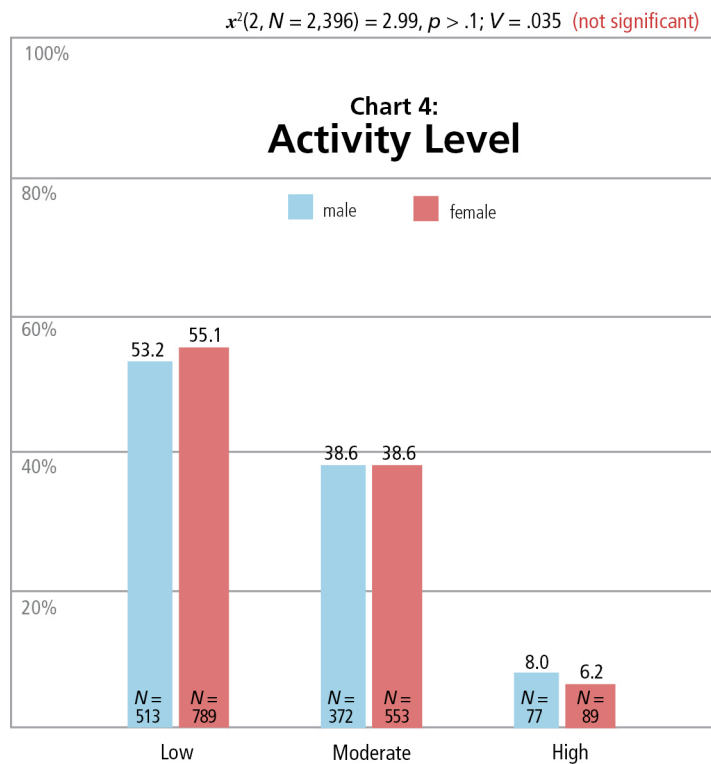
$\chi^2(5, N = 2,396) = 10.44, p < .1; V = .066$



As predicted, male characters (35.7%, $N = 344$) were more likely than female characters (31.8%, $N = 456$) to be engaged in play or recreation activities. Female characters were more likely than male characters to be posed (29.3%, $N = 419$ versus 28.5%, $N = 275$) and sitting, standing or lying down (9.6%, $N = 137$ versus 8%, $N = 77$), but these differences were very slight and much smaller than anticipated. Although the inverse was expected, a slightly higher percentage of males (18.3%, $N = 176$) than females (17.8%, $N = 255$) were engaged in communication activities. There were no gender differences in terms of engagement in learning activities. In fact, very few males (1.9%, $N = 18$) and females (1.7%, $N = 25$) were involved in learning tasks. There were also low numbers of people shown doing work, housework, or errands (3.4%, $N = 33$ of males and 4.4%, $N =$

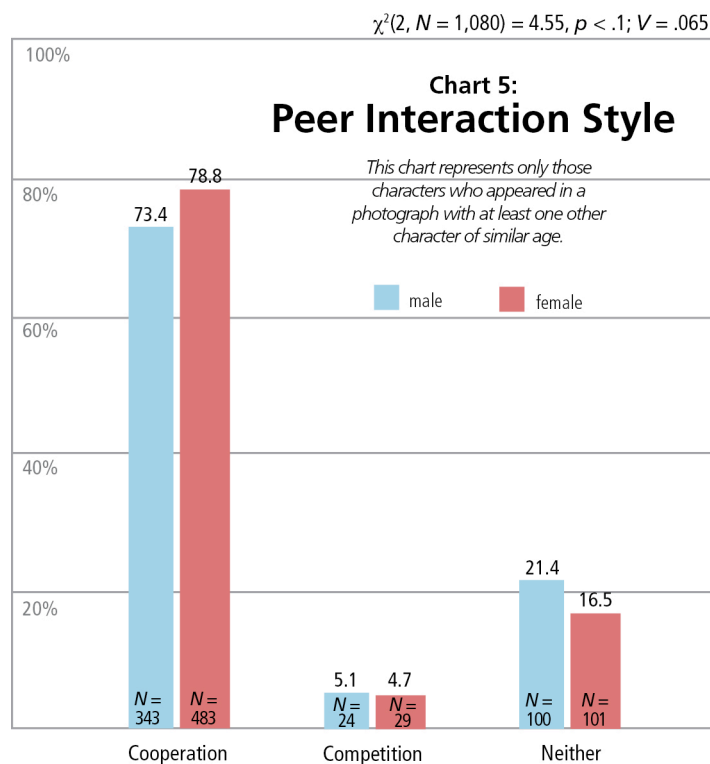
63 of females). Analysis of gender and activity type by age group did not reveal statistically significant results.

Activity Level. H4 predicted that females would be more likely than males to be engaged in low-intensity activities and males would be more likely to be involved in high-intensity activities. Males and females, however, performed very similarly in terms of activity level (see Chart 4). The results for gender and activity level, therefore, failed to reject the null hypothesis because the association was not statistically significant $\chi^2(2, N = 2,396) = 2.99, p > .1$.



Peer Interaction. Approximately 48% of males of 43% of females were shown in a photograph along with at least one other character of a similar age. The following

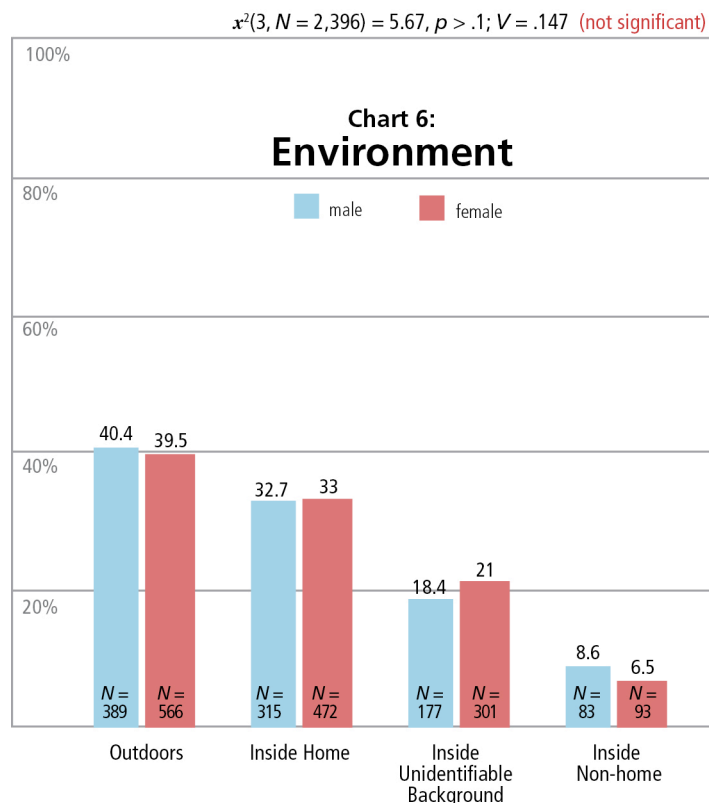
analysis will refer only to these characters. Overall, most peer interactions (adults with adults and non-adults with non-adults) were cooperative in nature (see Chart 5). As predicted in H5, the statistically significant results, $\chi^2(2, N = 1,080) = 4.55, p < .1$, show that females (78.8%, $N = 483$) were more likely than males (73.4%, $N = 343$) to be in cooperation with a peer. A greater percentage of males (5.1%, $N = 24$) than females (4.7%, $N = 29$) were engaged in competitive interactions, but the gender difference was very slight and much smaller than anticipated. Indeed, there was a very small effect size, $V = .065$, in the relationship between gender and peer interaction style.



Although some photographs included at least two characters of a similar age, these characters were not necessarily interacting with one another. This was the case for 21.4%

($N = 101$) of males and 16.5% ($N = 100$) of females. When infants appeared in a photo with one or more non-adult characters, males (81.8%, $N = 18$) were much more likely than females (55.6%, $N = 10$) to exhibit no interaction with them. These results for infants were statistically significant, $\chi^2(2, N = 45) = 12.17, p < .01$, and showed a medium effect size, $V = .285$, in the relationship between gender and peer interaction style. The results for gender and peer interaction style in adults and children were not statistically significant.

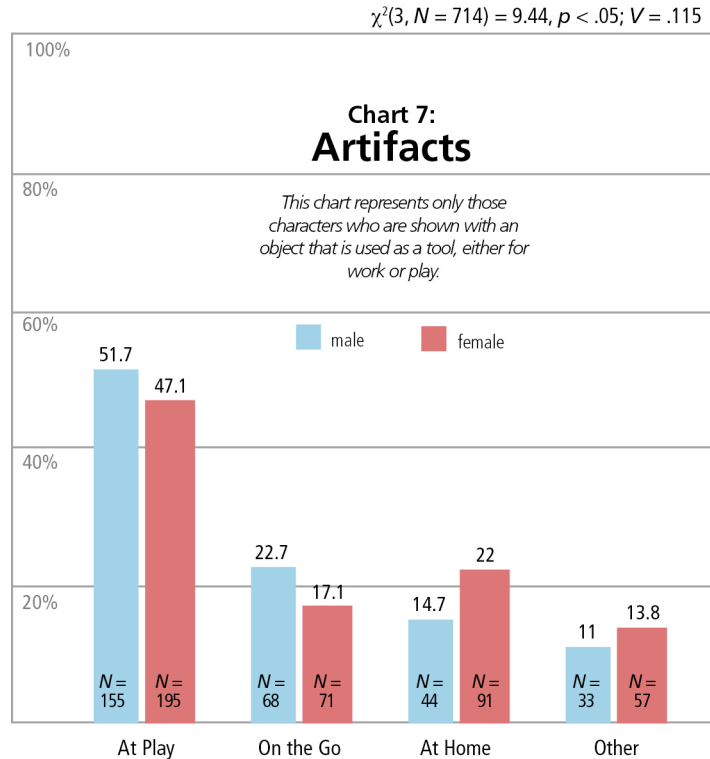
Environment. Although H6 predicted that females would be depicted more often in indoor home settings and males in outdoor settings, the two-way chi-square test was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(3, N = 2,396) = 5.67, p > .1$, and therefore failed to reject the null hypothesis. In this sample, males and females were seen in the environments at very similar rates (see Chart 6).



Analysis of gender, environment, and age did reveal statistically significant results, $\chi^2(3, N = 602) = 13.43, p < .01$, with a small effect size, $V = .149$, for the adult age group. A greater percentage of fathers (47.3%, $N = 78$) than mothers (37.3%, $N = 163$) were shown outdoors, and a greater percentage of mothers (32.5%, $N = 142$) than fathers (24.2%, $N = 40$) were shown inside homes. In contrast, male infants (50.7%, $N = 38$) were much more likely than female infants (37.5%, $N = 36$) to be indoors at home, and female infants (24%, $N = 23$) were more likely than male infants (18.7%, $N = 14$) to be outdoors. The relationship between gender and environment for infants had a small-to-medium effect size, $V = .191$, that was statistically significant, $\chi^2(6, N = 239) = 38.59, p < .1$. The association of gender and environment for children was not statistically significant.

Artifacts. Approximately one-third of the characters in the sample were shown using tools for either work or play; only these characters will be examined in the analysis of this variable. Just as the activities of males showed slightly higher levels of movement and engagement than those of females, a higher percentage of males than females used objects and tools that facilitated higher motion levels, such as those in the categories of “At Play” and “On the Go” (see Chart 7). A greater proportion of males (51.7%, $N = 155$) than females (47.1%, $N = 195$) used the objects in this first category, which includes toys, musical instruments, electronic media, art supplies, and books. Sports equipment and transportation devices, such as bicycles, skateboards, and boats, in the “On the Go” category were seen with 22.7% ($N = 68$) of males and 17.1% ($N = 71$) of females. The remaining categories of objects, “At Home” and “Others,” were associated with a greater proportion of females than males. Approximately 15% ($N = 44$) of males compared to

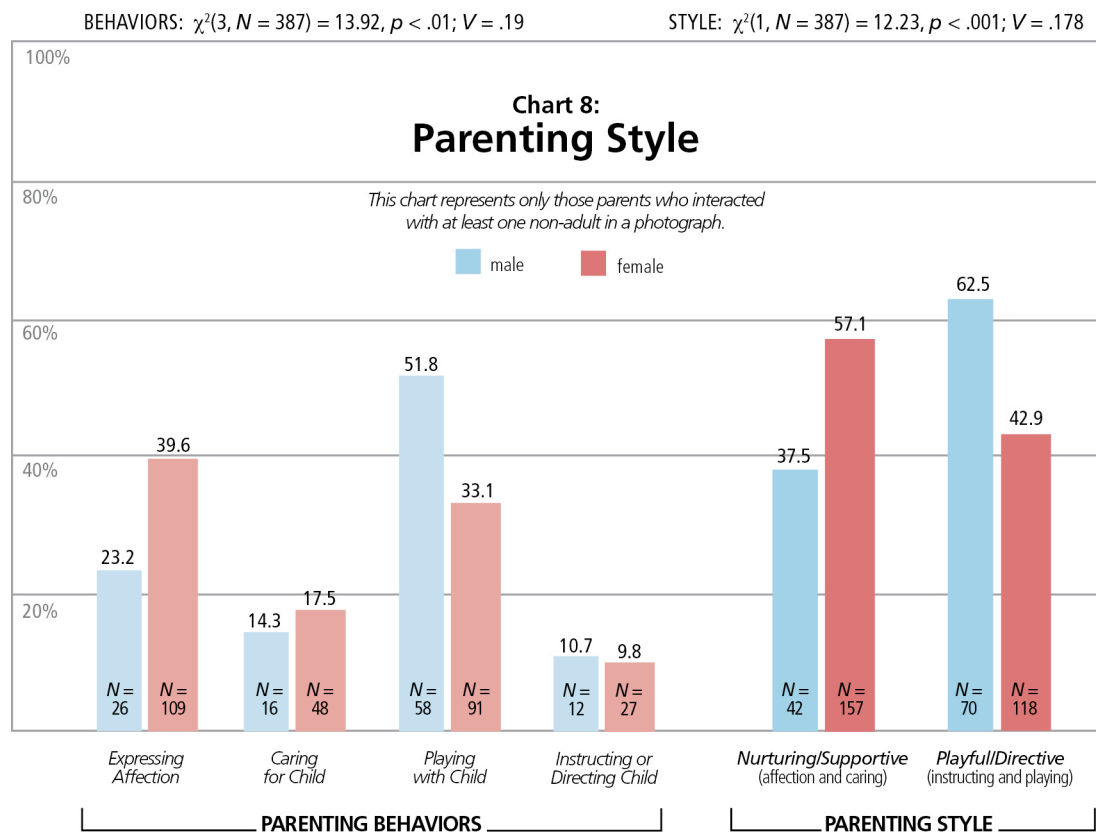
22% ($N = 91$) of females used objects in the “At Home” category, which includes kitchen gadgets, eating implements, indoor chore tools, and health and hygiene aids, and 11% ($N = 33$) of males versus 13.8% ($N = 57$) of females used “Other” objects, including carrying devices, general tools, outdoor home chore tools, and others. These statistically significant results, $\chi^2(3, N = 714) = 9.44, p < .05$, support H7. A test of association revealed that there was a small effect size, $V = .115$, in the relationship between gender and artifacts.



When the variable of age is factored into the analysis, the results were statistically significant, $\chi^2(3, N = 537) = 16.26, p < .001$, only for the combined group of toddlers, children and teens. A greater proportion of girls (25.3%, $N = 74$) than boys (13.9%, $N =$

34) used “At Home” artifacts; boys (23.3%, $N = 57$) were more likely than girls (13.4%, $N = 39$) to use “On the Go” artifacts. Males ($N = 129$) and females ($N = 153$) in this age group were seen using play objects at almost equal rates (52.7% compared with 52.4%). Overall, there was a small-to-moderate effect size, $V = .174$, in the association between gender and artifacts of children. Although the data showed gender differences in adults in terms of artifact use, these results were not statistically significant.

Parenting Style. Of the adult characters in the sample, 67.9% of men and 62.9% of women were shown interacting with at least one infant, toddler, child, or teen. Only these adults were included in the analysis of four parenting behaviors and the two corresponding parenting styles (see Chart 8).



The results were statistically significant and showed a small-to-moderate effect size for the association between gender and parenting style [$\chi^2(1, N = 387) = 12.23, p < .001, V = .178$] as well as the related association between gender and parenting behaviors [$\chi^2(3, N = 387) = 13.92, p < .01, V = .19$]. As predicted by H8, a greater proportion of mothers (57.1%, $N = 157$) exhibited the “Nurturing/Supportive” parenting style than did fathers (37.5%, $N = 42$). Also as expected, men (62.5%, $N = 70$) were much more likely than women (42.9%, $N = 118$) to exhibit the “Playful/Directive” parenting style. Within both of these parenting styles, one of the two parenting behaviors revealed more extreme gender differences. In the case of the former style, a much greater percentage of mothers (39.6%, $N = 109$) than fathers (23.2%, $N = 26$) expressed affection to a child. For the latter style, fathers (51.8%, $N = 58$) were much more likely than mothers (33.1%, $N = 91$) to play with a child. The gender differences for the other two parenting behaviors were relatively small. Approximately 11% ($N = 12$) of men and 10% ($N = 27$) of women instructed or directed a child, and 14.3% ($N = 16$) of men and 17.5% ($N = 48$) of women cared for a child.

DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to explore whether the images in parenting magazines framed children and adults with distinct gender behaviors, roles, and responsibilities. All characters in the editorial photographs from 24 recent issues of four parenting magazines

were submitted to content analysis. They were coded for nine variables in order to quantify the ways in which males and females were depicted. The previous section presented the resulting gender associations on a variable-by-variable basis. This format offered a detailed view of how male and female depictions were similar or different within each variable and its defined values. In order to gain a more generalized sense of how males and females were alike or different, the following analysis will look only at those values with which the characters were most often and least often associated.

Media frames exist when some aspects of a perceived reality are made more salient and, in turn, other aspects are diminished (Entman, 1993). Thus, in order to reveal whether this study's data and results yielded distinct gender frames, it was necessary to identify which values within each variable were most and least salient for males and females. In doing so, it was revealed that for six variables (all but parenting style, which was coded for adults only), the same value was most salient for both boys and girls (ages 1.5-18) as well as men and women: articles about play, recreation, entertainment, and lifestyle; outdoor environments; posed, resting, or communication activities; low activity level; artifacts for play; and cooperative peer interactions. In addition, there were no gender differences for infants in terms of the most salient values, which varied only slightly from those mentioned above for children and adults. Infants were depicted in indoor home environments rather than outdoors and as not interacting with any peers present in the scene. The only instance in which males and females did not share the same salient value was for parenting style. The most salient parenting style for women was expressing affection. For men, it was playing with a child.

Because there were no gender differences in terms of which values were most salient within each variable, any gender frames that result from this examination will stem more from what males and females do not exhibit than from what they do exhibit. Boys and girls in the combined age group of toddlers, children, and teenagers did not differ in terms of the least salient value for any of the six variables. Thus, no distinct gender identities emerged for boys and girls. For infants, two variables saw gender differences in the least prominent values. Female infants were least likely to be paired with articles about learning and social development while male infants were least likely to be paired with articles on family and parent issues. This difference is not necessarily notable, however, because both of these values were the two least prominent for both genders and the percentages did not vary greatly. Male infants were least likely to be shown with either “at home” or “on the go” artifacts; female infants were least likely to be shown with “other” artifacts. These differences, too, can be exempted because the low number of infants with artifacts resulted in skewed the proportion percentages and made them more extreme than what might occur with more units. Thus, no distinct gender identities were revealed for infants. Adults exhibited the most gender differences in terms of least salient values. Men were shown least often in indoor unidentifiable settings and women were least often in indoor non-home settings. Women were least often engaged in learning activities and associated with “at home” artifacts, and men were coded least often with the value “other” for both these variables. Because learning and other activities were at the bottom of the list for both men and women and varied only by one percentage point, the differences found for this variable do not contribute to distinct gender identities. If any distinct gender identities for adults can be pulled from this examination,

they would be simply that men are children's playmates who rarely use general tools, carrying devices, or outdoor home tools; women are affection-givers who are absent from non-home indoor settings.

Although the above comparison on most and least salient values did not reveal many distinct gender identities, it did uncover another finding: the depictions of children are in general more gender equal than those of adults. This finding came about when, in a non-statistical analysis, the difference in the proportions of boys versus girls as well as men versus women was calculated for all 28 values within the nine variables (this excludes the values within the variable parenting style). Then, these 28 measures of difference were totaled for each age group. The proportions of boys versus girls differed by 73 points, but women versus men differed by 172 points. So, not only were boys and girls represented at more equal frequencies than men and women, they were also depicted as more equal in terms of behaviors and attributes. This finding might be attributed to a greater social and media emphasis on fostering gender egalitarian attitudes in children. For both age groups, the measures of difference within the artifacts variable contributed most to these total value differences. For adults, the calculated measure of gender difference for the four values within parenting style, however, passes the artifacts variable in exhibiting the greatest variation between males and females. In fact, of all of the results of this study — most of which revealed only slight gender differences — parenting style was most extreme in distinguishing the behaviors of males and females.

The parenting style variable was adapted from a study on depictions of fathers in television advertising (Coltrane & Allan, 1994). In that study, the scholars note that parents of both genders were shown most often doing stereotypical “mothering”

activities, such as serving children and being emotionally supportive, rather than stereotypical “fathering” activities, such as playing games and instructing. The commercials depicted approximately three-fourths of both mothers and fathers as nurturing. Not only was the proportion of nurturing parents in the current study on parenting magazines much smaller than that found in the abovementioned study, the gender differences were much wider. Approximately 38% of men and 57% of women were coded with the nurturing/supportive parenting style. Consequently, approximately 62% of men and 43% of women were shown with the playful/directive parenting style — a result that corresponds with previous findings that men are characterized more as children’s playmate more often than parent (Craig, 1992; Kaufman, 1999). Thus, it appears that parents in parenting magazines continue to represent somewhat stereotypical parenting roles and responsibilities. This is evidenced, in addition, by the relative frequency of mothers and fathers in the images. Of all parents in the sample, approximately 73% were mothers and 27% were fathers. This gives the impression that mothers are the main parent and fathers are secondary — a finding that aligns with the assertions in another study on parenting magazines. Sunderland (2006) analyzed the language, visuals, voices, gendered stereotypes, and gendered discourses in three parenting magazines and found that the term ‘parenting’ is synonymous with ‘mothering.’

The numbers of male and female representations for non-adults were more gender equal in the parenting magazine photographs. In fact, equal numbers of toddlers were boys and girls. For children, there were slightly more girls than boys (approximately 57% compared to 43%). A previous study on Australian, U.S., and British parenting

magazines also found more girls than boys in the images. It seems parenting magazines differ from children's magazines, television, and books in terms of which gender is overrepresented. In the existing literature on children's gender in the media, representations of boys generally exceeded those of girls (Aubrey & Harrison, 2004; Barner, 1999; Cuneen & Sidwell, 1998; Davis & McDaniel, 1999; Duncan & Sayaovong, 1990; Gooden & Gooden, 2001; Hardin et al., 2002; Leaper et al., 2002; Oskamp, et al., 1996; Weitzman et al., 1972; Wharten, 2005).

Previous studies on gender in magazines, on television, and in books also noted contrasting gender identities in terms of activities, activity levels, environment, and peer interaction. Males were often described as active and aggressive (Barner, 1999; Hardin et al., 2002; Johnson & Young, 2002; Larson, 2001; Leaper et al., 2002; Weitzman et al., 1972). In the parenting magazine photographs, boys were slightly more likely than girls to be engaged in high-intensity activities, but both genders were most often and equally likely to be engaged in low-intensity activities. For adults, a greater proportion of women than men were shown for both the values of high-intensity and low-intensity activities. More men than women engaged in moderate-intensity activities. Overall, most characters were depicted in the lowest level of activity — a circumstance that is likely due to the nature of print media. Logically, the moving images of television programming are more conducive to depicting action than printed still photographs. Even so, there appeared to be very few depictions within the parenting magazines of highly active play, exercise, or sports. This is perhaps because the magazines infrequently provided articles on these topics. Active play and sports tend to coincide with competitive peer interactions. Thus, it is not surprising that very few indications of competitive natures were found in the

photographs. Unlike previous studies that found males to be aggressive and competitive and females to be polite and nurturing (Barner, 1999; Johnson & Young, 2002; Larson, 2001; Leaper et al., 2002), the current study did not find major gender differences in the interaction styles. Overall, approximately 5% of males and females were shown as competitive. Boys were slightly more competitive than girls (6.1% versus 5.2%) but women were slightly more competitive than men (3.4% versus 2.4%). Because approximately three out of four characters of either gender were cooperative in nature, neither males nor females were framed as competitive.

Because previous studies on gender in media found males more likely than females to demonstrate ingenuity, practicality, cleverness (Aubrey & Harrison, 2004; Rajecki et al., 1993; Weitzman et al., 1972), it was predicted that more males than females would be shown in educational or learning activities. On the contrary, very few characters — less than 2% — of either gender were depicted as such. These findings are consistent with a study on youth magazine advertisements, which found that children were very rarely depicted in scholarly settings (Peterson, 1994). Whereas the children in scholarly settings from this previous study were depicted unfavorably in the advertisements, the children engaged in learning tasks in the parenting magazine photographs appeared thoughtful and conscientious. Instead of engaging in educational activities, most characters were shown as posed, at rest, or engaged in communication activities, which, not surprisingly, aligns with the finding that most characters exhibited low levels of activity. There is a slight hint, however, of the above-mentioned “active male” frame. A greater percentage of males than females (35.7% versus 31.8%) were engaged in play or recreation activities. In the past, males were more often depicted in

outdoor settings and females in home settings (Courtney & Lockeretz, 1971; Larson, 2001; Luke, 1994). The photographs in the four parenting magazines, however, presented little gender difference in terms of environment. Approximately 40% of males and females were outdoors and 33% were inside a home. Thus, no distinct gender frames emerged concerning where males and females “belonged.”

One study on children’s books characterized males and females based on the types of tools they used (Crabb & Bielawski, 1994). In that study, females were seen more often with household artifacts and males more often with production artifacts. Such findings can frame the “normal” responsibilities and capabilities of the characters. In the photographs from parenting magazines, the artifacts were not easily divided into the categories of household and production. Instead, 15 sub-values were grouped into four values of tools: at home, at play, on the go, and other. If artifacts do indeed help frame the roles and skills of characters, then the photographs in parenting magazines suggest that females are expected to use and have an aptitude for artifacts within the home (kitchen gadgets, eating implements, indoor chore tools, and health and hygiene aids). Males, on the other hand, excel in more active and outdoor pursuits involving play and transportation artifacts (which include art supplies, electronic media equipment, toys, musical instruments, sporting equipment, bikes, boats, and cars). Although approximately just one-third of the characters utilized an artifact, the results for this variable presented more pronounced gender differences than the activity type and activity level categories.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTRODUCTION TO QUALITATIVE VISUAL ANALYSIS

From its inception, this study sought to understand the scope of visual gender depictions readers encounter when viewing the editorial photographs in parenting magazines. A quantitative content analysis was deemed the most efficient way to examine a sample large enough to be generalizable to the population of parenting magazines. Indeed, this method facilitated a nine-variable analysis of 2,479 characters in order to explore the extent to which gender correlates with certain behaviors and attributes in these images. The method allowed for the statistical testing of eight comparative hypotheses and revealed, in general, which aspects of males and females were made salient or omitted in the framing of gender. What this type of analysis cannot offer, however, is an individualized look at each photograph and its contained 'visual texts' (Bell, 2001). Although inferences can be made from quantitative data, the analysis itself does not explore the photographs' meanings. Qualitative visual analysis, in contrast, is a method focused on the depth rather than breadth of visual communication messages. It provides a closer examination of the meanings found in a smaller sample of images. As such, this method was appropriate for a post hoc study on a sub-sample of the images used in the initial content analysis.

The 24 issues of parenting magazines examined in the content analysis each contained an average of just seven fathers in the editorial photographs. In total, images of

165 fathers (compared to 437 mothers) were found in the pages of the magazines; fathers comprised less than 7% of the total sample of characters. Although fathers were underrepresented, the inferred impact of such depictions should not be underestimated. In a study on viewers' perceptions of family roles in television sitcoms, participants rated fathers as being more effective parents than mothers (Reep & Dambrot, 1994). The researchers suspected that viewers were more rewarding toward fathering behavior because it was less expected and therefore left a greater impression. In the case of parenting magazines, women (who make up the majority of the readers) might take more notice of father depictions not only because these characters are seen infrequently but also because they represent an "other" rather than mirror a self. Readers see nearly three times as many images of mothers than fathers and, thus, have more examples from which to base their expectations on mothering behavior. This means that each image of a father carries more weight in contributing to the impression readers have about fathering behavior. A qualitative semiotic analysis of these images can reveal how the photographic symbols found in parenting magazines frame the roles of fathers.

In the existing literature on media and gender, studies have identified both traditional and progressive fathering tropes. The "undomestic father" was revealed in children's literature, which rarely presented men as caring for children, running errands, or doing household chores (Gooden & Gooden, 2001). Most identities of fathers in the media stem from television representations. In over-the-counter medicine commercials, fathers' general inability to administer medicine without the advice or assistance from their wives implied the "inept father" trope (Craig, 1992). The "foolish father" frame in sitcoms became more evident over time, perhaps because at the same time women gained

more power status outside the home the felt the power to make jokes at the expense of men (Scharrer, 2001). One study of primetime television shows identified two contrasting frames: the “instrumental and authoritarian father,” who takes major responsibility for the family decision making and is a firm enforcer of rules, and the “supportive father,” who adopted the stereotypical mothering traits of nurturing and expressiveness (Dail & Way, 1985). Another study on sitcoms revealed the “domestic father” frame because men were shown to cook dinner and participate in household chores as well as exhibit agency in caring for themselves (Reep & Dambrot, 1994). The “teaching father” trope emerged from television commercials, which depicted more fathers than mothers teaching or reading to a child (Kaufman, 1999). This current study’s content analysis led to the “playful/directive father” frame, because more fathers than mothers were shown playing with or teaching or directing a child.

In these above studies, the establishment of frames was an inductive process. That is, the frames were identified after the quantitative analysis was completed and the results had been calculated. In the qualitative portion of this study, however, frames were developed prior to the intensive analysis. The main and secondary coders from the quantitative content analysis used a grounded theory approach to identify six frames for fathering identities in the magazines. In grounded theory methods, research samples are explored with no preconceived ideas of the results. During this exploration, codes within the texts are identified, and these codes are grouped into categories. For this study, the coders looked for recurring and prominent codes of fathering behavior without speculation as to what the eventual categories might be. Then, they grouped these codes into tropes and proposed six frames that represented the 165 fathers:

Father as ...

- 1) the forefront of fun;
- 2) teacher;
- 3) inept parent;
- 4) inconspicuous caregiver;
- 5) manly domestic; and
- 6) Atlas.

Using these tropes as a framework, the visual analysis will address the following research question:

***RQ3:** How do the syntactic relations between people, places, and things depicted in the sample of editorial photographs of parenting magazines present particular frames of fathers?*

The study utilized a purposive sample of 21 photographs from the same 24 magazine issues that were used for the quantitative content analysis. The sample included at least one photo from each of the four titles (*Cookie*, *Family Fun*, *Parenting*, and *Parents*). The photographs were chosen to represent the six fathering frames that emerged through the grounded theory process. Two to four photographs serve as examples for each of the tropes. These images were submitted to a qualitative visual analysis that draws from several methods.

Common methodologies for examining visual media include content analysis, visual anthropology, Cultural Studies, semiotics, iconography, psychoanalytical, social semiotics, and ethnomethodology (van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001). This study utilized elements of Cultural Studies, iconography, and social semiotics. The goal of Cultural Studies — “to understand the relationships of cultural production, consumption, belief and meaning to social processes and institutions” (Lister & Wells, 2001, 61) — is

applicable to this study's intent of exploring how the social institution of gender is presented and what types of gender depictions are consumed. In addition, the method "insists upon the constitutive role of culture in sustaining and changing the power relations enacted around issues of gender, sexuality, social class, race, and ethnicity ..." (Lister & Wells, 2001, 62). Any study on gender inherently examines the power relations of males and females. The Cultural Studies method has no definitive protocol. Rather, it is characterized as a compound field that repurposes methods from a variety of disciplines. (Lister & Wells, 2001). In this case, the study utilized the methods of iconography and semiotics, both of which are premised on the idea of layered meaning (van Leeuwen, 2001). The first layer is the denotation (what or who is depicted?), and the second is connotation (what does it signify or mean?). In iconography, there are two types of symbols: 1) abstract — shapes with symbolic references, such as a cross, and 2) figurative — represented people, places, or things with symbolic value (van Leeuwen, 2001).

Social semiotic visual analysis has been likened to the method of quantitative content analysis for its more prescriptive use of "codes" (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001). Just as body language can communicate the concept of emotions or power relationships, these codes are learned conventions of visual communication messages. Analyzing the codes present in an image can help describe the syntactic relations between people, places, and things depicted in the images (van Leeuwen, 2001). The codes are organized into three categories of meaning, each with several subcategories:

Representational Meaning

- Narrative structures: a connection between at least two characters

- Conceptual structures: no connection between characters

Interactive Meaning

- Contact: the character(s)' point of gaze
- Distance: the size of the subjects within the frame
- Point of view: the perspective from which the view is seen

Compositional Meaning:

- Information value: the composition of the photograph's elements
- Framing: the connection or disconnection of elements
- Salience: elements that are made more eye-catching than others

The 21 photographs within the sample were analyzed for both the denotative and the connotative meanings. The connotations were guided by the representational, interactive, and compositional meanings set forth by social semiotic visual analysis as well as the presence of any abstract or figurative icons.

QUALITATIVE VISUAL ANALYSIS FINDINGS

*Father as the forefront of fun: photographs 1a-c.*¹ Three photographs in the sample present fathers as playmates and the source of fun. Because the photos present parallel structures and characters, they are similar in both the denotative and connotative

¹ 1a: *Cookie*, December 2006, page 29; In the right foreground, a father holds his son outdoors in a Superman flying position while his daughter stands in the left background watching the scene. 1b: *Cookie*, December 2006, page 150; On a snowy mountain, a young boy snowboards as his father guides him from behind with a training leash. His mother, with a snowboard still attached to her feet, sits in the background watching the scene. 1c: *Cookie*, May 2006, page 148; On a park sidewalk, a father holds both his sons hands and lifts him into the air. The mother, whose face is partially covered by the father's elbow, stands behind and watches.

meanings. All photographs capture outdoor scenes in which a father and son participate in active play in the right foreground as a female (a daughter in 1a and wives in 1b and 1c) sits or stands still and observes from the left background of the scene. The outdoor recreational context of each these photos symbolizes a sense of freedom and agency; the characters are uninhibited by the lack of four walls and lack of ties to responsibilities. The photos each contain two vectors — described by Jewitt & Oyama (2001) as symbolic lines that connect character relations — giving the scenes a narrative structure. The fathers and sons are connected by physical vectors: the fathers' arms in photos 1a and 1c or the safety leash in 1b. These physical connections link the two characters as playmates and signify a caring parent-child relationship in which the father enables his son the risk and thrill of airborne or high-speed activity within arm's reach and under his safe watch. A gaze rather than physical vector connects the female characters to the father-son duos, making this a weaker relationship. The wives are made even more subservient within the scenes by their relative small size within the frame of the photo; the daughter disappears into a slight blur due to the photo's depth of field. As a result, the actions of the fathers and sons are most salient within the scene. The denotation of the mid-air, horizontal body position of the sons in photos 1a and 1c lend to the connotations of flight and allude to the figurative symbol of Superman. The iconic pose, particularly in photo 1a, gives the impression that boys have the ability and power to perform fantastic feats. Girls and moms have only the responsibility to stand back and watch.

*Father as teacher: photographs 2a-d.*² Four of the images within the sample present fathers as the supervisors of children's educational activity. In both photographs 2a and 2b, a father sits behind his daughter as she looks in a microscope or mixes play-dough ingredients. The vectors connecting the fathers to the daughters are drawn with the mutual touch of the education artifacts: a microscope and cookware. Although fathers are naturally much taller than their young daughters, their downward-facing gaze gives them a sense of ownership over the girls' activities. At the same time, however, the placement of the parents behind the children implies that the fathers are there as back-up support but want to give their daughters the freedom to navigate the learning experience. This idea is evidenced, as well, in the fathers' hand positions. Neither of the fathers grips the education artifacts in an aggressive, dictating manner. Instead, they gently steady the objects with a light touch. The daughter in photograph 2b, in contrast, exhibits more tension and gusto in her hands as she pours, stirs, and smashes. The mutual gaze toward and the touch of the education artifacts connotes the daughters' and fathers' mutual commitment to learning. Although the father in photograph 2b supervises an activity more traditionally associated with females, the fathers in 2a and 2c represent the meme of the male aptitude for science and math, which is alluded to with the icons of a microscope and abacus. It goes against the meme, however, that these fathers are teaching math and science skills to a daughter rather than son. Further, the father's

² 2a: *Parents*, December 2007, page 84; A young girl rests her elbows on a table as she leans over to peer into a microscope. Her father, who sits slightly to the right and behind his daughter, steadies the microscope with one hand and rests his other hand on the girl's back. 2b: *Parents*, September 2007, page 292; A dad sits behind his young daughter and steadies a pot as she pours ingredients for and mixes homemade play-dough. Both father and daughter smile. 2c *Parents*, January 2006, page 40; Sitting at a small table in an elementary classroom, a young girl ponders a task on an abacus while her father sits beside her ready to help. A young boy watches on from the background. 2d: *Parenting*, June 2006, page 84; A dad lies on the floor with his head propped against the couch and reads a book to his toddler son and daughter, who lie nestled beside him. The boy looks at the book, while the daughter looks at her outstretched leg.

attention toward the daughter's activity in photo 2c results in the ignoring of his son, who looks on from the background. A mutual gaze toward the abacus implies a stronger relationship between the father and daughter than between father and son. This father-daughter connection is made more salient because they are centered in the foreground of the scene. Similar to photos 2a and 2b, the father's situation behind his daughter in photo 2c indicates a supervisory role, but the parent gives the child agency to guide the learning task. These first three photos made salient the relationship between fathers and daughters and excluded mothers and sons from the learning activities — a circumstance that somewhat ironically implies that men are more capable of teaching than are women, and girls are more capable of learning than are boys. The last photo in this group, however, presents different relationship dynamics. Instead of being situated behind a child in a supervisory role, the father in 2d is on the same plane as his two children as the characters lay on the living room floor to read a book. This side-by-side parent-child configuration connotes a more equal partnership in the learning rather than giving the father a supervisory role. Unlike the first three photos, the strongest vector in 2d is that between the father and son, who both direct their gaze on the book. The connection between the daughter and the father is weaker because the girl's moving leg distracts her from the learning activity. Still, close proximity of the characters and the more intimate environment of the living room demonstrate that learning does not need to be formal and directive. It can also be nurturing and supportive.

*Father as inept parent: photographs 3a-c.*³ Unlike any of the above-mentioned photos, the two images in the sample that present fathers as inept parents are demand pictures, meaning the subject makes eye contact with the viewer. For demand pictures, the viewer uses clues from facial expressions and hand gestures to determine what exactly the subject demands (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). In photograph 2a, a father laughs and covers his face with his hand. From this denotation, the viewer can sense lighthearted embarrassment. Even further, the hand over the face connotes a submissive nature and a relinquishing of power. Historically, such expressions and gestures have belonged to female depictions in the media. Both the factors of “feminine touch” and “the ritualization of subordination” — a lowering of oneself physically — were theorized as codes that communicate deference rather than confidence (Goffman, 1979). Even though no mother is present in this photograph, she is still inferred to have more authority and confidence than the depicted father. This mother-father power comparison might not only be observed but also felt by the reader — a phenomenon created by the photo subject’s gaze. The father invites the reader (who, more often than not, is a mother) into the scene with direct eye contact. When the reader becomes the imagined mother in this way, a pseudo-relationship is formed that simulates face-to-face interactions. The second set of photos also uses vivid facial expressions and gestures to communicate meaning. The denotation of photograph 3b is a father holding his head and yelling. An iconographic

³ 3a: *Parents*, September 2007, 130; A head-and-shoulders shot of a father standing outside shows the man laughing with his eyes squinted and hand covering his nose and smiling mouth. 3b: *Parents*, December 2007, page 110; A purple-shirted dad stands against a background of orange, yellow, brown, and red waves with both hands to the sides of his face. His mouth is wide open as though he is screaming. 3c: *Parents*, December 2007, page 111; Against the same background as in 3b, a crying, distressed infant looks at the camera. We only see his father’s two hands, which hold up the baby. 3d: *Parents*, December 2007, page 112; Sitting in front of the same background as 3b and 3c, a young girl sits sideways on her mother’s lap. Both have messed-up hair, wear striped colorful sweaters, and sit with their mouth open in shock or disgust.

connotation of this image, most notably the facial expressions and the warm-hued waves in the background, links it to Edvard Munch's *The Scream*, which is often associated with periods of anxiety, disorder, or chaos. In photograph 3c, which is paired directly next to 3b, the viewer becomes the anxious father holding a crying child. The perceived distance at which the father is holding the child away from his body communicates a lack of confidence in his parenting skills and a lack of rapport between father and child. The context in which this photo is used makes the inept father frame more salient.

Photographs 3b and 3c fill the opening two pages of a feature about the stresses of parenting. Using a harried father to introduce such a topic rather than a mother signifies that the trait is more organic for fathers. A depiction of an anxious mother appears in the story, but the photograph (3d) is not given as much real estate on the page and does not reveal a disconnect between parent and child.

*Father as inconspicuous caregiver: photographs 4a-c.*⁴ In one issue of *Cookie*, a pattern emerged in the depictions of fathers: none of the men were given individual identities as a result of hidden faces. Similar circumstances were found in the other three magazines as well. Photo 4c gives viewers a small glimpse of a face in profile view, which, in contrast to more engaging frontal views, connotes detachment (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001). The characters are also farther from the viewer than in previous photos. These "long shots" cause the subjects to not represent individuals but rather certain types

⁴ 4a: *Cookie*, September 2006, page 124; From the viewer's perspective, man stands sideways to the left of a bench. He holds a cell phone in his hand by his waist, but his head and shoulders are cut out of the top of the image. Next to him, a woman sits cross-legged and holds her squirming daughter next to her. Another woman sits on the right edge of the bench and looks up at the man. 4b: *Cookie*, September 2006, page 125; On a sidewalk, a man stands facing backward, props his foot on a rung of an iron fence, and sits his daughter (who looks straight at the camera) on his knee. A young boy stands, leans against his father's hip, and looks at the camera. 4c: *Cookie*, September 2006, page 117; On a garden path, a backpack-wearing toddler faces backward and walks toward the outstretched hand of his father, who stands with his body facing backward but his head in profile.

of people, such as all fathers (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001). The father and child in this photo walk away from the viewer. This, in conjunction with the hidden faces, sends the message that the relationship is a private one or is not ready for public exposure. In image 4b, the viewer does not even see the profile of the father. The man's back is turned toward the camera, but his children look straight at the viewer. Although the father's stance signifies detachment with the viewer, there is no indication of detachment from his children. In fact, the father props his foot on a fence rail to create a perch for his daughter and allows his son to lean up against him. The family relationship is actually seen as more intimate because the three members form a circle into which the viewer is not invited. Even more extreme than the first two cases, the father's head in photograph 4a is cropped out of the image entirely. This exclusion exaggerates the varying height levels of the male and females in the scene. Two women and one female child sit on a bench, next to which a man stands tall. This depiction frames females as existing on one plane and males as existing on another. One of the women gazes up at the man. Normally, a gaze coming from this low angle would signify a disparity in power between the high figure and the lower figure. In this instance, however, it seems as though there is strength in the number of females, who seem to have control of the situation. Meanwhile the father, with his hip popped and cell phone in hand, stands impatiently.

*Father as manly domestic: photographs 5a-c.*⁵ Although both mothers and fathers were rarely shown doing housework, men took pride and found fun in the domestic

⁵ 5a: *Parenting*, October 2007, pages 122-123; A chalkboard hangs on a red wall. A husband stands with his back to the wall to the left (from the viewer's perspective) of the board. His arms are crossed and his eyes glance upward as if he were daydreaming. A thought bubble extends from his head, saying, "Three chores in one morning! Go me!" His wife stands to the right of the board as she draws tallies on her side of the chalk board (she has 11 tallies and her husband has three). Her thought bubble says, "And there's so much to do still — the laundry, the bills, and the...." 5b: *Parenting*, August 2006, page 57; A man in a polo shirt

activities in which they did participate. In figure 5a, viewers see a man standing tall next to a chalkboard with his arms crossed and eyes looking upward. This body language, along with the image text (“Three chores in one morning! Go me!”) shows how proud the father is in what he has accomplished. His wife, on the other hand, faces the chalkboard and writes tallies. The message sent by her turned-back is that she feels anxious about how much work there is yet to do and cannot look at the viewer out of guilt. When it comes to men preparing food, image 5b presents a meme: the male grill master. This demand picture offers viewers tall, confident body language and a gleeful smile as the father waits for the grill to work its magic. Fathers are even happy to do laundry, as depicted in 5c. Of course, this father isn’t actually doing laundry. Rather, this juxtaposition of a masculine person with a traditionally feminine chore is beefed up by letting the father show off his biceps and play with his kid. As such, this demand picture demands more attention to traditional male aspects (strength and playfulness) than more progressive male tasks (doing laundry). This association of play and laughter with labor-intensive chores devalues the time and effort these household tasks require and communicates the idea that traditional “women’s” work is easy and enjoyable. This message is further emphasized by a lack of photographs in which women do housework. Because women’s work in the home is essentially invisible, the resulting message is that such tasks do not consume very much time or effort.

stands smiling at the camera. He wears an apron with pockets filled with grilling tools. In one hand, he has an oven mitt and holds a plate. The other hand grips a metal spatula. 5c: *Parenting*, August 2006, page 50; A muscular man in a white tank top holds a laundry basket with both hands and rests it on his head, revealing the biceps on his up-stretched arms. His toddler daughter sits among the towels in the laundry basket that is perched on her dad’s head. Both father and daughter are smiling.

*Father as Atlas: photographs 6a-d.*⁶ Four photos in the sample present male adults' support in similar ways: a father holds one to four children on his shoulders and in his arms. The denotation of these positions is families at play or in transit, but the connotation is that fathers have the strength to carry the weight of the family. Iconographically, these images allude to the Greek god Atlas, who carried the heavens on his shoulders. This iconic allusion posits the fathers with the endurance of Atlas and correlates children with the heavens. Another way to consider this connotation is that men are the pillars of strength or the stabilizing factor of the family. Evidence of this latter point is depicted in a photograph from *Parents*.⁷ The photograph juxtaposes two parties at a restaurant. The party on the left is a typical nuclear family composed of a mom, dad, and two kids. The party on the right is composed of two mothers with three children. Whereas the family with the present father is quiet and well-mannered, the children in the other party are ignoring their food and the mothers are ignoring their scattered children. Thus, the juxtaposition connotes that the presence of a father within a family unit stabilizes the relations, which speaks to the traditional role of fathers as the disciplinarians and leaders of the household.

⁶ 6a: *Cookie*, March 2006, page 130; A man in knee-high rain boots stands in an open field. His daughter sits on his shoulders with her chin resting on his head. The father holds his son, who faces him with his legs around his father's waist. 6b: *Parents*, September 2007, page 286; A father walks along the waterfront with his toddler son sitting on his shoulders. The son rests his hands and chin on his dad's head. 6c: *Family Fun*, March 2006, page 65; A father stands chest-deep in a swimming pool. On his shoulders sits a totem pole-like tower of three young girls. 6d: *Parenting*, June 2006, page 90; A young boy sits on his fathers shoulders. The two have a down blanket wrapped around them like a giant cape.

⁷ 7: *Parents*, December 2007, pages 126-127; A restaurant scene shows two booths back-to-back. In the booth on the left (from the viewer's perspective) sits a father, mother, and infant and toddler daughters. The father reads his menu and gently touches the back of the infant. The mother holds a menu and has her other arm around her toddler daughter, who stares at the booth behind her. In the next booth sits two mothers and three children. The table is covered with plates and spilled food; spaghetti is strewn about the booths. A young girl sits on the back of the booth and holds a guitar while the mother next to her eats. On the opposite side of the booth, a mother wraps her arm around her infant son and converses with the other mother. An unattended crying infant sits on the floor amongst a menu, balloon, and toys.

This qualitative visual analysis, rooted in the approaches of Cultural Studies, iconography and social semiotics revealed a portrait of fathers that was not attainable through the quantitative content analysis. In general fathers, correlated with one of six tropes: Father as ... the forefront of fun, teacher, inept parent, inconspicuous caregiver, manly domestic, and Atlas. Although there were rare exceptions to this list, describing fathering behavior with only six frames circumscribes their familial role as well as their identities as adult males. Mothers are offered a wider range of emotions to experience in the photographs, partly because there simply are more depictions of them and partly because adult females are depicted both as mothers and as individuals. Fathers, on the other hand, are rarely given the opportunity in photos to assert their individuality. Rather, they seem to be included in a scene only when a traditional fathering activity or context necessitates a father's presence. Adult men, then, become performers or representations of the fathering role rather than individuals with varied identities. These restrictive identities of fathers and varied identities mothers go against the history of depictions of parents in the media. In the past, the media has presented mothers as restricted mainly to mothering activities and fathers as free to assert their individuality. In these parenting magazines, the roles have reversed.

The qualitative analysis of the composition of the photographs as well as the icons and vectors contained in the photographs revealed how fathers relate to their spouses and their children. Fathers were instrumental in encouraging their daughters in educational tasks and in allowing their sons to be active and take risks. Other fathers were depicted as nurturing to their children, but these relationships were kept relatively private from the viewer — an observation that speaks to the perceived socially allowable traits of

fathering behavior. The inconspicuous nature of these nurturing interactions hints at a father's hesitation to display emasculating behaviors in the direct public eye, as though this type of fathering behavior will not be understood or accepted by an outside viewer. In the home, fathers were proud of their household contributions and presented strength in the carrying of their children. In general, whether men were playing, teaching, caring, cooking, or carrying, fathers tended to engage in nurturing relationships with family members. Compositional features of the photos sometimes assigned men to be the authority figure, but none of the codes in the photographs signaled that men were authoritarian. This brings back a point about gendered authority figures made in the literature review. Goffman (1979) asserted that male-female relationships exhibited the same power dynamic as a father-child relationship. Subsequent studies on family roles in the media, however, found that the inverse was true for parenting depictions: wife-husband relationships exhibited the power dynamic of a mother-child relationship. In other words, each gender was at some point depicted as dependant on and incompetent relative to the other. This qualitative study did not analyze any images in which mothers and fathers engaged in direct interactions. Even so, husband-wife power dynamics were simulated in the photos representing the 'father as inept parent' frame, in which the fathers looked straight at the camera. This direct gaze invited the viewer to interact with subjects, whose bashful and anxious facial expressions marked incompetence. As a result, the reader, who temporarily takes on the role of the subject's wife in these pseudo-relationships, feels a sense of superiority and competence over the inept fathers in the photographs. Thus, the wife-husband relationship in these cases did in fact exhibit the power dynamic of a mother-child relationship. This power dynamic was not evident,

however, in the other five frames. Instead, fathers were shown to be competent in teaching their daughters, playing activities with their sons, doing household tasks (albeit with a masculine touch), carrying the weight of their families, and stabilizing the family unit. Overall, the images did not show husbands with child-like dependencies relative to their wives. If anything, the photographs demonstrated that fathers are restricted to the roles of teacher, playmate, and pillar of strength rather than the roles of nurturer, cook, or general caregiver.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Historically, research on gender depictions in the media yielded results that polarize males and females. Over time, however, studies found evidence of a shrinking gender polarization. Observations revealed that, in some circumstances, men or boys engaged in several stereotypical feminine behaviors and women or girls engaged in stereotypical masculine behaviors. But, in the end, most studies found that at least some main differences remain between the portrayals of males and females. Such was the case for this quantitative content analysis.

In light of the previous research, this study predicted that boys and girls as well as men and women would be framed with contrasting behaviors and attributes. It was expected that some categories would reveal drastic gender disparities while other categories would be more gender equal. What the statistical tests actually revealed, however, was that males and females were depicted very similarly overall. For each of the three age groups, males and females were identical in terms of which variable values were most salient and showed only slight differences in the least salient variables. Male and female characters in the middle age group — boys and girls ages 1.5-18 — were remarkably similar in their depictions. Thus, it was concluded that there were no clear gender frames for youth in the photographs in parenting magazines. The implication of

these results from the standpoint of the social learning theory, which asserts that behaviors modeled in the media can shape the behaviors and attitudes of the viewer (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1961), is that readers of parenting magazines will not take away gender polarized views of children's behavior after viewing the photographs in the editorial content. Further, repeated viewing of such gender-equal media images of children might have the power to alter any existing stereotypical ideas of how boys and girls should behave.

In contrast to the gender egalitarian depictions of children, the results revealed several major gender differences in adults. Most obvious is the disparity between the number of father and mother depictions. Nearly three times as many mothers than fathers — 437 versus 165 — were found in the photographs of the 24 issues. Whether or not this difference is the result of the editors targeting the mainly women readers with mainly images of women, the disparity posits mothers as the primary parent and fathers as the secondary parent. It affirms stereotype that women are more capable in and organic to parenting matters and discounts the contributions that men bring to the family. The results also showed strong gender differences in terms of parenting style. As expected, mothers were most often nurturing and supportive and fathers were most often playful and directive. Again, this stereotypically defines mothers as the day-to-day problem solvers and fathers as merely the entertainers. For readers, then, the primary message communicated through the photographs is that boys and girls are gender-equal in their talents and opportunities until they grow up and become parents. So, even though readers might not adopt and pass on gendered views about what their sons and daughters can and should do, they might accept and model the idea that mothers are the main, nurturing

parent and fathers are the secondary, playful parent. These inferences about the social learning theory —the potential media effects resulting from the modeled gender behaviors in the magazines — are limited, however, by the consideration of the raw data versus the calculated associations. The proportions presented in the quantitative results section compared females and males as if they were shown at equal rates. Readers, though, are not likely to consider the depictions of males and females on equal playing fields when the reality is that females are shown more often than males in the photographs. Thus, in consideration of cultivation theory, the magazines are more likely to “cultivate” readers’ perceptions of how females rather than males should act and behave. Readers should remain cognizant of how photographs marginalize male roles — especially fathering behaviors — in order to diminish the potential for internalizing the distinct definitions of mothering and fathering put forth by the parenting magazines.

Because the parenting style variable yielded the most gender disparate results in the quantitative content analysis, a post hoc qualitative analysis aimed to provide a more in-depth description of these differences. Readers of parenting magazines are given fewer opportunities to see models of fathering behavior than mothering behavior in the photographs. Therefore, each instance of modeled fathering behavior has a greater impact on a reader’s impression of fathers. In order to understand what impressions readers might take away about fathers, a social semiotic visual analysis examined a sub-sample of the photographs. The messages garnered from the codes and icons in these 21 photographs yielded a more nuanced description of fathers than could be provided in the quantitative content analysis. Whereas the content analysis results could only tell us that fathers were more likely to be playing with or teaching a child and mothers were more

likely to be expressing affection or caring for a child, the visual cues in the photographs show the reader that fathers are actually quite nurturing and affectionate as they play with and teach their children. Simply, the content analysis found that men continue to be linked to stereotypical fathering activities but the qualitative visual analysis revealed that men have adopted several stereotypical mothering personality traits. The semiotic analysis revealed that the inverse also occurs: fathers engage in stereotypical mothering activities but maintain their masculine personality traits. One photograph depicted a father with a laundry basket — an artifact that links him to a traditional female task — but as exhibiting masculine strength and playfulness as he shows off his biceps while lifting the basket and his daughter above his head. These observations can be visualized in a 2 x 2 typology table of masculine and feminine tasks and personality traits (see Table 2).

Table 2:
Fathering Typology

	masculine task	feminine task
masculine personality trait	✓	✓
feminine personality trait	✓	✗

As this table demonstrates, depictions in which fathers adopt both traditional feminine traits and feminine activities were nearly nonexistent in this sample. While this might indicate a resistance to fully break the gender divide, it might also appeal to the fantasy of

the female reader. Such depictions show ideal gender mutuality in the goal to nurture and support their children, but also provide mothers and fathers their individuality. This individuality yields a sense of ownership of each parental role and can also contribute to creating imagined communities. For the female readers, the photographs communicate that, “Men are like this. You are like this.” This message highlights the shared experiences of motherhood, making readers feel as though they belong to a community of women who are just like them. Of course, this message also has the potential to alienate male readers or readers who in reality have divisions of labor or parenting roles at home that do not mirror those defined in the magazines. Even so, as long as women remain the majority of parenting magazine readers and as long as editors must appeal to the gratifications of these readers in order for the magazines to be financially viable, the potential seems unlikely for the publications to present mothers and fathers as equal parents. This statement assumes that the publications have researched the types of images their readers prefer and have determined that photographs of mothering behavior are most desirable and, as a result, most marketable; the overrepresentation of mothers, then, is attributed to fiscal obligations of the editors, art directors, and publishers. If the photo editing decisions were exempt from financial considerations, would the depictions of mothers and fathers be more egalitarian? Detachment from monetary concerns would allow art directors and editors to more carefully consider the social message about gender they want to send through the photographs. Even then, however, the question remains whether a parenting magazine’s goal should be to reflect reality — mothers as primary caregivers and household managers — or an ideal vision of co-parenting, in which mothers and fathers share childcare and household responsibilities equally. The latter

goal has the potential to shape a society that expects from fathers the same level of caregiving and household duties as mothers. It also has the potential, however, to alienate readers whose family structures do not include an adult male. Because the photographs infrequently presented both a mother and father with a child, though, increased depictions of fathers and father-child interactions would also represent families that do not include an adult female. Magazine producers might also consider providing a balanced or more realistic picture of racial diversity in the photographs. Although race was not formally examined in this study, a limited range of diversity was observed.

Inherent to the methodologies, more frames emerged from the qualitative than the quantitative portion of this study. The content analysis framed mothers and fathers differently in terms of parenting style, but the visual codes and messages in the photographs yielded a deeper layer of tropes that more richly described fathering behavior. Because the quantitative and qualitative results are different in how and what they describe in terms of gender behaviors, utilizing both methods provides a richer picture of how images depict males and females. Using just one of these methods might have given a false impression about men, as was asserted in another study on fathering roles in television advertisements. The researchers suggested that even though portrayals of men in nurturing and caring roles are seen in the media more often now — as was revealed in the qualitative visual analysis of parenting magazine photographs — than several decades ago, depictions of fathers in these roles (and fathers, in general) are statistically infrequent (Coltrane & Allan, 1994). Because content and visual analyses of the parenting magazine photographs cannot describe whether the impact of seeing a few fathers engaging in more feminine caring roles makes up for the infrequency of

fatherhood depictions as readers form impressions of fathering behavior, further study on the media effects is recommended.

To guide further study on the framing of gender in parenting magazines, it might be beneficial to examine each step in the communication process, as outlined by Entman (1993): 1) the communicators, who make intended or unintended framing judgments based on the schemata that organize their beliefs; 2) the text, which contains frames through the presence or absences of keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, etc., that reinforce clusters of ideas; 3) the receiver, whose conclusions may not align with the text frame or the communicator's frame; and 4) the culture, which is a demonstrable set of common frames in the discourse of the majority in social groups. Whereas this quantitative content analysis and qualitative visual analysis explored the texts described in the second step, in-depth interviews, surveys, or ethnographic studies would reveal how the communicators in step one intentionally or unintentionally choose photographs with or without gendered meanings. In addition, focus groups, surveys, or experiments would reveal how the receivers in step three view the gender messages in the photographs and whether the gender models are internalized. This last direction of study would speak directly to whether the media effects described by the social learning theory are at work for readers of parenting magazines. Such effects can only be inferred from the results of a content and visual analysis. In addition, future studies could examine this study's main finding: boys and girls are more gender equal than mothers and fathers. Do other media formats reveal a similar pattern, or are parenting magazines unique in presenting gender-egalitarian children and gender-differentiated adults?

APPENDIX

CODING PROTOCOL

Gender

- 1=Male
- 2=Female
- 3=Unknown

Age

- 1=Infant
- 2=Toddler
- 3=Child
- 4=Teen
- 5=Adult

Note: Values 2, 3, and 4 were grouped for some statistical tests.

Story Type

Physical Well-being

- 1=Physical growth and development
- 2=Health and safety of children

Mental Well-being

- 3=Social development
- 4=Brain development and education

Recreation and Lifestyle

- 5=Play, recreation, and entertainment
- 6=Fashion, lifestyle, and travel
- 7=Food
- 8=Crafts and holiday celebrations

Family and Parent Issues

- 9=Employment and child care
- 10=Spousal relationships
- 11=Adult friendships
- 12=Parent health
- 13=Family planning
- 14=Being a parent
- 15=Finances

Other

- 16=Editor's letter
- 17=Parent-submitted tips, stories, and photos
- 18=NA (cover stories with no clear link to story)

Environment

- 1=Indoor home setting
- 2=Indoor non-home setting
- 3=Indoor non-discernable setting
- 4=Outdoors

Activity Type

- 1=Play/recreation
- 2=Learning
- 3=Work of housework activities
- 4=Communication (talking, listening, thinking, gesturing)
- 5=At rest (simply sitting, standing, lying down, or sleeping)
- 6=Deliberately posed (character acknowledges camera's presence)

Note: Values 4, 5, and 6 were grouped for some statistical analyses.

Activity Level

- 1=Low (at rest, communicating, other activities with limited movements)
- 2=Moderate (engaged in some sort of task that involved movement)
- 3=High (engaged in a strenuous task, such as athletics or intense play)

Artifacts*At Home*

- 1=Kitchen gadgets
- 2=Eating implements
- 3=Indoor household chore tools
- 4=Health and hygiene aids

At Play

- 5=Art supplies
- 6=Books and learning tools
- 7=Electronic media equipment
- 8=Toys
- 9=Musical instruments

On the Go

- 10=Sporting equipment
- 11=Transportation devices (bikes, boats and cars)

Other

- 12=Carrying devices
- 13=General tools
- 14=Outdoor home chore tools
- 15=Other
- 16=None

Peer Interaction

- 1=Cooperative
- 2=Competitive

- 3=No interaction between the peers in the photographs
- 4=NA – no peer in photographs

Parenting Style

- 1=Expressing Affection
- 2=Caring for child
- 3=Instructing/directing child
- 4=Playing with Child

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