

https://dspace.org/

Black like me : representations of black women in advertisements placed in contemporary South African magazines.

Masina, Nomalanga Leander

2011-04-14
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/9455

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Black Like Me: Representations of Black women in advertisements placed in contemporary South African magazines.

Nomalanga Leander Masina

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

September 2010

Declaration

I _____ (Student number: _____) am a

student registered for the degree of _____ in the academic year _____.

I hereby declare the following:

- I am aware that plagiarism (the use of someone else's work without their permission and/or without acknowledging the original source) is wrong.
- I confirm that the work submitted for assessment for the above degree is my own unaided work except where I have explicitly indicated otherwise.
- I have followed the required conventions in referencing the thoughts and ideas of others.
- I understand that the University of the Witwatersrand may take disciplinary action against me if there is a belief that this is not my own unaided work or that I have failed to acknowledge the source of the ideas or words in my writing.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ABSTRACT

Media analysis is used to investigate repetitive occurrences of dominant discourses circulating in the world. The recurring nature of periodicals such as magazines, allows research that tracks ideologies over time. The aim of this study was to uncover how black women's representations in two women's magazines indicated what normative roles the ideal readers were expected to play in their lives. I analysed representations of black women appearing in two South African magazines – True Love and Destiny. This analysis was situated within African feminist discourses, and utilised quantitative and qualitative research methods to unpack the types of representations present, and the frequency with which they occurred. The advertisements used appeared in the issues published between May 2009 and October 2009. From these I extracted 486 advertisements, 165 from Destiny and 321 in True Love. Critical Discourse Analysis informed the coding system that was used to analyse the meanings within the advertisements during the qualitative section of the research. Quantitative content analysis was then used to put a numerical description to the appearance of the codes, tracking the trends through time. I argue that the majority of images depicting black women in these advertisements privilege dominant heteronormative subjectivities. Interestingly, Destiny showed a wider variety of options available to the readership than True Love. My conclusion is that the representations with the highest rate of occurrence presented the subjugation of black women as the norm.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For my mothers who taught me that I always have a choice and my father whose courage in the face of tyranny reminds me that speaking and living with integrity is all that matters. Nobuhle and Ntabiso, thank you for your light.

Phumzile Ncube and Tamara Paremoer, two warrior poets whose intellectual rigor did not allow for any entropy on my part, thank you for your patience.

Pumla Gqola, my teacher, whose incredible mind guided me through the most memorable period of learning yet. I cannot thank you enough for your time, generosity and support.

Table of Contents

1 Chapter 1: Introduction 8

1.1 Introduction 8

1.2 Aim 9

1.3 Rationale 10

1.4 Research Questions 13

1.4.1 13

1.5 Hypothesis 13

2 Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review 14

2.1 Theoretical Framework 14

2.2 Literature Review 21

2.2.1 Signification, Representation, Ideology 21

2.2.2 Race 23

2.2.3 Race and Gender 28

2.2.4 Representations in magazines 30

3 Chapter 3: Research Methods 39

3.1 The Data 39

3.2 The Analysis 41

3.2.1 Quantitative Analysis 41

3.2.2 Qualitative Analysis 42

4 Chapter 4: Consumption 46

4.1 Context 46

4.2 Consumption of the female form 47

4.3 The Analysis 53

4.3.1 The surface meanings 53

4.3.2 Exploding the text – ideological meaning 58

4.3.3 Conclusion 64

5 Chapter 5: Simple steps to the real you 66

5.1 Context 66

5.2 Skin deep 66

5.3 The Analysis 71

5.3.1 The surface meanings 71
5.3.2 Exploding the text – ideological meaning 81
5.4 Conclusion 84
6 Chapter 6: Relaxing 86
6.1 Context 86
6.2 Hair matters 87
6.3 The Analysis 93
6.3.1 The surface meanings 94
6.3.2 Exploding the text – ideological meaning 99
6.4 Conclusion 102
7 Chapter 7: Erasure 104
7.1 Context 104
7.2 Wipe away your imperfections 104
7.3 The Analysis 108
7.3.1 The surface meanings 108
7.3.2 Exploding the text – ideological meaning 116
7.4 Conclusion 121
8 Chapter 8: Overview and Discussion 124
8.1 Context 124
8.2 Overview 124
8.2.1 Media Ownership 124
8.2.2 Advertisers 126
8.2.3 Readership of these magazines 128
8.3 The advertisement trends specific to these publications 129
8.3.1 Advertising allocation 129
8.3.2 Trend Charts 132
8.3.3 Detailed Trend Charts 133
8.3.4 Others 138
8.4 Conclusion 140
9 Chapter 9: Conclusion 143
9.1 Purpose of research 143
9.2 Overview of results 143

9.2.1 Consumption 143
9.2.2 Simple steps 144
9.2.3 Relaxing 144
9.2.4 Erasure 145
9.2.5 Overview and Discussion 147
9.3 Limitations of study 148
9.4 Implications of research 149
10 Bibliography 151

1 Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The transition of South Africa from apartheid to a non-racial democracy is worthy of study as it is an example of extreme reformation of a group's identity. From separatism, to a new phase that puts a stress on diversity, the transformation of institutions has the potential to elucidate the relations of power between groups over a decade later.

The second decade of democracy has created an environment where researchers can look back at the transition and begin to unpack the development trends that have occurred since the abolition of apartheid. South African media, like the society, has undergone change – the liberalisation of the broadcasting sector, the local production of tabloids, the surge in internet usage for media distribution, and the shifts in media ownership patterns show that the changes have been felt in all spheres of media production (Hadland, Louw, Sesanti, & Wasserman, 2008). As significant as these structural changes may be, however, research into representations within media by authors such as Britten (2005), Laden (2003, 2007, 2008), Sanger (2007, 2008), and Gqola (2001, 2007) has shown that dominant discourses that favour certain subjectivities still remain.

The following chapters will explore these subjectivities by analysing representations of gender and race in two women's lifestyle magazines produced in South Africa – *True Love* magazine and *Destiny* magazine. Media analysis is a way to investigate repetitive occurrences of certain discourses because of the recurring nature of media, especially periodicals such as lifestyle magazines. These magazines contain advertising content within their pages, and due to repetition this content has a normalising effect on dominant ideologies. I have chosen magazines because they are a large part of the media network that circulates dominant

constructions of raced and gendered bodies, and as such are able to elucidate the discourses that are normalised.

In her work on media representations in magazines Narunsky-Laden (2008) shows the ways in which media has created a framework through which the redefinition of South African citizenship must be enacted. She discusses how the racialised discourse of identity that structured apartheid continues to inform and structure popular discourse today,

> "These articulations [within magazines] are strikingly symptomatic of how advertising identities are typically presented as 'authentic' productions of the idealized self which are at once culturally encoded and pre-determined." (Narunsky-Laden, 2008, p. 126)

Meanings attached to identity markers such as race and gender remain significant even after 16 years of democracy in South Africa because the repeated themes in media, in advertising specifically, serve to indicate who should be treated in what ways.

1.2 Aim

The aim of this study is to uncover how black women's representations indicate what normative roles they are expected to play in their real lives. I do this by analysing the dominant discourses that appear in magazine advertisements.

The texts to be studied will be from two locally produced women's magazines, namely *True Love* magazine and *Destiny* magazine. Both quantitative content analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis have been utilised as the research methods which will uncover the normalised discourses within the publication. These tools have allow for a detailed analysis into the structure of the texts, calling out repeated themes whose discourse is unpacked further in the following chapters.

1.3 Rationale

Hadland, Louw, Sesanti & Wasserman (2008) argue that that scholarly debates around media production in post-apartheid society have tended to focus on three issues. Firstly, there have been studies focussed on structural shifts, studying ownership changes, editorial changes and the media's relationship with society. Secondly, studies have questioned professional issues such as 'public interest' or the media's role as watchdog over the state. Lastly, studies have questioned symbolic dimensions of production such as representation, with race and gender enjoying particular attention. My study takes these ideas further by investigating the intersections between these three areas, showing how they overlap in magazines.

This study has arisen from the fact that racially motivated policies of the apartheid government alienated groups of South Africans from each other, and this alienation has had wide reaching consequences to this day, for the population as a whole. The legislation has changed, yet it is not guaranteed that mindsets have as well. So while the idea of unity within diversity may seem to have permeated all structures of society, I argue that black women continue to be portrayed in ways that normalised their continuous subjugation.

I have chosen to use magazine advertisements as the focus of this study because the aim of advertising is to mirror for the hopes and aspirations of the communities in which they act. This is to say, advertisements sell aspirations, not products. By studying them, one begins to get a sense of the roles that different people are expected to play in society, to quote Sarah Britten,

> "Advertising broadly reflects (while at the same time attempting to shape) the needs and desires of consumers, it can be argued that tracking South African advertising over the post-apartheid period will reveal deeper concerns and tendencies circulating within the society that both produced and consumed it." (Britten, 2005, p. 8)

Magazine advertisements provide a staging ground from which "strategies of action" (Narunsky-Laden, 2008, p. 127) may be formed. They are a source of data whose imperative is the reimaging and generation of understandings and instructions governing the appropriate behaviour of an individual at any given time. By providing a visual representation of what is to be aspired to, not the given state of affairs, they solidify their role as the manual for the perfect society,

> "[It] is their evocative power, and that of the cultural commodities and beliefs they recommend, that concerns us here; these are the means by which they provide valid ways for people to imagine as plausible alternative realities which may be structurally opposed to their existing reality." (Narunsky-Laden, 2008, p. 127)

According to feminists such as Chandra Mohanty (1996), history frames black women as singular monolithic subjects, wiping away the stories specific to them, and leaving black women with no alternative representations of themselves. This problem affects media production, argues Happy Ntshingila, who is the co-founder of the first black owned South African advertising agency. He writes that lack of alternative views stems from the fact that the producers of this media are so far removed from the reality of their readers, in this case black women, that they subscribe roles that are caricatures, benefiting the producer not the consumer (2009, p. 27). By this argument, *True Love* magazine and *Destiny* magazine which are produced by black women should in theory show alternative representations of black women on their advertising pages.

Advertisements that appear in magazines are interesting in that they show widely accepted understandings of how subjects should behave in order to be accepted as part of this ideal. Racial imagery is central to the organization of the world, and every decision about a person's worth is based on what they look like, what they speak, and where they came from (Dyer, 1997).

Advertisements that appear in lifestyle magazines are of particular interest because the role of these magazines is to mould the reader into the prototype the reader is told to aspire to; therefore any advertising that appears in a magazine's pages will be in line with this mould. One could use *Coke* as an example of this lifestyle sale, when *Coke* urges you to "Live on the Coke side of life", it's not saying that by drinking their product you will suddenly live on the *Coke* side of life, what they are saying is that the group of people you should aspire to be around share the same interests, and one of those interests is *Coke*. *Coke* becomes the central theme and is therefore one way of becoming part of the in-crowd. In looking at the portrayal of black women in South African print advertisements, we can begin to see who the in-crowd is and what the acceptable ideal for black women within South Africa is.

True Love magazine was first published in 1972 and envisaged as the sister magazine to *Drum* magazine. Self described as "All a woman needs" on every single cover it produces, *True Love* magazine is a lifestyle publication focused on fashion, and it positions itself in the market as a chronicle of the roads women in South Africa have travelled over the past 37 years. *Destiny* magazine's positioning differs from that of *True Love* magazine as it describes itself as a high-end business and lifestyle magazine for women that "is aimed at accomplished, stylish and intellectually curious women who are either interested in, or actively engaged in business" (Destiny Magazine, 2009, p. 12). The motivation for choosing these two magazines is that they are both produced by and cater to black women. These magazines are relevant to this study of media as I would like to ascertain whether or not the advertisements shown in *Destiny* reflect the range of choices available to black women as they shape their lives and carve out their identities.

This study is important because while there have been studies that analyse women's representations in magazines (Baker, 2005; Britten, 2005; Covell & Lanis, 1995; Jooma, 2009; Narunsky-Laden, 2001, 2007 & 2008; Linder, 2004; Monro & Huon, 2004; Plous & Neptune,

1997; Sanger, 2007), there is a gap in the study of self-reflexivity in media produced by black women. The analysis in this study unpacks the ways in which black women are represented in media that caters to them. My study takes the view that decades into democracy, we should be able to see an oppositional approach to media production by black women, because they have an unprecedented amount of power as potential producers of socially conscious media. This is in agreement with Sanger (2007) who writes that private media operates as an agent of socialisation, privileging certain discourses around race and gender. I argue that it is because of privilege that black women who produce media have an opportunity to question and present alternative views of race and gender. The following chapters will show the editorial stance of the magazines by focussing on the advertisements chosen for display in these periodicals.

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1

- What themes are given preference in the advertisement allocations of these two magazines?
- To what extent are these themes are given preference in the advertisement allocations of these two magazines?
- How do the themes relate to the mandate of empowerment that the magazines are published under?

1.5 Hypothesis

As discussed above, media normalises certain subject positions, benefiting dominant heteronormative discourses. With this in mind, my hypothesis is that even the media produced by black women will show the markers of subjugation of black women, because mass media

circulates these heteronormative discourses, and these discourses historically disenfranchise black women.

2 Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

According to Howard-Hamilton (2003) the application of appropriate theoretical frameworks to the research of black women is always challenging because so many theories are general and do not consider multiple identities and roles. Black men must face racism in their lives but they do not have to contend with sexism, white women have to make their voices heard in patriarchal societies, but do not have to fight against white supremacy. It is black women who are faced with both racism and sexism, and although black women have these multiple identities, within this there are variations in experience depending on class and location.

It is because of these multiple identities that I will use two frameworks in this research, Critical Race Theory and Black Feminist Theory. The combination of these theories allows for a detailed study into the intersections of race, class, and gender within the lived experiences of black women. This intersectionality, as conceived of by Kimberle Crenshaw (1991) is important to take note of because it allows us to understand that black women face racism and sexism concurrently, and that these multiple roles require a manner of discussing race and gender that is specific to these intersections.

In order to study images of black women in South African media, it is critical to understand how "race" has been conceived of historically first. With this, will come an understanding of how the concept has shifted, and continues to shift, in social science and how this influences our understanding of "race" in this moment. In America Critical Race Theory (CRT) developed as a critical response to deeply entrenched, everyday thought processes that are taken for granted. According to Treviño et al (2008) the essence of Critical Race Theory is to advocate justice for

those who have been subjugated historically due to racial classification. It is a way to direct attention to structural configurations that disadvantage black people while benefiting white supremacy within society. This theory then becomes a "device for conveying personal racialised experiences but also as a way of countering the metanarratives – the images, preconceptions, and myths – that have been propagated by the dominant culture of hegemonic Whiteness as a way of maintaining racial inequality" Treviño et al (2008, p. 9).

Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic (2000) write that Critical Race Theory began in America in the mid-1970s with the aim to understand and deal with the subtle nuanced, but just as deeply entrenched, varieties of systematic racism that characterize everyday life. They put forward that CRT works on the basic assumption that racism is not an anomaly in any society, but a way in which a powerful group can actively ensure that they retain their power over the less powerful under the pretext of racial difference. In race terms those who have power are white, and it is white supremacy that has historically entrenched racism to such an extent that it remains within systems of governance and economic participation. These entrenched tools of racist oppression are more difficult to fight against because racism is rendered invisible when decisions about who is allowed access to information, health care, and education are accorded to institutions such as the state. It is because of this that CRT looks to other forms of analysis to counter the effects of this invisible oppression. It may take the form of analysing stories and myths that make up the common sense assumptions of race starting from the premise that societies construct realities in order to maintain the status quo.

Much of feminist thought has been marred by what Adrienne Rich, an American feminist, describes as "white solipsism" (Bhavnani, 2001, p. 75), which is the tendency to think, speak and write as if white experience describes and extends to the experiences of everyone in the world. It is not a view that white people are inherently superior to other races, but the blinkered vision that does not allow any importance to be ascribed to experiences that are not white. Rich argues

that the only recognition of other experiences comes as guilt reflexes that have no long term effects.

Hill Collins (2002) writes that black feminist thought in America, much like any other specialised scholarship, reflects the standpoint of its creators. This comes to mean more when we examine who creates and controls the validity of all specialised scholarship. It is because elite white men control structures of knowledge validation black feminist thought can at best be seen as "subjugated knowledge" (Collins P. H., 1991). She writes that black feminists have been forced to find alternative sites, such as music and literature, to articulate their lived experience. This speaks directly to Mohanty (1996) and her analysis of 'third world' feminist discourse which argues that the combination of Western assumptions of privilege and ethnocentric universality, and inadequate self-consciousness about the effects of Western scholarship on the 'third world' are characteristic of most Western feminist work on women in the 'third world'. It is because feminism is located under the banner of specialised thought, it is controlled by the elite and their control structures of validation,

> "Only from the vantage point of the West is it possible to define the 'third world' as underdeveloped and economically dependent. Without the overdetermined discourse that creates the third world, there would be no (singular and privileged) first world." (Mohanty, 1996, p. 190)

Bhavnani (2001) writes from an American perspective when she puts forward that black feminist thought's potential significance goes far beyond demonstrating that black women can produce independent, specialised knowledge. Such thought can encourage collective identity by offering black women a different view of themselves and their world than that offered by the established social order (2001, p. 186). As an African feminist, Latha (2001) cautions against generalisations which do not give enough thought to the historically specific and complex realities of African women, writing that an understanding of women's disempowerment in

particular contexts are crucial to the culturally specific understandings of women in post-colonial societies (2001).

Essof (2001)points out that in Africa 'feminism' is a contested term, citing Mama's exploration of African feminisms as indicating that there are three distinct schools of thought that relate to this internal challenge. The first school of thought, she writes, says that there are those who see feminism as a bourgeoisie invention of the West with no real value or meaning to African women. The second states that there is a need to recognise women's inequality and overcome it, but that there should be a renaming of the concept, as womanists and Islamic feminists have. Womanism is a feminist tradition that derives from black feminism and was easily translated into the anti-apartheid context because womanism is a self-identified, self-rooted concept providing a single-gendered, single racial space for the struggle and solidarity among black women. Essof (2001) argues that this space was central in forming a specific type of feminist consciousness among women in the 1980s. The third school of thought says the challenge is that the term 'feminist' should be retained and made into something African women can own by filling it with their specific meanings. What this shows is that there are numerous ways that black African women can articulate their views. Black feminists in Africa have to register an understanding of context and specificity of our location in order to avoid the pitfalls of locating ourselves in the rhetoric of western-centric feminism, and ignoring the theoretical advances located in local experiences. As Gqola (2001) argues, central to the work of black feminism is the valuing of black women's everyday experiences.

De la Rey (1997) writes the recognition of differences in experience contributed to a significant shift in African feminist theory, allowing for theory that rejects the essentialism within the idea that all women share the same experience of patriarchy, she notes,

> "Being a woman is not distinct from being either black or working-class or heterosexual. We cannot partial out gender from the rest of who we are - for we are simultaneously

> classed, raced and gendered. Hence, we cannot talk about my experience of being a woman without talking about my race and my class for how I experience the social world and others' responses to me are inextricably tied to all these axes of difference."(de la Rey, 1997, p. 7)

This is especially relevant with this study as I, the researcher, do not want to make the mistake of missing these intersections and placing myself in the position of one who is already liberated, thereby framing the women who appear in these advertisements as "victims of the colonial process" and "victims of the economic development process" (Mohanty, 1996, p. 192). Qunta (1987) echoes this, cautioning that the native researcher "like her alien counterpart, has to overcome her class stand in order to take a class position opposing, as the oppressed have done, imperialism" (Qunta, 1987, p. 92).

This idea is reiterated by bell hooks, who argues that mainstream feminism in America tends not to arise from women who are the most victimized, who are most likely to endure extreme sexist oppression, the women who are seen as being powerless to change their lived experience (Bhavnani, 2001, p. 33). Rather, it is powered by women who have enough autonomy to speak out, those who have enough money to be heard, whose bodies are safe enough to risk masculine backlash. Mainstream feminism has made the plight of white women, who enjoy the benefits of being white, synonymous with the state of oppression experienced by all women, most of whom are not white or from the middle class. In doing that failed to call attention to the differences associated with classist, racist, sexist attitudes put forward by women against other women, "feminism has its party line and women who feel a need for a different strategy, a different foundation, often find themselves ostracized and silenced" (Bhavnani, 2001, p. 37).

bell hooks writes,

> "The oppositional black culture that emerged in the context of apartheid and segregation has been one of the few locations that has provided a space for the kind of decolonization that makes loving blackness possible. Racial integration in a social context where white supremacist systems are intact undermines marginal spaces of resistance by promoting the assumption that social equality can be attained without changes in the cultures and attitudes about blackness and black people." (hooks, 1987, p. 10)

In addition to being black, being a woman is another role we have to play. The intersections between race and gender are important to take note of because it is through them that the lives of Black women are elucidated. As bell hooks puts forward,

> "White women and black men have it both ways. They can act as oppressor or be oppressed. Black men may be victimized by racism, but sexism allows them to act as exploiters and oppressors of women. White women may be victimized by sexism, but racism allows them to act as exploiters and oppressors of black people." (Bhavnani, 2001, p. 39)

Black women have no institutionalized 'other' to oppress, so we live lives that directly challenge all prevailing classist, sexist, and racists social structures. hooks argues that it is because of this specificity, this special vantage point, that black women should use their lived experience to shape the consciousness of the feminist movement in research. On the subject of research, Collins writes that any specialised scholarship reflects the standpoint of its creators. This comes to mean more when we examine who creates and controls the validity of all specialised scholarship. It is because elite white men control structures of knowledge validation that black feminist thought can at best be seen as "subjugated knowledge" (Collins P. H., 1991, p. 202). She writes,

> "Institutions, paradigms, and other elements of the knowledge validation procedure controlled by elite white men constitute the Eurocentric masculinist knowledge validation process. The purpose of this process is to represent a white male standpoint." (Collins P. H., 1991, p. 203)

What this means is that white men's validity processes continue to mask black women's work in a manner that is invisible, through frameworks that provide answers to questions they deem necessary. According to Collins (2002), there are three key themes black feminist thought uses to break out of this cycle. Firstly, the framework is shaped and produced by the experiences black women have encountered in their lives. Secondly, although the stories of black women are unique there remain intersections and linkages between women, shared experiences. Thirdly, while common threads between women can be seen, diversity of age, sexuality and class call for an understanding that these experiences can be read and understood in varying ways. Collins writes that these themes may not be readily apparent so one of the roles of researcher or "Black female intellectuals is to produce facts and theories about the Black female experience that will clarify a Black woman's standpoint for Black women" (Collins P. H., 2002, p. 469). These themes highlight the fact that the ways in which others have shaped Black women's identities have been erroneous and new means of study are necessary to counteract these stereotypical depictions.

Collins (2002) puts forward that black women are not only outsiders within sociology, that we are an extreme case of outsiders moving into a community that has historically excluded us, that our experiences and work have the opportunity to elucidate the tension experienced by any group of less powerful outsiders encountering the thought of a more powerful insider community. Although black feminist thought comes from an American context, it's still very relevant to South African studies because, to quote Nkululeko (1987, p. 88) "knowledge cannot best be determined by alien researchers, who will always be laden with the trappings of their

own history, values, culture and ideology", black women must have the right to self-determination in research if we are to fully engage in our lived experience.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Signification, Representation, Ideology

Before I discuss the terrain that 'race' has inhabited through time it is necessary to discuss the nature and importance of representation and discourse. Representation is the production of meaning through language. It is through language because the medium uses signs to symbolize, stand for or reference material objects in the real world, or abstract ideas, such as love, which are not readily apparent in the world,

> "Language is one of the 'media' through which thoughts, ideas and feelings are represented in a culture. Representation through language is therefore central to the processes by which meaning is produced." (Hall, 1997)

Discourses are circulated in the world through the use of language. In order to exemplify this we can look at the discourses of femininity that circulate through women's magazines, these discourses gain power through this medium because of its repetitive nature and can only circulate because of the language and shared understandings that magazines distribute. Discourse, as argued by Foucault, constructs the topic, it is the definer and producer of the objects of our knowledge - it defines how a concept can be meaningfully discussed and reasoned about. Discourse is not merely the vehicle that conjures or hides desires,

> "Discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized." (Foucault, 1981, p. 53)

Discourses never consist of a single statement or thought, the same discourses or "episteme" as described by Foucault (Hall, 1997, p. 44). Discourses appear throughout a range of texts and actions which are characteristic of the way of thinking or the state of knowledge at a given moment in time. When these discursive events appear over a range of texts or media sharing the same style and supporting the same line of thinking, they are then said by Foucault to have the same discursive formation. These formations are important because they create repetition and practice which creates meaning within a given discourse (Hall, 1997).

It is important to understand discursive formations and where they come from because, as Foucault argues, it is discourse which produces meaning, not subjects. Subjects may produce certain texts, like advertisements within women's magazines for example, but they operate within the discursive formation when they produce and advertisements about 'hair relaxer'. Here one of Foucault's most radical assertions is brought to light,

> "[T]he subject is produced within discourse. The subject of discourse cannot be outside discourse, because it must be subjected to discourse. It must submit to its rules and conventions, to its dispositions of power/knowledge." (Hall, 1997, p. 55)

The subject is the bearer of the knowledge which produced within the discourse. This conceptualization of where the subject sits in relation to the discourse from which the subject speaks is vital in understanding the different conceptions of race and gender that have evolved through time. Ultimately, society privileges certain subjectivities and because of this other configurations of self are rendered invisible,

> "There is no single 'truth', only different constructions, different representations, some of which are read as 'fact', some 'fiction', depending on the way they are functionally contextualised and by whom and in whose interests." (Threadgold & Cranny-Francis, 1990, p. 3)

What Threadgold & Cranny-Francis show is that there are no discourses that are more truthful than others. There are only discourses that hold more power. Understanding this allows us to see that the work done by 'race' is not about truth, but about a dominant discourse that maintains relations of power through serving the interests of a more powerful group, while subjugating a less powerful group.

2.2.2 Race

The concept of 'race' describes the division of populations according to physical characteristics such as skin, eye colour, and hair texture (Banton, 2000; Cox, 2000; Dyer, 1997; Delgado & Stefancic, 2000; Miles, 2000; Winant, 2000). According to Miles (2000),

> "[Race] is an idea created by human beings in certain historical and material conditions, and used to represent and structure the world in certain ways, under certain historical conditions and for certain political interests." (p. 192)

The division of population groups according to 'race' can be understood as the determining force that allows a more powerful group to organise social relations according to physical characteristics, which are seen as the embodiment of natural differences between people (Miles, 2000). This organisation occurs in a manner that oppresses the less powerful group. This oppression was evidenced by the divisions of populations during apartheid in which the more powerful group of white supremacists oppressed the less powerful black population.

In the essay, "The theoretical status of the concept of race", Winant (2000, p. 182) critically discusses two opposing views on the contemporary theory of race – race as an ideological

construct, and race as an objective condition. Winant goes on to offer a third perspective that recognises the importance of historical context in the framing of racial categories and the social construction of racially defined experiences, much like Goldberg (1999) does in his discussion. The first viewpoint, that of "race as an ideological construct" (Winant, 2000, p. 185), puts forward the idea that race is nothing but false consciousness, a choice that is voluntarily held onto by many. This argument from Fields (2000, p. 182) does not adequately explain the power 'race' has as a concept because it does not seem to be aware of the salience that a social construct develops over hundreds of years. It fails to recognise that at the level of daily experience in an individual's life "race" is almost an impenetrable part of our lives. Guillaumin writes that in the last decade theorists have been at a crucial stage in the development of the concept of race, noting that this attempt to completely eradicate the concept of race by calling it a construct that does not exist represents a turning point where the origins of the concept can now be studied critically, separate from the common sense view of our age (Guillaumin, 1999).

The second view states that "[r]ace [is] an objective condition", arguing that as socio-political circumstances evolve over time racially defined groups will evolve and adapt to rule the world or fail, trapped in poverty (Winant, 2000, p. 187). Cox (Miles, 2000, p. 128) also discusses this approach to theorizing race as "a social attitude propagated . . . by an exploiting class for the purpose of stigmatising some group as inferior so that the exploitation of either the group itself, its resources or both may be justified". This way people in the working class, for example, who do not have the means of production are usually seen to come from a certain race group, and the people who control the means of production are from another group. According to Cox, this view does not adequately take into consideration the constructed nature of racial meaning and its power when it comes to the link between the social and the economic. Goldberg (1999, p. 366) agrees with this assessment, writing that this conception of race masks dominant economic relationships, considering race to be a materially determined, socially formed class position. What this does is take power away from race by emptying it, and implying that class is the

determiner of racial categories. I do not think that this conception is very useful because it assumes that different races of people will naturally appear in separate classes, so it does not account for the multitude of relations that cannot be explained away through class differences. This definition would mean that any discussion about race would just be a discussion about class under the guise of 'race'.

Winant (2000, p. 185) writes that we must move towards a critical theory of the concept of race, taking into account "Contemporary Political Relationships", meaning that there must be an awareness of the constant reconstruction of racial meanings and transmission. Through analysis of media these changes can be observed. If we look at advertisements specifically, one can see that racial markers are always used, whether it is a specific accent in a radio commercial, or a name in a print advert, certain signifiers are always used to mark race. Markers such as providing the person's name, occupation and place of residence allow race to be present without being explicitly named. "The Global Context of Race" (Winant, 2000, p. 185) is the breakdown of geographic barriers allowing communities that are physically distant from each other to share certain cultures and identities. Magazines are an effective example of this as they leap from continent to continent fluidly, not only in printed form but through the internet and other technologies as well, ensuring that raced knowledge made apparent by the racial signifiers, is shared throughout the world.

Guillaumin (1999) writes that race as a concept has become transformed through technological advances, and used as the means through which states achieve their goals of domination, exploitation ad extermination. For this reason it is important to understand its evolution through time and study its impact on the formation of popular discourses today.

'Race' is discursively constituted, and because of this that it is important to discuss the ways in which discourse works in the process of meaning production. This discussion is crucial in order to understand the ways in which all subject positions are discursively positioned, including mine

as a researcher. This then allows us to see how 'race' impacts on the production of discursive texts.

In "The Order of Discourse" (1971), Foucault examines discourse and its relevance to the production of meaning in the world. The central argument is that in all societies the production of discourse is selected, organised, controlled and then redistributed by a number of procedures whose role it is to put forward what is acceptable as truth in that space in that particular period of time. An example of this is discourses about race in South Africa, showing that at any given time the dominant discourses about race will be selected by a number of procedures and put out into the world as an acceptable truth. During apartheid the dominant discourse was that of separation, and through procedures such as the law, education and media, this idea of races needing to be separated permeated throughout society as an acceptable truth, until a new truth emerged, leading to the eventual demise of the formal apartheid system. These shared understandings are in constant flux, growing and evolving as the societies they inhabit change. Foucault writes that each procedure is designed to preclude the powers and dangers of unrestricted discourse, gaining "mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality" (Foucault, 1971, p. 52).

The Foucauldian view of subjectivity is of the self pulled in different directions by competing discourses,

> "[F]or Foucault power is not only coercive, but also productive of kinds of relationship and experience. Our own investment in discourses is emphasized when we consider who would promote and who would oppose these discourses." (Levett, Kottler, Burman, & Parker, 1997, p. 4)

In order to study the representations of black women, it is important to locate this study in the history of the issue of race. The understanding of race should rely on the historical study of

racial thought and attitude through time. In order to explore the role of race in the contemporary moment, it is imperative that we place the ways in which race has been conceived of historically within the confines of the scholars' understanding of the term, and within the framework of their knowledge. The production of human knowledge is implicated in the ways in which race has been conceived of through time. In turn, the conception of race is not static itself, it too shapes human knowledge. This idea is expanded in Goldberg's (1999) work on the semantics of race, as he suggests that a more effective way of studying race may not be defining race conceptually, but looking at how the term 'race' has been used in different times. He writes that studies should unpack what the idea has signified and how these notions have served to mould a conception for the users as individuals and of group identities,

> "We should focus, rather, on a different set of concerns: how has the term been used at different times, what has it signified, and how has it served to articulate a conception for its users of self-and group-identity, of self and other?" (Goldberg, 1999, p. 363)

Goldberg defines the use of 'race' as the "racist expression [that consists of] the promotion or actual exclusion of people in virtue of their being deemed to be members of different racial groups" (Goldberg, 1999, p. 364).

Although race has often been made to sound as if it is part of an innocuous allocation of human characteristics, similar to that of gender, both race and gender are not harmless categories or uncontested truths. As Guillaumin argues, the idea of categorizing people according to closed anatomical and physiological groups that have nothing to do with a person's character are astonishing because this creates a link between people who may have nothing to do with each other. With the use of a physical trait as a marker large groups of people with no relationship with each other can be grouped and designated as a single entity,

> "Heterogeneous lines of thought came to be fused in the single claim that human groups were differential by nature, and that there was a natural line of separation between them ... It is an idea built up (and slowly at that) from elements which might equally well be physical traits as social customs, linguistic peculiarities as legal institutions, lumped together and homogenized according to the precept that they must ultimately all be biological phenomena." (Guillaumin, 1999, p. 358)

Guillaumin cautions that this weight on what constitutes as biological is especially potent in a societies whose power is entwined with that which should be classified and understood as coming into being through scientific rigor.Whether or not race is considered to be a scientific fact, it is still a reality legally, politically and historically, playing a real and constraining role within societies (Guillaumin, 1999). While scholars may agree that the biological reality of race does not exist, the effects of the concepts can still be felt, because it is this power that allowed apartheid to flourish, it is this power that was incorporated into law and it is this power which governs how certain groups of people are treated and expected to behave. The racing of knowledge affects the ways in which representations circulate within society. It is through this circulation that our own conceptions of self are shaped by the racial knowledge available to us. Having moved through the histories of 'race' and come to understand how it is configured in representation and social science, we can begin to look at the ways 'race' is always gendered.

2.2.3 Race and Gender

The concept of 'gender' is a cultural construct that describes how bodies should perform according to the social constructions of men and women (Berger, 1972; Butler, 1993; Threadgold & Cranny-Francis, 1990; Wolf, 1991). As Jackson & Scott (2002) define the concept, 'gender' is the hierarchical division between men and women embedded in both social institutions and social practices. Gender can thus be said to be a structural social phenomenon which is produced, negotiated and sustained at the level of everyday interactions. Butler (1993) defines

'gender' in a more specific manner, writing that it is the cultural construct imposed upon the surface of matter which is understood as either 'the body' or its given sex. The performativity of gendered bodies is not brought about by the subject bringing into being what they name, as mentioned in the discourse discussion above; rather, it is the discourse that binds the subject, producing the regulations and constraints of their gender performance. In the same way that raced subjects speak from within discourses, people perform their gendered subjectivities from within the constraints of gendered discourse. Gender should thus be described as not only encompassing social divisions between women and men, but should also include the characteristics commonly associated with femininity and masculinity (Jackson & Scott, 2002, p. 2).

Ferber (1999) notes that because race and gender are social constructs, they are not constructed in isolation and often appear entwined with other categories of identity, resonating with the work of the African feminists discusses above (Essof, 2001; Gqola, 2001; de la Rey, 1997). This is similar to Carby's (2000) critique of feminism as rendering black women's stories as invisible by structuring feminism around white women's debates. Both Ferber (1999) and Carby agree with Collins and hooks, criticising "single-axis" (Ferber, 1999, p. 214) theories that separate race and gender, assuming that white women's experiences shape all gender discourses.

I locate my study within these intersections of race and gender as I study these advertisements, because black women are always aware of the ways in which whiteness and masculinity exert their privilege over our lived experiences simultaneously.

Sanger's (2007) study of representations of gender, race and sexuality in English–medium South African magazines is particularly relevant to my study because she stresses the importance of taking note of intersections between race, gender and sexuality within research into representations. Her work speaks to hooks' (Bhavnani, 2001) argument calling for further analysis into the multiple roles that black women have to play. In my research I illuminate the

ways in which black women are depicted in black women's magazines in order to see what these magazines prescribe as roles black women are expected to inhabit.

2.2.4 Representations in magazines

Nadia Sanger (2008) draws on Stuart Hall's (1992) concept of the media as definer of realities, not just a producer, when she writes that is important to take note of portrayals of black femininity in magazines because magazines play a large role within the framework of mass media, a space which uses repetition to establish normativity in the popular imagination. This idea of mass media, and advertisements in particular, as being a space where ideologies are developed and repeated until they are taken to be common sense, is one that is written about by a range of authors who have studied raced and gendered representations that appear in South African magazines (Linder, 2004; Narunsky-Laden, 2007; Odhiambo, 2008; Sanger, 2007). Narunsky-Laden (2007) in particular has described magazines being as ubiquitous vehicles of social opinion with a wide reach. Research into advertisements that appear in magazines has shown that this content has an influence on how people make judgments about and relate to one another, indicating that the role of these periodicals requires further analysis (Baker, 2005; Covell & Lanis, 1995; Neptune & Plous, 1997).

Narunsky–Laden's studies look at the ways media has created a framework in which the redefinition of South African citizenship must be enacted. She discusses the ways the racialised discourse of identity that structured apartheid continues to inform and structure popular discourse today. She notes that the "articulations [within magazines] are strikingly symptomatic of how advertising identities are typically presented as 'authentic' productions of the idealized self which are at once culturally encoded and pre-determined" (Narunsky-Laden, 2008, p. 126). These productions that appear authentic because they mirror our lives and merge them with our aspirations, and this is where their power lies. Producers of advertisements have the ability to create a scene in a magazine, and in other media forms, and these scenes have real power

because they provide a staging ground from which "strategies of action" (Narunsky-Laden, 2008, p. 127) may be formed. These strategies provide the reader with a map detailing how they should perform the roles advertisements assign, in their real lives. They are a source of data whose imperative is the reimaging and generation of understandings and instructions governing the appropriate behaviour of an individual at any given time. By providing a visual representation of what is to be aspired to, not the given state of affairs, they solidify their role as the manual for the perfect society,

> "It is their evocative power, and that of the cultural commodities and beliefs they recommend, that concerns us here; these are the means by which they provide valid ways for people to imagine as plausible alternative realities which may be structurally opposed to their existing reality." (Narunsky-Laden, 2008, p. 127)

Narunsky-Laden's view is of a consumer culture whose existence is a means of regulating change, thereby increasing the stabilizing effect of the emerging social order. The consumption of the magazines and the advertisements within them, allows the most powerful discourses, which appear on the pages, to take effect and ensure that the readers know what the dominant ideologies are. Advertisements are one of the most powerful vehicles of social communication with the power to structure common differences in the "age of globalization" (Narunsky-Laden, 2008, p. 128).

Narunsky-Laden posits that endless circulation of these seemingly innocuous periodicals which use formulaic models is in itself interesting, as it is this repetition that allows magazines to carry out cultural work. On one hand, magazines are seen as frivolous entertainment that should not be taken too seriously, but on the other hand, the regularity of the production of these periodicals lends credibility to the information published, because production is so consistent. This means that "the prevailing attitude toward the magazine as a seemingly non-committal product, which seeks primarily to invoke entertainment, may be precisely what enables

magazine professionals to successfully ensure its endless appeal" (Narunsky-Laden, 2007, p. 597). Odhiambo echoes this thought and warns that "uncritical depictions of black women in the popular media undermine societal efforts to realise social transformation" (Odhiambo, 2008, p. 72), social transformation which is supposed to underpin the evolution of the new South Africa.

In her examination of the portrayal of women in advertisements Linder (2004) looks at two magazines *Time* (general interest) and *Vogue* (women's magazine) in order to plot the differences in the representations of women in two magazines which target different audiences. She is in agreement with the arguments put forward by Narunsky-Laden (2003), Odhiambo (2008) and Sanger (2007) who write about representations in magazines and argue that advertisements present images that detail what is considered to be appropriate behaviour at any given time. She writes that these "images also act as socializing agents that influence our attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviours" (Linder, 2004, p. 409). She goes on to argue that these images contain messages about gender roles that may be subtle, but create a relationship between these portrayals and ideas about women's roles, and potions they should occupy within society.

Linder argues that between the 1950s and the 1990s women were shown more often as being independent of men by their entrance into the corporate world, however "the trend toward gender equality (i.e., men and women engaging in more similar activities and behaviours) was counteracted by an increase in women portrayed in purely decorative and sexualized roles" (Linder, 2004, p. 410). This shows that progress in the area of women attempting to gain financial independence was counteracted by negatives in other areas, as evidenced by the increase in the commodification of women's bodies. As Linder (Linder, 2004) argues, this is a backlash that seems to have occurred as a response by patriarchy to women gaining power over their lives and moving into more professional spaces. Locally, Gqola's (2007) work on 'women's empowerment' in South Africa shows that all of the markers described above indicate that there

is a contestation between women's independence and the counteraction in seemingly innocuous ways. She argues that there seems to be an assertion that women must adapt and live within the systems constraints. They must inhabit these spaces they have been "empowered" (Gqola, 2007, p. 116) ()into in specific ways that ultimately oppress them if they are to participate in the workplace. I believe that in women's magazines today we can still observe the contestation between women's progress in gaining some social power in their lives, being counteracted by media portrayals disempowering women in visually subtle ways.

Linder's (2004) study is interesting in that it shows the ways in which women's roles are communicated. She found that *Time*, a magazine that covers a broader range of topics and desires a more serious audience, reinforced gender roles that showed women as being smaller, weaker and dependent on men. *Vogue* on the other hand showed much less of this type of stereotyping, but reinforced the idea of a lesser, weaker woman by depicting them lowering themselves physically or being embraced by a man's body, by mentally drifting from a situation or withdrawing their gaze from the scene, and by wearing revealing or no clothes at all. The women's fashion magazine tended to stereotype women in more subtle ways with greater effect, showing that just because a magazine may be geared to women, it does not mean that they are free of the matrix of disempowerment. In fact, in order for these magazines to survive they need women to remain insecure, unsure and willing to do almost anything to achieve and unrealistic ideal. The author writes that This portrayal of women as inferior and,

> "flawed is a necessity for the existence of a women's fashion magazine such as Vogue, which is primarily a means for advertising and selling products that are suggested to be a "cure" for women's feelings of inferiority and inappropriateness." (Linder, 2004, p. 420)

In her article about the rise of consumer magazines geared towards black South Africans, Narunsky-Laden (2007) argues that the magazine form has played a large role in black South Africans re-envisioning the social formations in South Africa and their role within society.

Magazines have done this, and are continuing to do so, by providing a benchmark for a state of affairs that may not be given. They let the reader know in great detail what is to be aspired to and in so doing magazines open up a new range of possibilities for black South Africans to devise new ways of living life, "enabling them to access new resources and strategies directed at the social and the individual production of selfhood" (Laden, 2003, p. 191). The manner in which these magazines perform as cultural reordering tools is by "codifying, disseminating and legitimizing" (Laden, 2003, p. 192) ideas specific to the urban and middle class for black South Africans living in urban environments.

The cultivation and legitimization of new models of social options in not a one way street, these options are not simply imposed from above, Laden's findings show that they are filtered by the discerning populace and chosen. These chosen options are more or less processes into a new, relevant cultural repertoire which presents itself as typically, or 'proudly South African',

> "Despite having been deprived of political rights for so long, black South Africans have long since been more than passive subscribers to, and casualties of, colonialist legacies and the apartheid regime." (Laden, 2003, p. 195)

Laden (2003) notes that black South African magazines have become increasingly aspirational. Magazine producers have been making use of celebrities in their advertising content and in the products on their pages. She makes particular mention of Basetsana Makgalemele, former Miss South Africa, who was used by advertisers to promote 'Revlon Realistic Hair Relaxer',

> "Aspects of 'middle-classness are brought to the foreground by Basetsana's celebrity status as a former beauty queen, her acclaimed good looks and the way the advertised product is denoted euphemistically as 'a hair relaxer' rather than hair straightener." (Laden, 2003, p. 199)

Many black media personalities promote these magazines and allow the weights of the magazines to reinforce their status in an elite class. As the highest in the status ladder, they inspire individual and collective aspirations within the reading public, endorsing new codes of conduct (Laden, 2003). Magazines elicit the desire to know more about these celebrities by regularly supplying a glimpse into a life that different from our own, a life of glamorous lifestyle choices that leave us feeling inferior, yet optimistic because,

> "Consumer magazines for black South Africans inspire new social contracts between themselves and their readers, and new sets of conditions that enable them continually to reconfigure and refine aspects of the new urban consumer culture they seek to evoke." (Laden, 2003, p. 212)

Laden puts forward that the use of local celebrities shows that the producers of magazines for black women are committed less to a feminist agenda than to the broader cause of "socio-semiotic change" (Laden, 2003, p. 201) in South Africa. She proposes that before looking at the ways in which black women are represented, the producers focus on making sure that black women are represented in the mass media to begin with,

> "*True Love* confirms and places beyond question the urban status of South Africa's black middle-class, enhancing the roles and social standing of black women within it." (Laden, 2003, p. 201)

While it may be true that *True Love* brought a new range of options for black South African women, I argue that the focus should have moved forward from mere representation to a critical appraisal of the types of representations being put out. These magazines are now mediated by black journalists and advertisers, as evidenced by Khanyi Dhlomo's role in the rejuvenation of *True Love* magazine and the launch of *Destiny* magazine, and should examined as if they are the embodiment of this agency.Nadia Sanger (2008) researches the depiction of black women in

white women's magazines, and through her findings she argues that women's magazines with predominantly white readerships sexualize black femininities in a manner that is reminiscent of white male colonial obsession with black bodies. This study is similar to Plous & Neptune's (1997) study which showed that black women tended to be framed as "predatory and animal-like" (Plous & Neptune, 1997, p. 631) in magazines with a white audience. Evidence in their research shows that racial and gender biases in magazines have increased decade by decade.

The term 'hypersexualisation' has been used in black feminist literature to describe "the ways in which black physical bodies have been sexualized and exoticised through colonial obsession with racial difference" (Sanger, 2008, p. 277), with the 'hyper' indicating a manic portrayal of sexuality. This hypersexuality foregrounds black female sexuality as being excessive and abundant, beyond representations of white female sexuality, which is seen as passive and vulnerable. Gilman (2002) argues that representations of individuals in art historically have been predominantly "iconographic" in character, with specific individuals coming to represent a particular class of people. This is particularly evident when the class of people is considered to be 'other' and deviates from the 'normal' white masculinity. He writes that one of the prime examples of this iconography was the use of the "Hottentot female" (Gilman, 2002, p. 392) to represent the sexualised black woman in the 19th century, thereby fulfilling the iconographic function in the perception and representation of the world. The representation of the outsider ensured that the native black woman was associated with unbridled sexuality. This was framed as a primitive expression of emotions that was viewed as pathological and contrary to the white man's ability to control his sexuality (Gilman, 2002).

In Plous & Neptune's (1997) study they noticed that black women were shown disproportionately wearing clothing with animal prints and were captures in animal like poses, with the majority of the prints and poses modelled after predatory animals such as jungle cats, depictions that they say are central to the experience of black women in white magazines. The

results for this study were noted after Plous & Neptune analysed the content in 10 years worth of fashion advertisements that appeared in magazines geared towards black women, white women and white men. This study was interested in the interactions between gender and race because not many studies had examined these intersections in the portrayals of models in magazines. They argue that although one can cite several studies dealing with representation of black people in magazines, not enough have compared representations of black people in women's magazines and men's magazines, "no studies have assessed racial segregation by crossing the gender and race of models with the gender and race of the magazine audience" (Plous & Neptune, 1997). When analysing the content of magazines aimed at a black female readership, the question is whether the same depictions occur, even though the producers of the publications are black women themselves. My study takes this further by analysing the interactions between gender and race in magazines that are produced by advertisements for black women in the African context. (Sanger, 2008, p. 277)

Sanger (2008) notes that in certain magazines produced for a black readership, there is an attempt to confront constructions of black heterofemininities and masculinities. She writes that in many ways magazines such as the black men's magazine, *Blink* show a contestation within the editors as they "portray black women as agents in terms of their career aspirations, while simultaneously refusing to disturb the notion of hyper(hetero)femininity as essential and fixed" (2008, p. 279). Two facets of idealized femininity work together here, firstly black women are presented as independent career driven individuals, yet on the other hand, the images and quotes that accompany the text continue to emphasize women's heterosexualities in a manner that is far removed from being independent. One of the questions this study asks is whether *True Love* magazine and *Destiny* magazine use the same matrix to configure their portrayals of black women for an audience of black women. Odhiambo's work on the black female body as both a consumer and a consumable posits that,

> "The black female body is the subject of both manipulation and an intense gaze by producers of commodities seeking advertisement space ... [the] black female body embodies both the value of the commodities that 'it' advertises, as well as offering itself as an object of consumption while it simultaneously becomes a consumable itself." (2008, p. 72)

He writes that magazines embody and carry meanings and social relations, both commodities themselves as well as vehicles for a range of cultural beliefs and practices.

The study of magazines is also the study of social change through time, which allows us to ask questions about the transition made in the second decade of democracy. I believe that the constant focus in South Africa on race matters has allowed prejudices that are both raced and gendered to remain largely unseen. I believe that the constant focus in South Africa on race matters has allowed prejudices that are both raced and gendered to remain largely unseen.

Casale's (2004) analysis of the labour market participation of women since the mid-1990s shows that there has been an increase in the participation of women in areas of formal employment, leading to what she terms the "feminisation" (2004, p. 1) of the South African labour market. What her research also shows however is that this participation has not occurred at the same rate between different groups of women. She notes that in terms of earnings and the types of employment available, white women have benefited more than black women. She views this as evidence that white women have been the greatest beneficiaries in terms of access to opportunities available for career advancement. This has resulted in an overall worsening of black women's occupational positions in the labour market relative to men. In short, while the country has seen an increase in the participation of women in the labour market, black women have benefitted the least. Casale's (2004) research shows that democracy allowed black men to move swiftly up the earnings ladder in the traditionally masculine labour market, and it also allowed white women to gain higher paying positions in order to offset gender inequalities. It is

black women, who contend with both raced and gendered inequality who have remained unseen.

I believe that parallels can be drawn between labour market participation and representations of women in the media. Media circulates dominant discourses, as argued above, and it follows that the types of roles assigned to black women in media would mirror the discourses that ensure that they remain unseen in the labour market. In this study I show that the roles that black women play in advertisements indicate that there is a very limited range of subject positions that we can occupy because we are both black and female.

The following chapters will build on this body of work through the analysis of these two magazines. The analysis of each theme will unpack the nature of the representation appearing in these locally produced periodicals.

3 Chapter 3: Research Methods

3.1 The Data

The data collected was retrieved from 6 issues consecutively published by each of these two magazines – *True Love* magazine and *Destiny* magazine. These issues were collected from May 2009 to October 2009. This made a total of 12 magazines. From these 12 magazines, every

advertisement that took up a full page of space or more was retrieved and the themes were then coded.

The question of sampling is essential in ensuring that the project is externally valid and that the findings can be applied more widely to other studies and generalised in the future (Davies & Mosdell, 2006). Therefore taking time to choose the appropriate sample was an important part of the research preparation. In this study I wanted to find out a number of things about black women's representations in media. Firstly, I wanted to locate and describe the themes that were valued and repeated in advertisements concerning black women, within media produced by black women. Secondly, I wanted to analyse the themes in order to find out whether the themes empowered black women since the media's producers would be black women themselves.

The time frame for this project required data that was easily accessible, and known to have been produced and published by editors who are black women. For these two reasons magazines were chosen. Magazines are published with regularity, ensuring that there would be a consistent flow of samples during the time frame. Publications such as these are also useful because they use a certain format that does not change drastically over time, and this repetition allows the study to ascertain which ideologies are presented as normative over a period that continues even after the study has been completed. From the repetitive nature of magazine publication I theorised that the normative representations could then be extrapolated over time such that the findings of this study could highlight dominant trends over a period longer than 6 months.

In South Africa there are a range of black women's magazines but these two were chosen for specific reasons. *True Love* magazine has been published since 1972 and has a readership of almost 3,000,000 South Africans according to the South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF, 2008). Its reach, combined with its age provide a useful platform from which to analyse trends in advertising for black women. *Destiny* magazine has been published for a shorter time, since 2007, but is interesting because its publisher and founding editor is a

black woman. The target audience for *Destiny* magazine is also different from *True Love* as the publication markets itself as the first locally produced business magazine for women, reaching 186, 000 readers each month (SAARF, 2008).

I extracted every advertisement that took up a full page or more in each magazine. I began by describing the copy in terms of its layout, but found that the layouts are usually the same if not very similar because the producers show women in the same kinds of poses. The more beneficial descriptions came from what Fairclough describes as "overwording" (Fairclough, 2001, p. 92), which is a showing of preoccupation with an idea through the repetitive use of the same concept. An example of this is the use of abbreviated technological terms in cosmetics advertisements which indicated a preoccupation with using science to convince the audience that the product is of value. This overwording allowed me to uncover the discourse strands beneath each advertisement and work through the dominant themes.

3.2 The Analysis

3.2.1 Quantitative Analysis

The aim of quantitative study is to provide a systematic means for quantifying thematic features that appear across a large number of texts (Deacon, Pickering, Golding, & Murdock, 1999). It is useful in showing trends that may appear that the researcher would miss through discourse analysis alone. In its most precise sense, quantitative content analysis is a research method used to put a numerical description to content,

> "The purpose of content analysis is to quantify salient and manifest features of a large number of texts, and the statistics are used to make broader inferences about the processes and processes of representation." (Deacon, Pickering, Golding, & Murdock, 1999, p. 116)

In order to effectively use this type of analysis I had to be clear about what I wanted to find out. In this case, I wanted to see what the regularity in appearance of the themes was in both of the magazines. I then wanted to compare the magazines to see if the appearance of the themes could add to the discussion about the dominant discourses which were valued by the producers. Although this method does not allow for an exploration into the text's meanings in order to develop insights and ideas, it does however qualify or refute the initial questions (Deacon, Pickering, Golding, & Murdock, 1999).

Fairclough's (2001) recommendations for the procedures a researcher can use to describe texts informed the coding system that was used during the qualitative aspects of the content analysis. He writes that the first point of analysis should be the "experiential values" (Fairclough, 2001, p. 94) found in the text. This is done by noting the occurrence of the overwording and rewording of terms that indicate what ideologies are coded in the vocabulary. It is this overwording that revealed the four main categories detailed and qualitatively analysed in the following chapters. These categories are 'Consumption', 'Simple Steps', 'Relaxing', and 'Erasure', and they fall under the broader term that I have titled 'Subjugation' for purposes of this study. These categories describe the ideologies that were revealed though overwording within the texts[1].

Although this method may seem objective as Davies & Mosdell (2006) argue, there are decisions that the researcher makes throughout the process, such as coding structures and other protocols, which make the resulting data less empirical than it seems. The reason that I used this method in this study was to show the regularity with which the themes appeared in the publications. The analysis also opened the door and allowed for deeper study into the differences in representation between the two magazines through Critical Discourse Analysis.

3.2.2 Qualitative Analysis

[1] The primary data analysis can be found in the appendix.

Using discourse perspectives as a means of analysis highlights the structuring effects of language and provides a platform from which the researcher can connect language with power relations (Levett, Kottler, Burman, & Parker, 1997). The use of discourse analysis as a research tool allows for an investigation into the politicised nature of what is often taken to be normal or unmarked, because "language reproduces culture and power" (Levett, Kottler, Burman, & Parker, 1997, p. 4).

The qualitative methodology used in this study drew on the model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) developed by Norman Fairclough (2001). In his study concerning the relationship between language and power, Fairclough is interested in how "how discourse figures within processes of change, and with shifts in semiosis and other social elements within networks of practices" (Fairclough, 2001, p. 1). My research placed emphasis on the common-sense assumptions implicit within the frameworks of these advertisements.

In order to understand Fairclough's approach to critical discourse analysis, we must first understand his definition of discourse as a type of social practice. He uses "discourse" to refer to the entire process of social interaction, where the text is merely a single piece of the puzzle. This social practice may then be defined as a stabilised form of social activity consisting of a number of elements aside from discourse, elements such as objects, time and place, and subjects and their social relations (Britten, 2005). Critical Discourse Analysis can therefore be said to be the "analysis of the dialectical relationship between discourse and these other elements of social practice" (Britten, 2005, p. 76).

Critical Discourse Analysis Model

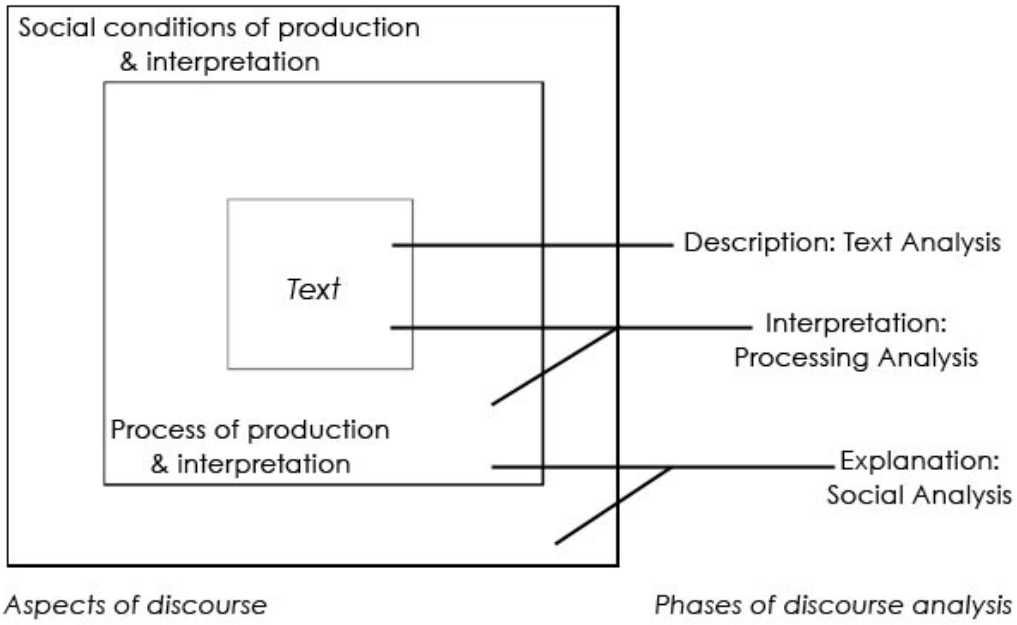


Figure 3.1

From his understanding of the relationship between discourse and social practice as being dialectical, Fairclough has created a model for critical discourse analysis. This method, as illustrated above *(Figure 3.1)*, allows the researcher to map out the interconnected nature of text and context (Britten, 2005). Fairclough's boxes provide a useful structure from which an analysis of the relationship between text and context can begin. The purpose of the diagram, in Fairclough's words, is "to map three separate forms of analysis onto one another: analysis of (spoken or written) language texts, analysis of discourse practice (processes of text production, distribution and consumption) and analysis of discursive events as instances of sociocultural practice" (Fairclough, 2001, p. 5).

The model *(Figure 3.1)* consists of three boxes which fall within one another, each representative of an aspect of discourse. The text is in the middle, embedded within the process of production, which is in turn embedded within the social conditions of production. Each of these phases

require a particular kind of analysis, whether it is textual analysis or social analysis all forms can be used to elucidate the work that is being done by any given text.

In addition to Fairclough (2001), the research design drew on the methods of analysis outlined by Frith (1998) and Meyer & Wodak (2001). The detailed steps for the structure of the analysis were as follows,

1. A list of advertisements relevant to the study was compiled. These were advertisements that appeared on a full-page or multiple pages, featuring black women from the magazines collected over the 6 months.
2. A structural analysis roughly covered the characteristics of the advertisements in question, describing aspects of interest such as language used, illustrations, and layout. It was from this analysis that the overwording and rewording appeared.
3. Quantitative methods were used in the collection and categorisation of the data for further analysis.
4. The discourse strands encompassing various sub-topics were identified and summarized into groups. For example, in advertisements for beauty products sub-topics were summarized into groups such as 'quick fixes/simple steps', 'being flawless/erasing', and 'consuming/improving yourself'. As Wodak and Meyer (2001) wrote, from this initial analysis a characterisation of the publications' discourse positions began to emerge, leading to a more detailed analysis of typical discourse fragments.
5. The next step was to examine how often these sub-topics appeared, this highlighted the ones that became the areas of focus and which ones were relegated to the background. The sub-topics with the greatest regularity in appearance were 'Consumption', 'Simple Steps', 'Relaxing', 'Erasure', and they are discussed in greater detail in this study.
6. The qualitative analysis used the three boxes described by Fairclough (2001) to do three things – to describe the text's surface meanings, and then to give an oppositional reading

which exploded the text (Frith, 1998), revealing underlying discourses from the producers to the audience.

7. The last step was to look at whether or not there was a shift in the way topics were distributed or used over the space of six months. In addition to that a comparison between the uses of the topics in the two magazines was made.

4 Chapter 4: Consumption

4.1 Context

In this chapter I discuss the presence of advertisements that require the reader to utilise the internalised male gaze in order to appreciate their content. These pages require that the preferred woman reader engage in masculine fantasies internally, in order to inhabit a space that will allow her to take pleasure in the reading of this copy. I will interrogate the reasons for their inclusion and their effects on the readers of the publications.

I analyse the portrayal of women as objects for the male gaze in three advertisements by *Peugeot, Sean John,* and *D&G*; using the seminal work of John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* (1972), and Laura Mulvey's *Visual and Other Pleasures* (1989) who will link these portrayals to women's struggles to gain equal rights and autonomy. Mulvey discusses the pleasures involved in looking at images like the ones in the advertisements from the perspective of men and women, highlighting the existence of the male gaze in readings by women themselves. Understanding the male gaze is useful in the analysis of media as the concept describes the unequal relationship between the spectator who sees the image, and the object within the images that is seen. Berger describes the male gaze as the way of seeing the world through a heterosexual male subject position, thereby framing the woman who is seen, as an object to be looked at. Both Berger and Mulvey's discussions note that women are socialised into internalising the male gaze, thereby simultaneously viewing themselves through the eye of the male spectator and inhabiting the role of the female subject. Mulvey's discussion on the internalised male gaze will be the launch pad for this analysis as it will begin to explain why advertisements such as the ones in this chapter appear in women's magazines at all. Finally, I will analyse the copy myself, putting forward theories presented by Roland Barthes (1982) and Richard Dyer (1997) which explain why magazines created by black women for black women would choose to place such content on their pages. I begin with the discussion of the male gaze.

4.2 Consumption of the female form

In John Berger's book, *Ways of Seeing* (1972), he asserts that seeing comes before words, it allows us to establish what our place in the world is when we are children. As an extension of this, every image tells a story of seeing, seeing through a certain perspective in a certain moment. An image is a sight that has been captured in some way and reproduced; its appearance is detached from the original place and time and preserved for further analysis and appreciation. The idea of perspective is important in the analysis of photographic images because they are not a mechanical record, when we look at a photograph, no matter how realistic it seems we are aware that this is a scene that was chosen by the composer over a multiplicity of other possibilities. The way we see things is at all times affected by what we know and believe, and we are always looking at how things relate to ourselves. The photographer's way of seeing is reflected in the subject choice, the angle of the shot, the lighting and the editing post-production. And yet, although every photograph tells the story of how the composer sees the world, there is an added dimension to the viewing of the image which is the perspective of the viewer. The perception of the viewer who reads the image and what they see is governed by their own knowledge and beliefs.

Berger (1972) argues that according to usage and conventions, the social presence of women and men differs greatly in representation. A man's presence is dependent upon the promise of the power that he embodies. His presence suggests what he is able to do to a woman or for a woman; he is the embodiment of power which he exerts upon others. This promised power is external and can be wielded at will. On the other hand, as Berger writes, "to be born a woman is to be born into the keeping of men" (Berger, 1972, p. 47). The man presides over her presence, her own attitudes towards herself and defines what can and cannot be done to her. She must watch herself at all times and is always accompanied by the image of herself. From birth she is taught to watch herself continually and so she comes to consider "the surveyor" (Berger, 1972, p. 46) and "the surveyed" (Berger, 1972, p. 46) as two distinct elements of her identity which reside side by side,

> “She has to survey everything she is and everything she does because how she appears to others, and ultimately how she appears to men, is of crucial importance for what is normally thought of as the success of her life. Her own sense of being in herself is supplanted by a sense of being appreciated as herself by another.” (Berger, 1972, p. 46)

What this says about women is that they must have an internal monitor for their femininity in order to navigate the world. She is the gatekeeper, envisaging her appearance to others at all times and ensuring that she always performs correctly, so that she may please her men. Berger writes that another way of saying this is that “men act and women appear” (1972, p. 46). According to Berger, a man can only inhabit the role of the one who looks at the woman, an idea Mulvey (1989) discusses as well, but a woman must inhabit the role of the one who is looked at and the one who watches herself simultaneously. This does not govern the relationships between men and women alone however; it plays a part in relations between women and themselves. She comes to regard the role of “surveyor” and that of “surveyed” (Berger, 1972, p. 46) within her as two constant yet separate elements in her identity as a woman (Berger, 1972). How she appears to men is of critical importance for what the world sees as the success in her life, because men survey their women before they treat them. In order to acquire some control over how they are treated women must contain and interrogate the self. The part inside her which is the ‘surveyor’ treats the part of the self which is ‘surveyed’ in the manner that she shows the world how her whole self should be treated. This is to say, the manner in which a woman treats herself gives outsiders an indication of how she should be treated. Berger exemplifies this by saying that if a woman throws a glass in order to indicate that she is angry, she gives the world a clear indication of how she wishes to be treated by showing how she treats her own emotion. (Berger, 1972). This is how the male surveyor within the woman turns herself into the surveyed and thus into an object, more specifically, and object of vision.

Moving on from the rules that govern seeing and the objectification of the female form, Berger is then able to combine the two ideas and speak about women as the recurring subject of paintings and photographic images. He puts forward that European oil paintings solidified the nude as the category of paintings with the most recurrence as far as women were concerned. In painting the nude woman the artist was able to display the body as something separate from the actual person, the subject. When the woman was naked in the painting she was not naked as she was but naked as the spectator saw her. On nudity the author writes,

> "To be naked is to be oneself. To be nude is to be seen naked by others and yet not recognised for oneself. A naked body has to be seen as an object in order to become nude." (Berger, 1972, p. 54)

What this means is that in arranging the body, framing the scene, setting the lighting, and a myriad of other steps that go into painting a scene or taking a photograph, the artist turns that which is a naked body into something else – a nude. Being naked is to be without a disguise, but to be on display is to turn the surface of the body into a disguise where nudity becomes a form of dress. Seeing the image as an object, and using it as such, works in taking away that which is human (Berger, 1972). Sometimes an image of a woman might involve a male lover, but the women's eyes are rarely on him. Instead she would look directly at the spectator, the one who stands in front of the artwork, he who was her true love and owner. The arrangement of her body will usually be made to appeal to the spectator and his sexuality, not hers. Women are depicted in this way not because they differ vastly from men, but because the ideal spectator is always male and the image of the woman is for his delectation.

Today the most widely circulated images are those in advertising. Berger (1972) observes that advertising is closely related to freedom and forward movement. Publicity shows us the idea behind advertising, that transformation from the use of a product is enviable and glamorous is a state we should all want to be in. Advertisements promise us that one product will help us

become the person we always wanted to be. This person will be someone who is funnier, smarter, better dressed and more successful than everyone around us, thereby providing us with a solitary form of reassurance. The female spectator or buyer is set up to envy the future self she will become if she buys the product on offer. She imagines herself transformed by the product into the promised object of envy for others. This, according to Berger (1972), will then justify her loving herself.

Mulvey (1989) moves Berger's (1972) arguments further by discussing the scopophilic instinct, which is the pleasure derived from looking at another person as an erotic object. She states that this subject is important because women's struggles to gain rights over their bodies cannot be divorced from questions of image consumption and representation. According to Mulvey, sexualised images say nothing about women's lived realities; they are primarily about male fantasies that are thrust upon the female image. In this sense, images of women that circulate as signifiers of sexuality can be detached from the idea that they refer to actual women, and be analysed as coming from the male consciousness. This speaks directly to Berger's (1972) arguments about the nude body connoting something that is very different from the naked body. Mulvey emphasizes that in analysing any visual text, gesture, body position and clothing are of equal importance. The arrangement may seem unplanned but there is meaning behind every decision.

The world is ordered by sexual imbalance, and pleasure in looking is not exempt from this. Pleasure in looking is split into two categories – active which is male and passive which is female. In their traditional roles women are displayed and looked at with their appearances coded for the maximum visual impact. In the images portraying women, the determining male gaze projects fantasy onto the female figure, which in turn has been styled accordingly. The woman's appearance is coded for visual impact so that they can be said to connote "to-be-looked-at-ness" (1989, p. 19). Mulvey reiterates the idea of being surveyed as discussed in

Berger's writing above. What is of importance is what women provoke in their men, not what they represent. They move men to act in certain ways keeping the narrative running. In herself, the women is really of no importance.

The woman who is on display functions on two levels – firstly she is an erotic object for the characters within the narrative, secondly she is also the erotic object of the spectator looking into the text. In order for the text to be unified technically, the gaze of the spectator and that of the main character have to co-exist neatly, so that the narrative is not broken. The ruling ideology dictates that the male figure cannot bear the burden of sexual objectification, so it is placed on the woman, with the man within the text playing the role of the surveyor together with the reader who is the surveyor of the text as a whole.

The female viewer might find herself so out of tune with the male viewer she is expected to inhabit that the fascination is broken, leading to a possible oppositional view, or she may find herself enjoying the freedom of action and control over the world that the hero provides. The female spectator must temporarily accept masculinisation (Mulvey, 1989).

I argue that the women in the following advertisements are served up for consumption to the black women reader. I believe that this is done in order to police the manner in which women act as a surveyor of their own bodies. They are given examples of how women should be surveyed and in turn use this when they play the role of both the 'surveyor' and 'surveyed' in their own bodies. As argued by both Berger (1972) and Mulvey (1989), the 'surveyor' of the women within herself is male, she is thus also the surveyed female in her own mind – she turns herself into an object. As an object she can then strive for what is seen as perfection, moulding herself towards what she deems necessary for her survival, and in the same moment ensuring that she will live with the anxiety of having to attain that perfection.

4.3 The Analysis

4.3.1 The surface meanings

Peugeot

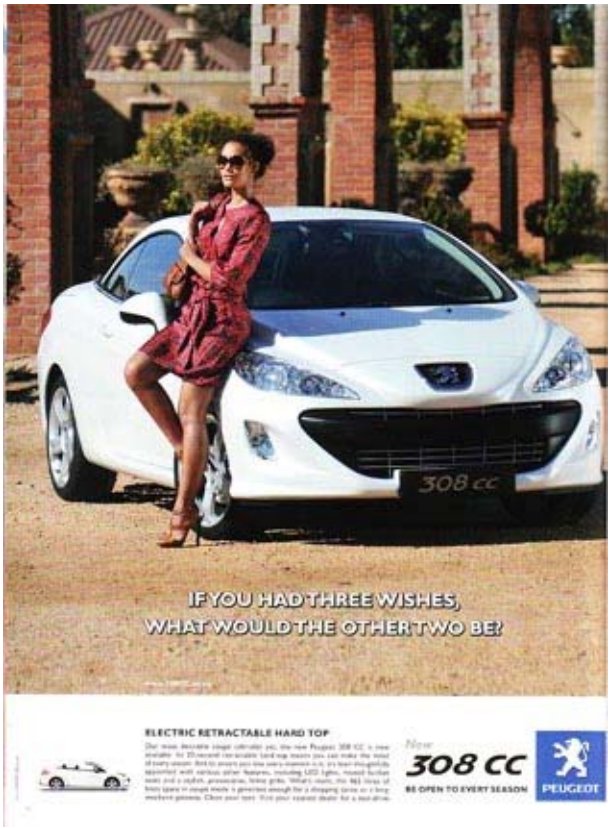


Figure 4.1

This advertisement *(Figure 3.1)* appears the in the motoring section of *Destiny* magazine. The one page advertisement shows the television personality Jo-Ann Strauss, a well known presenter of the lifestyle television show *Top Billing* and a former Miss South Africa. She is widely recognised for this role so her appearance as the only person in an advertisement such as this is not unusual. The product is a new motor vehicle in the South African market, the new *308CC Peugeot*. Strauss leans her body against the car and is seen looking into the distance, out of the left hand side of the page. The surroundings indicate wealth, as if she is on one of the estates

that she visits on the television show. There is one question at the bottom of the page which acts as a call-to-action for the reader. It is intended to engage the reader and elicit a response.

The use of Jo-Anne Strauss in this copy indicates to the reader that the *Peugeot* is a luxury item that they should own. She is known to appear on *Top Billing* a programme which caters to viewers who are interested in the lavish lifestyles of wealthy South Africans, and as such her presence on this page is an indication of the demographic the producers are targeting. The scene surrounding her and the car gives the impression of a large estate, similar to scenes from the television show. Essentially this copy *(Figure 3.1)* could be a snapshot of a moment on the programme and in so doing fits in with the demographic that *Peugeot* targets.

The way that her body looks and is posed is an indication of who the preferred customer should look like, or in the very least strive to look like through body conditioning. This is evidenced by the phrasing used in the question asked – "If you had three wishes, what would the other two be?" This is interesting because the first wish could be for the car, but at the same time it is as if the advertiser is referring to the life that the model leads. This double meaning is a point of interest on the page and would get the reader to engage with the advertisement.

D&G



Figure 4.2

The advertisement above *(Figure 4.2)* runs over two facing pages. On the left page we can see the prominent D&G (Dolce & Gabanna) logo in the centre of the page, printed in white text. Underneath it there is a line of text that says "THE NEW FRAGRANCE BY D&G". On the bottom of the left hand page are five perfume bottles standing in a line next to each other. The five fragrances are named – *Le Bateleur 1*, *L'Imperatrice 3*, *L'Amoureaux 6*, *La Roue de la Fortune 10* and *La Lune 18*. The text is in French and there has been no attempt made to translate it into English.

The right hand page is a full page image of the six models used to represent the product, where three men and three women can be seen. The most prominent well known models are the women, namely Naomi Campbell, Eva Herzigova, and Claudia Schiffer. All three are famous for modelling for what is thought to be the most luxurious lingerie company in the world – *Victoria's Secret,* with Campbell being the most successful of them as she is the most famous supermodel. The male models are French and Brazilian but they are not as well known as the women, and are not as easily recognisable.

This copy *(Figure 4.2)* is intended to speak for itself without any written text being provided. There is no written text that appears on the page, with the producers preferring to use the image as the complete communication. This is a marked way of advertising because producers usually rely on written text to convince the reader about the worth of their product. This worth is directly linked, without being openly spoken, to the bodies that are displayed. The bodies show control of the human form and signal the achievement associated with the product on sale. In addition to this, the text on the bottles is in French indicating that this achievement is European and progressive. All of these signs are designed to show the reader what perfection looks like without saying a word. With fewer words on the page, the ideologies are less contested and the signs can then be taken at face value.

Sean John



Figure 4.3

This is a single page advertisement that appears in the first pages of the magazine *(Figure 4.3)*. It is an advertisement for *Sean John Unforgivable*, a perfume created by the company owned by

rap star and hip-hop mogul, Sean “P Diddy” Combs. The copy is a full page image that shown a man and woman on a stairwell. The woman is facing the wall with the man, Sean Combs, standing behind her and pushing her body against the wall. She wears a black shirt and that is all the reader can really see of her clothes. The man on the other hand wears a finely tailored suit and a crisp white shirt. We can see the expensive watch on his right wrist as well at the diamond studs in his ears and the designer sunglasses.

The woman’s eyes are closed and her head is tilted upwards. She has long brown hair and wears makeup on her face. The sepia tones used in the advertisement’s colouring, combined with her features create the sense that the model should be read as racially ambiguous. These signs could also be read as showing that the model is ‘of colour’ if the context of the American production is taken into account. Her right arm is raised above her head, and her left arm grips the banister against the wall. The man stands behind her with his body pressed up against hers. He braces himself against the wall with his left arm, which comes around her neck from the back of the body, bracing him against her. His right arm comes around the right side of her body where the hand holds onto the same section of the banister as hers. He wears sun glasses but you can see that his eyes are open underneath them. His head faces downwards and his lips hover above the nape of her neck. The entire arrangement of the bodies gives the impression that the man is holding the woman’s body against the wall, allowing for no movement on her part.

The bottle of perfume sits on top of the image with two lines of text above it. The text says, “LIFE WITHOUT PASSION IS UNFORGIVABLE – SEAN JOHN”. Beneath the bottle sits the name of the perfume – “UNFORGIVABLE WOMAN – A SCENT FOR WOMEN FROM SEAN JOHN”. That is the only text on the page, adding to the message transmitted by the image.

This advertisement *(Figure 4.3)* shows the protagonists in a pose that is supposed to intimate romantic fervour. Together with the text that reads “unforgivable woman” is almost a scene out of a film in that it gives the ideal reader what they want – a moment of passion. This configuration is linked to positive romantic ideas and projects this fantasy into the reader’s mind. If the reader inhabits the role of the surveyed, as the producer would hope, then they would be accepting of the narrative that the woman should be punished for her ‘unforgivable’ manner. The acceptance would allow the reader to embody the male gaze as the male protagonist does, and together they would take pleasure in the consumption of the woman in the copy.

4.3.2 Exploding the text – ideological meaning

Peugeot

According to Tate (2007), the importance placed on ‘good hair’, a ‘good nose’, and ‘good complexion’ for African American women privileges what can be seen as white features. She recounts how the shade of a black person’s skin is central to the policy of inclusion, exclusion and visibility within black anti-racist aesthetics. This “pigmentocracy” (Tate, 2007, p. 301) dates back to Caribbean-American slave societies where “mulatto” women who had lighter skin, due to slave owners impregnating their slaves, were rated as more acceptable and attractive because of their approximation of white features such as eye colour, skin lightness and hair.

While the local classifications of beauty according to race are not as clear-cut as Tate’s argument, Russel (1989) writes that there is no dispute that the apartheid government in South Africa relied on an intensely racist pigmentocracy to survive, in which the lowest status was reserved for the darkest skinned people. The experience of black women in South Africa differs from the examples that Tate (2007) provides in that while black woman locally may try to

lighten their skin, through the use skin lightening creams for example, they are not just trying to be read as coloured. The lightening of the skin shows an awareness that skin is emblematic of the very real differences that existed and continue to exist in economic realities for different racial groups in South Africa. Black beauty movements may have had an impact on how black women view themselves and each other but the legacy of light skin continues to impact on judgements of femininity, beauty and desirability.

In this advertisement the model, Jo-Anne Strauss *(Figure 3.1),* is light skinned and is presented as the ideal woman in the same way the woman in the *Sean John* copy is. Her role in this copy is to show what the reader should strive for in their lives and as the surveyed; she shows us what we should be. The question "If you had three wishes, what would the other two be?" is not just about the car. The entire narrative is set up to be that wish. You should wish to look like Strauss, spend time on the estates she does and drive the car she does. More than her body, you should want to consume her entire life, this will them make you feel better about yourself.

Strauss leans against the car which allows her to raise her right leg. This pose serves to call attention to her body and her clothes. She is dressed in high heels and a summer dress whose effect is to highlight the length and fitness of the body. Her lithe body is an indication of success to the outside world in controlling the body's appearance. Control is a theme that runs through most advertising copy, but nowhere else is it more pervasive than in advertisements that relentlessly indicate to women that what they are doing with their lives is sub-standard, that they need to control what they eat, how they exercise in order to fight the bulge, how to wear the most expensive clothes, and how they keep their bodies from falling apart. By offering up the car for consumption the producers simultaneously offer Jo-Anna Strauss' body. As a person she is of no real value, but as a woman on display she functions as the object that the reader can consume.

D&G

This advertisement *(Figure 4.2)* uses no words to explain what this product is and is not concerned with using questions to prompt audience engagement. All that it relies on is the use of image. This, for double paged advertisement is a marked choice. In unpacking the copy I refer to Roland Barthes writing on *The Photographic Message* (1982). He writes that the photograph is a message whose meaning is formed by a source of emission, the channel of transmission and the point at which the message is received (Barthes, 1982, p. 194). The emission and modes of reception require a study of social relations between human groups, defining their motives and attitudes, but the resulting photograph however, is a message in itself. Regardless of the means of production the photograph is not just a result of a channel but an object endowed with structural autonomy. It is unique and requires an analysis of its own structure prior to the social relations that produce it.

In terms of "trick effects" makeup, air brushing and hair removal are used to show off the toned bodies of the models. Their nudity has meaning in itself. These effects use the reputation of the photographic to imply that the artificial is simply a denoted message. There are reasons behind using the photographic message to connote the objective, and in this case the producers want to send a message with the use of the body that has been perfected through the use of these tricks. Dyer (1997) puts forward that the naked body is a vulnerable body in the most fundamental sense in that it offers no protection for the physical self. In a social sense, clothes are bearers of prestige, showing the world our social standing and to lose them is to lose that status. To use models that are entirely nude is to highlight bodily superiority. The built body speaks to the need for an affirmation of the white male body without the loss of legitimacy that comes with exposure – it replays the idea that white men are distinguished above all by their spirit and control of the material. The built body presents itself as being above the typical and attaining the ideal. The three models in this advertisement are all white and exhibit the ideal masculinity as

described by Dyer (1997). The man in the bottom right hand corner shows off toned pectoral and abdominal muscles, the model in the upper left hand corner flexes his left bicep in a show of superior muscular conditioning, and the model in the middle of the back row shows that a man with a sculpted body can attain the woman he wants. The bodies of the men are largely hairless which assists in showing off their physiques, the only hair that is apparent is facial and on the lower arm, their chests remaining smooth and contoured. Body hair is considered to be animalistic and should be removed because hairlessness indicates striving above nature (Dyer, 1997). The heightened muscularity gives the reader clear cues through the connotations of whiteness, as do the tanned bodies. Tanning is something only white people do and it connotes privilege, the privilege of having the time to lie in the sun, or the wealth to pay for artificial tans or travelling to the sun.

The two white women on the page *(Figure 4.2)* are blue eyed and blonde haired, promoting the idealised Aryan appearance. Dyer (1997) discusses the glow of white woman, stating that the flaxen hair and the lighting used on their bodies is intended to give them a glow as if they are bathed by the light of God. This is especially evident in this copy if we look at Claudia Schiffer, the woman in the bottom left hand corner. Her skin is the whitest of all the models, her hair is long and blonde covering her breasts, and her head is tilted towards the heavens as she stares directly at the reader with her bright blue eyes – in short, she glows. According to Dyer, the angelically glowing white woman is an extreme representation, an idealisation that accords white women the position of superiority over others (Dyer, 1997, p. 130). This superiority is evidenced by the pose of the black model on her right. While Claudia Schiffer's head points towards the sky, Naomi Campbell's head faces downwards and she has to look up into the camera. She places her left hand on Claudia Schiffer's shoulders, while the white model leans back into Campbell's body for support.

In her work on femininity, Susan Bordo (1993) writes that historically non-European femininities have been described as primitive, savage, and sexually animalistic. She argues that that black women specifically have been stereotyped as amoral Jezebels. Unlike the stereotype of the European temptress who teases and resists, as a black woman, Campbell interrupts the scene with her animal-like nature. Naomi Campbell has built the reputation of being volatile and quick to anger, as evidenced by three assault cases lodged against her by former employees (Reuters, 2010), and her appearance in this advertisement plays into the idea that black women have untamed emotional sensibilities. In this way she represents the opposite of the white feminine ideal, Claudia Schiffer. In this advertisement, the producers of the copy create a sense of danger through her nude body by "signalling temptations of the flesh and the source of man's downfall" (Bordo, 1993, p. 11).

In discussing the theory of "photogenia", Barthes (1982, p. 202) writes that techniques of lighting, exposure and printing connote a message in themselves. In this case the message of control is shown in a number of ways. The pristine condition of the bodies *(Figure 4.2)* through the use of makeup and airbrushing combined with the models' attainment of physical perfection indicate control. The control is also shown by the precise use of lighting and editing effects used on the image itself, a great deal of work has gone into the removal of imperfection in post-production and this can be seen in the final product. This control is important because it indicates achievement of man over matter, more specifically of whiteness over matter.

Sean John

Barthes (1982) describes the text that accompanies the image as being parasitic. It is designed to connote the image and quicken its effects on the reader. The closer the text is to the image, the less it connotes it and it then begins to share the photographic image's objectivity. The connotation in the language can then be taken at face value in the same manner that the image

is. The text is presented with the image in order to serve as the amplifier of the connotations within the photograph (Barthes, 1982). In this advertisement the text is placed on top of the image, merging them into one unified sign, with the text giving an explanation of the photograph and the photograph in turn lending credibility to the text. On its own the phrase "unforgivable woman" could be contested for giving the impression that a woman's desirability is unforgivable and she should therefore be taken by the man who cannot help himself, but when it is placed over an image like this contested view loses its force. This is because the photograph lends credibility to the text when they are read as a single sign. The text further states that "life without passion is unforgivable" signalling to the reader that this is what passion should look like.

The colouring of the image is gentle and romantic, making use of subtle skin tones. This gives the impression that the scene tells the story of desire, that women in the photograph is enjoying the moment that she is in. The use of Sean Combs *(Figure 4.3)*, whose celebrity is recognised all over the world, as the male protagonist while the female is an unnamed woman is important as well. The implication is that the use of this perfume, together with looking like this woman, would make you irresistible to men like Sean Combs. This man, with his fame and fortune, is the kind of man that the ideal reader should aim to have a relationship with.

The pose is the most significant aspect of this photograph because it gives the reader the most information concerning the storyline. It is a photograph of a man and a woman who appear to have been caught in a moment of movement. We can see that they are in motion by the slight blurring of the woman's hair as her head tilts upwards. The motion is also evidenced by the manner in which they stand; it is not a rested position that allows a wide range of movement to any of their bodies. In short the image connotes the feeling of being caught in some kind of act. From the pose we can also see that the man's body is placed higher than that of the woman,

allowing him to exert pressure on her body with his weight. His arms encircle her allowing very little room for her to move.

As a woman, the idea of a man pinning you to a wall in a dimly lit stairwell may very well sound like a nightmare, but in this case the reader is expected to believe that this scene is a positive one. This speaks to Covell & Lanis' (1995) work around women's representations in advertisements, which shows that portrayals depicting sexual aggression towards women by men have been found to predict various rape related attitudes in their readers. This rape myth acceptance not only correlated with instances of depictions of sexual aggression but also with the women's status in the particular society. This is important to note in this instance because of the readership of these magazines, they are predominantly black and are therefore the most disadvantaged population group in the country. The effects of the roles shown in this type of advertisement on the ideal reader may be implicated in increasingly sexually hostile attitudes towards black South African women.

As argued by Mulvey (1989) the role of women is that of the conjuror of emotion in men, and in no other text is this more evident than in the *Sean John Unforgivable* copy *(Figure 4.3)*. The advertisement may be for a women's product and show a woman on its pages, but the larger message is that of the emotions that women bring out in their men. Even in our own narratives our purpose is that of the muse. Our role is of the one consumed.

4.3.3 Conclusion

The advertisements in this chapter do not rely on the heavy use of text to solidify the image's argument, instead the images is taken to be the argument on its own. The power of the images lies in the denotative weight behind the photographs themselves, a power so potent that the depictions seem to be statements of truth about how the world is ordered. The photographic

image allows the ideal reader to consume the bodies of the women on the pages as they survey them, giving a blueprint for the manner in which they should act as the surveyor of their own bodies. In short, these magazines show women how to utilize the male gaze on themselves thereby policing their bodies at all times.

5 Chapter 5: Simple steps to the real you

5.1 Context

Shevelow's (1989) work on women's representations in print culture from the 18th century onwards begins this chapter. She unpacks the evolution of women's print media in Western Europe, detailing the participation of women in popular media. Her work is followed by that of Ferguson (1983) whose conception of the 'cult of femininity' aptly frames the representations of women in print media. Ferguson's (1983) analysis of the coding systems that femininity relies on speaks to Wolf's (1991) work on beauty and paves the way for the analysis of these South African print adverts. This chapter examines the rules that govern the pursuit of beauty and perfection by analyzing three cosmetics advertisements appearing in these two magazines – *Elizabeth Arden*, *L'Oreal* and *dermalogica*.

5.2 Skin deep

Shevelow (1989) observes that in the 18th century, upper and middle class English women began to participate in the public realm which included print culture. During the same period, representational practices of the print culture were steadily restricting women to the private sphere of the home (Shevelow, 1989). This shows that in the very moment women were becoming visible as readers, writing subjects, and textual objects, the literary representations of women were producing increasingly narrow configurations as the model of femininity. This may seem like a great contradiction if we equate access to print media with freedom and inclusion rather than confinement, which was and still is a direct product of this access to information, but if we view media as one of the ways discourses are moulded and disseminated, we can begin to see the power that the creators of these early periodicals gained. The author shows that many of the very agents that enabled this access and promoted women's participation in print culture also engaged in the decisions around its parameters (Shevelow, 1989). The growth of the

popular literary forms such as the periodical aided in this simultaneous process of inclusion and exclusion, because it was this media's attention to women's matters that ensured that the emerging discourses around women developed, discourses that circulate today,

> "[Particular] associations of women with love and romance, matrimony, children and the household, were by no means new in the eighteenth century, their representation in popular literature contributed powerfully to a developing discourse surrounding women that was reformulating sexual relations and the family based upon this new criteria." (Shevelow, 1989, p. 2)

Through its topicality and direct engagement with its audience, the popular periodical asserted its influence as the purveyor of "feminine" (Shevelow, 1989, p. 4) values and played a normative role in women's representations. Shevelow's analysis shows that femininity's recurrence was particularly notable in that it concretised the idea that women are different in kind than in degree from men, and that the fundamental principle guiding the publications from the 18th century to today is the categorisation of readers according to gender. She echoes Ferguson's thoughts on periodicals when she writes that this ordering created the "cult of femininity" (Shevelow, 1989, p. 153) among its readers.

Ferguson's conception of the 'cult of femininity' is that of a cult that is manifested both as a group that anyone born as a female can belong, and as a set of rituals and rites whose performance serves to reconstitute a shared feminine identity and group belonging (Ferguson, 1983, p. 184). In promoting the 'cult of femininity' periodicals are not only reflecting women's role in society, they act as the supplier of definitions of and socialisation into the feminine role,

> "They provide a public platform and symbolic social order which constantly offers women a cheap and accessible source of positive evaluation, alongside practical

> directions for fulfilling her potential as a cultist – and as a consumer." (Ferguson, 1983, p. 185)

Ferguson (1983) reminds us that women's magazines are a social institution that resides alongside structures such as the church, school and family – they have been the definer of women's positions in society since the 18th century, and they continue to be the map that structures behaviour at any given time. These periodicals are more than just self-help manuals for women and womanly things, they are about femininity itself, an art form comprised of a set of practices and beliefs, they demand,

> "Dear reader, choose your female roles, learn your parts well, and then perform par excellence!" (Ferguson, 1983, p. 9)

Furthermore, the advertisements placed in these magazines provide codes that are repeated, and in so doing legitimate certain attitudes and beliefs. The author describes magazines as being the point of creation and maintenance of the "cult of femininity" (1983, p. 5), explaining how the processes of meaning production work much like a religious cult would. She lists the various parallels as these – the magazine periodicals are the oracles that carry the messages sacred to the cult of femininity; the interdictions and benedictions are shaped by the high priestesses who are the magazine editors; within these periodicals or oracles are rites, rituals and sacrifices that the cults adherents must abide by in order to remain part of the group. All combine to pay homage to the totem – Woman herself. Through this description we are able to see how the information within these magazines holds as much weight as it does and why it is worth analyzing further.

The producers of these periodicals provide women with a system that measures their self worth through their bodies, preaching the ideal of self-determination, while in the same moment,

never quite allowing any woman to be free of their helpful tips. Ferguson (1983) argues that femininity is constantly regulated within the pages of women's magazines, describing the 'cult of femininity' as being effective in its skill – using fear to control the decisions women make about their bodies by preaching the ideal of a woman's power attained though self-control. The emphasis on using these self-help techniques to power your self-determination harnesses the idea that true fulfilment and happiness are found through strict control of your body.

I argue that while the cosmetics industry may seem like a positive way to enhance black women's lives on the surface, by providing access to products that were once reserved for wealthy white women, the struggle to be beautiful actually works against women by forcing them to constantly pay for their supposed inadequacies.

The subject of female beauty as discussed by Ferguson (1983) is significant in that it defines the manner and extent to which women's worth is placed on their beauty, a view that is reiterated by Naomi Wolf (1991). Wolf emphasizes that the advances in gaining material independence have been countered by strict regulation of women's bodies. In a chapter entitled "The Cult of the Fear of Age" (1991, p. 106), she discusses the use of cosmetics as a tool against aging, the most dreaded affliction forced upon every woman. Wolf uses the cosmetics industry's obsession with keeping women looking young through the use of their products to illustrate how the fear of aging is a cult, much like the cult of femininity. The author (Wolf, 1991) argues that the producers of these cosmetics rely on carefully structured advertisements to convince potential buyers, in this case women, that they need to use a range of face creams, cleansers, and toners in order to be beautiful. This need stems from the idea that women are always in need of improvement, that their aging is inappropriate, and that 'blemishes' on the skin are a sign of bad skin care. Wolf (1991) believes that over the last two decades advertisement producers have become more sophisticated, using pseudo-science to convince the reader that the products they

sell are something more than ordinary lotion. In the 1980s the advertisements abandoned the strategy of using of feminine markers, such as floral patterned jars alone to mark the desired femininity, deciding to include the use of technological terms as women in the labour market became part of the computerized work force. These constant 'breakthroughs' enforced the idea that the beauty index was spiralling out of control, and that women were losing control of their bodies. The evolution of technology brought about the wonders of airbrushing and high definition photography, tools that could be used against women by giving the sense that scrutiny itself had become superhuman, that every woman had to strive to be superhuman. These same ideas can be seen in action in the advertisements under analysis in this chapter.

In evolving and honing their methods, print advertisements have approached potential cult members with a level of sophistication that is hidden beneath its mysterious language and impressive logos, which have been used in conjunction with the purported technological advances. These markers are imaginary advances according to Wolf (1991), because they guarantee of perfection which is never fulfilled. Instead the ideas are continuously reinvented and put out into the public sphere. This happens with such regularity that the consumer is never given a moment to step back and ask why new technologies are required if the previous claims by the cosmetics companies worked. The companies promise that the new product will be better than the last, which elicits interest from the target market, but no product is ever better than the one that will surely follow. The endless litany of products placed in these magazines hide behind obscure terms such as "Pro-Xylane" used in *L'Oreal* face cream, "Bordomin technology" used in *Elizabeth Arden* moisturizer, and "ChromaWhite TRx" which *dermalogica* promises will brighten the consumer's skin. The combined effect of this list is so ridiculous that manages to bypass scrutiny. The presentation of this so called 'microscopic evidence' further compounds the neurotic effects of such advertising by providing women with, what Wolf describes as, proof that we need facial products to fix ailments that are only visible through a microscope. This is presented not as outrageous, but a reasonable imperative (1991, p. 110). Susan Bordo's (1997)

writing on photographic images fleshes out this idea by asserting that within the cult of femininity lack of discipline over one's body is seen as laziness, especially since it is relatively easy to achieve perfection if the consumer puts in a little effort and follows the simple steps.

It is evident from the unwavering circulation of these images that women are expected to pay for their looks constantly, in money, in time, in anxiety, but we never reach that place of beauty perfection no matter how hard we try. As women, we are always a few steps away from being our 'real' selves, the ideal selves hidden within. The steps set out before us always appear simple, all you have to do is use this face wash for 'problem areas', and this cleanser for the perfect pores, but the reason cosmetics are a billion dollar industry is because no one can ever attain this perfection. Our inability to reach the goals adds to the feeling of failure since no payment will ever be enough.

Gqola's (2007)analysis of 'women's empowerment' in South Africa can be used again to highlight that all of the markers described above indicate a disjuncture between what the producers of the magazine say they are trying to achieve and what the actual framing of the women in the magazine says to the reader. She argues that there seems to be an assertion that women must adapt and live within the systems constraints. Women must inhabit the spaces they have been ()allowed into in ways that ultimately oppress them if they are to participate in the workplace (Gqola, 2007). I believe that what these advertisements say about black women in South Africa is that any advancement made after 1994 is always tempered by the constant subjugation of women due to the price of beauty.

5.3 The Analysis

5.3.1 The surface meanings



Figure 5.1

The first product to be discussed is *Elizabeth Arden Intervene (Figure 5.1)*, a skin care product that claims to be radiance boosting. In the Bible, Eve's sin meant that women were responsible for losing "grace" (Wolf, 1991, p. 103), which is a term that was redefined during the Renaissance period to describe the faces and bodies of beautiful women. Skin creams are the holy oil of this modern cult of femininity, as described by Wolf (1991), and they promise "radiance" in their advertising, radiance that can lead the user back to grace. The link between light and religious grace is a strong one according to Dyer (1997) who describes the use of light in media as an indication of superiority. He writes that from the 18910s it became usual to refer to the perfect lighting in film and photography as "Northern light", this light was defined as being the kind of light that comes into a room during the daytime through large north-facing windows; it is soft white and steeply slanted. In modern times this light effect is created in various ways, but however it is created this light retains the original implications. It is literally and symbolically perfect. 'The North' in geographic terms has been standardized in the process of European expansion as being above the South; it is still most common to think about it as going up North and down South. The North is also the region of Northern Europeans, the whitest whites in the white racial hierarchy (Dyer, 1997). The North is the epitome of the high

cold places that symbolise the piety, cleanliness, and enterprise of whiteness. Idealized white women are bathed in light – it permeates through them and falls on them from above. Light from the North is therefore celestial and the promise of radiance brings this promise to black women who are not fortunate enough to have hair that is the colour of the sun, eyes that are the colour of the sky, and the brightness that comes from the light of God above. In short cosmetics that promise 'radiance' to black women promise whiteness.

This advertisement appears over two pages, with the left page being a full page image of the model Lerato Moloi *(Figure 5.1)* and the right page giving the reader detail on the product. The right page shows the *Intervene* product which is partially opened and radiates a light from within it. Above it sits a paragraph of text explaining the effects of this skin cream to the reader. This text begins with a 'call-to-action', which is a signal from the producers of the copy to the reader that they should act on a directive as set out in the copy or answer a question. In this case the action is answering the question "What was your skin's most radiant moment?". The rest of the text proceeds to educate the reader on how they can attain radiance they had in their youth once again. The colours that have been used on both pages are powder blues and purples, from the background of the copy, the dress the model wears, and the make-up used on the model. While the model does wear some make-up on her face, it seems minimal, allowing us to see how evenly toned her skin is.

Lerato Moloi is a recognizable face as she is the first black person to have ever modelled for the international cosmetics brand *Elizabeth Arden*. She is South African which is noteworthy because the company is internationally recognised. It is because of this knowledge that the copy would have maximum impact in the South African market, especially with black women. If Moloi is the face of the product internationally it would have a positive effect on the feelings of self worth within black women in South Africa. Her appearance in this advertisement allows her be seen as the representation of the South African dream, a woman who participates in the

world on the same level as Katherine Zeta Jones or Mariah Carey who are both brand ambassadors for *Elizabeth Arden*. When you visit the Elizabeth Arden website you see that South Africa is the only African country named on its list of retailers, further cementing the producers' desire to have an active presence in this country. Using a local model for this market is a great strategic move as more black women can afford these cosmetics now and the use of a 'Proudly South African' model would be preferable in such a growing industry.

Moving onto the next page in the *Intervene* advertisement we can look at the written text. The call-to-action "What was your skin's most radiant moment?" allows the producers to launch into their marketing strategy. This cream does not use scientific evidence to try and prove its claims; instead it works on the idea that radiance is attainable through one simple step – the use of this moisturizer,

> "Every woman remembers that moment. When her skin looked so luminous, it seemed lit from within. INTERVENE captures that moment, instantly restoring skin's radiant appearance."

This radiance is an inexplicable glow, as symbolised by the light the jar of cream on the page emits, that will show the world the inner beauty that every woman, even a black woman who does not have a natural glow, has inside her. *Elizabeth Arden*'s *Intervene* could give every woman something that she used to have – her youth. According to the copy luminosity comes from youth and youth is beauty, so if you can try to turn back time with this natural cream you will attain that beauty again. Unlike the copy for *L'Oreal* and *dermalogica*, this advertisement puts a stress on the natural, not the chemical. It aims to enhance you by restoring your skin, not by using skin brightening technology. This idea of the natural is taken further in the colour

choices which are light and fresh and serene, allowing the radiance and connotations of grace to permeate through the page.



Figure 5.2

L'Oreal Derma Genesis (Figure 5.2) is the second product to be analysed and this copy is split into two pages much like the *Elizabeth Arden* advertisement. The left page is a full head-shot of the American actress Kerry Washington, a much closer shot than we are given in the *Intervene* copy. Her right hand cradles her face making sure her face is the focus of the page and that her eyes look directly at the viewer. Her face does not seem to have any make-up applied to it except for mascara and lipstick, giving the viewer an idea of how effective the *L'Oreal* product is. Her skin is perfectly even toned, taut and free of any of the acne and blackheads. In a quote assigned to her at the bottom of the page, the actress says "Derma Genesis is skincare with a difference". Over a small part of her face, on the right side, we can see a flutter of hexagonal shapes that move into the right hand page, linking the two pages. This motif of hexagons is carried out in the rest of the advertisement where the text is placed. The right hand page offers an explanation of the groundbreaking technology used in the new "cellular-nurturing" cosmetic face cream from *L'Oreal*. The copy tells the reader to "Nurture cells in the top skin layers" in order to achieve "dewy, plumped-up, younger looking skin". There is a column of text on the right hand side of

the page detailing the active ingredients in this moisturizer. There are three active ingredients – "Pro-Xylane" which is said to be a new generation patented molecule, "Hyaluronic Acid" which is inspired by dermatological science and sun-screen lotion with "SPF 15" to prevent premature ageing.

The producers of the *L'Oreal* copy aim to show and explain how well this new product works on the skin by providing visual cues as well as researched information. The visual cues begin with the famous actress being used as the face of the product, and in so doing assuring the reader that this cream is of a standard so high that it is used by a celebrity. Mapule's (2009) analysis of current celebrity culture defines modern celebrities as public individuals who are held in great esteem in society because of their ubiquitous appearance within media. Media has evolved into a tool that disseminates information around the world instantly, with a click of a button anyone can post an image on their blog or link a YouTube video to their Facebook profile – anyone can be famous. This rate of appearance allows these famous individuals to gain discursive power over 'ordinary' individuals, despite lacking the institutional power that other famous figures such as royalty and politicians have. Mapule (2009) writes that unlike famous people throughout history, modern celebrity does not care about talent or special achievement, the celebrity's importance comes from their omnipresence in media. The preoccupation with celebrities gives them discursive power, and this allows advertisers to use them in copy in order to elicit a favourable response from the reader.

Kerry Washington's skin appears flawless and that is to be linked directly to *Derma Genesis (Figure 5.2)*. The hexagonal shapes on the left page create a link to the right page, but more importantly they mimic the general shape of chemical compounds, thereby creating the sense that this product is based on scientific truth. They also add an image to the rejuvenated skin cells that we could all have if we use this product. If we take a closer look at the right page we can see that this hexagonal shape is repeated in the background behind the bottle of cream and

the extra information. The main colours used in this print advertisement are gold, silver, purple and pink. The gold and silver give a shine to the copy which is in line with the science behind the product as these are colours which indicate clean sterile environments, something that can be trusted. Purple and pink are colours widely associated with femininity so they work as markers for the acceptability of this message within the beauty paradigm. The colours used here are brighter than the ones used in the *Intervene* copy, adding vibrancy to these pages. The use of these bright colours shows that the producers want the attention of the reader as soon as they turn the page.

The reader is able to feel that there is a sense of transparency in this copy as the producers provide short explanations of the science behind the product, because Pro-Xylane and Hyaluronic Acid are not chemicals that the target market would be familiar with. This transparency is further compounded by the use of *L'Oreal*'s own research in which they test the product on a group of women, something that gives this campaign an added dose of credibility. Their research proves that their product works for most of the 243 women used in the testing, confirming the positive effects that rest of the page claims. For the producers, the combination of visual and scientific evidence is a potent one. The visual of the actress is enough to draw the reader in and have her ask what makes Kerry Washington's face look so uncompromised. Once that has happened the platform for further explanation is set up. Now the producers have a captive audience who will feel that their skin is substandard because it lacks the perfectly manicured look that is right there in front of their eyes.



Figure 5.3

The third product is *ChromaWhite TRx* made by the company *dermalogica (Figure 5.3).* This advertisement differs from the other advertisements analysed in this study because the copy only shows the product and does not present the reader with an image of a woman. The reason this advertisement was chosen for analysis is that the problems it seeks to address speak directly to black women. The words "hyperpigmentation" and "skin brightening" reference the discourses around skin lightening and should be analysed further because they seem so innocuous.

The copy for this skincare system appear on a single page, and its colours are more muted than those of the *Elizabeth Arden* and *L'Oreal* copy as *dermalogica* only uses white and hues of grey as its colours. On the right side of the single page advertisement we see a magnified tube of cosmetic cream with the product name *dermalogica C-12 concentrate* on the packaging. It is a plain white bottle with a thin grey line running around it and the text mentioned above. The left hand side of the page is split into three modules running from the top of the page down. The top

module contains the masthead which gives the reader information about the product name and use. The second module is a paragraph-long description of the product and its uses, detailing the technology behind this improved formulation. Lastly, the bottom module shows the reader the other products available from this manufacturer by lining them up on a metallic surface next to each other above the *dermalogica* logo. Beneath this logo we can see the website address for the company as well as contact information for the branches around South Africa.

The producers of the *dermalogica* copy take a slightly different angle when advertising the *ChromaWhite TRx*. This copy does away with the image of a face completely, choosing to rely solely on the weight of the text for authority. The text reads,

> "Only Dermalogica could unite skin health with the latest technology in skin brightening. ChromaWhite TRx is the synergistic system that rapidly delivers brighter skin and improved tone while enhancing skin health. Prepare, prevent and protect against hyperpigmentation with ChromaWhite TRx. It's a new era in brightening from the skin health experts.
> Visit a Dermalogica skin therapist and receiver your *Face Mapping*® and customized ChromaWhite TRx product prescription today."*(Figure 5.3)*

The voice of the producers is scientific and unquestionably authoritative. There are no questions, only statements which are to be read as truth – only *dermalogica* could bring you a product this revolutionary. The copy also tells you what kind of skin you want without ever asking you, the catch phrases used are "brighter skin", "improved tone", and "skin health", so that the reader knows that they have to inhabit the position of someone who wants these things in order to be able to participate in this narrative. The option not to participate is not given which allows the producers of the advertisement to position all readers of the copy as the target market. It is a very effective method of advertising as *dermalogica* situates itself as the answer

to a problem that you as the reader may or may not have thought you had before you read this, but which you now have to take care of. The name *ChromaWhite TRx* lends itself to scientific explanation without ever having to reveal what it actually is. This is compounded by the use of the *C-12 concentrate* descriptor on the bottle's label, this sounds so scientific it could be an element on the periodic table. This advertisement differs in strategy from the *L'Oreal* one in that it does not rely on evidence to try and convince the reader that they should use it, *dermalogica* is more forceful in its lack of argument and much like chemistry text books you read when you are in high school, it does not need to justify why this combination of chemicals does what it does, it is just a fact.

The sophistication of advertising methods can be seen the producers' use of mysterious language to describe products. According to Wolf (1991, p. 109) this language use is directly linked to Western societies finding techniques to ensure that new learning does not penetrate the underclass of the female sex. She writes that a long history of intellectual exclusion precedes the current intimidation by this mock authoritative language. The wording on these pages does not allow for an easy reading by the potential customer who is a woman, which may seem odd given the fact that the producers want to sell these products, however, this method of sale works in two ways. Firstly, because of the language used, the ideal reader is reminded of knowledge forms that women have historically been blocked from penetrating, like science and technology. The set-up of this copy is seductive to the potential consumer who reads it and understands the importance of the 'scientific breakthrough', because science symbolizes education, something which is not always available to black women. The availability now is a signal to the idea reader that they are sophisticated and intelligent enough to understand why this product is important. The seductive nature of the product is further highlighted by the fact that each woman can make an appointment with a trained professional which ensures that her *dermalogica* product is custom-made. Wolf (1991)insists that advertisers have refined their use of this daunting

language to cover the fact that skin creams do not actually do anything. This is the second way advertisers are able to secure the interest of the potential customer who may not even understand the copy but knows that the 'science' is the symbol of a product you can trust.

5.3.2 Exploding the text – ideological meaning

The two narratives that run throughout the *Intervene* copy are light and youth *(Figure 5.1)*. The use of a South African model in the *Elizabeth Arden* copy is interesting in that they pick a model that is not light skinned and they don't try to lighten her skin as they have Kerry Washington on the *L'Oreal* pages *(Figure 5.2)*. They talk about the skin being "lit from within" but never about the skin being made to look lighter. This is interesting because of the distance it puts between it and skin lightening creams without ever letting go of the idea that we should reach for the light, as discussed above. Markers such as "luminous" and "radiance" that reify the importance of light and exuding whiteness are implicated in the world view that privileges whiteness (Dyer, 1997). The ideal consumer for this product is someone who should want her inner light to shine through her dark exterior, and the discourse the producers of this copy speak through is evidenced by the symbolism they use – if we look at the black jar, we can see it is not transparent, it is hard and dark, but once Elizabeth Arden opens it, they allow whiteness to flow freely from it, its radiance permeating through the pages. The name of the product is interesting in itself because it demands an intervention by the customer, as the ideal audience we need to stop and intervene so that we do not have to deal with skin that holds its radiance within, never capturing it or showing the world the light and grace we have inside.

The second string of ideas within the *Intervene* copy is about retaining youth. Here the producers make use of technology by stating that they have produces a serum called "Biodormin", something that has been designed to turn back time and make any woman look

youthful once again. Moloi does look young, but that is because she is 26 years old, yet *Elizabeth Arden's Intervene* takes the credit for her youth by placing here on these pages and using her as the face of this brand. Regaining your youth is a theme that runs through this advertisement and the *L'Oreal* one.

The effective nature of the type of imagery used by *L'Oreal (Figure 5.2)*, the use of an airbrushed celebrity on copy like this is effective because even if the reader knows what Kerry Washington looks like away from this campaign and realizes that she is a human being and so does not have the 'perfect' skin shown here, it does not stop you from wanting what you see on the pages. Just by implying that it is possible the copy elicits such deep feelings of insecurity that what we all know about the production of these kinds of advertisements, from high definition camera lenses to photoshopping images, is forgotten in an instant. Suddenly she becomes this archetype of perfection for black women around the world, creating a need for a product which does not even make sense if one takes a closer look at what it is promising.

L'Oreal uses evidence that it claims is scientific to explain the revolutionary effects of *Derma Genesis* without ever really saying anything you can really hold on to and check. What is Pro-Xylane? All we know from the copy is that it is a new generation molecule, from that description we must take the leap of faith and believe that this molecule holds the key to eternal youth.
The use of the hexagons is so subtle that one could miss the intention. It is our knowledge around media production and the amount of money spent on it that shows us that there are no mistakes in the creation of advertising copy, that every piece of the puzzle fits in a certain way with the others and is there to elicit a well thought out response. The pink and silver hexagons that link the various parts of the copy together mimic those of chemical compounds; this is something the reader with the most basic science knowledge would put together without even realizing it.

While the *L'Oreal* copy is reliant on three markers for truth – the image of the woman, the explanation of the ingredients, and the evidence of surveys done, the *dermalogica (Figure 5.3)* copy does not rely on any of these truth markers. It is the most audacious because it relies entirely on its own text as fact. Interest is created though the visual, so the copy is created in a manner that differs from other products that are similar. From the other cosmetics advertisements we can see a great deal of colour used to guide the eye through the page, however on this page we see something completely different – a lack of colour altogether. This is a significant difference. The lack of colour here is intentional; the producers want to convey a sense of serious, scientific clout through this copy. When copy is designed in this way it is said to have good use of "white-space". This phrase means that the designer of the advertisement has left an ideal amount of the page free of the clutter of large pieces of text and pictures, when this is done in the manner *dermalogica* has, it is known as effective use of design space. This page is white, and as Dyer (1997) writes, the colour white is a sign of purity and authority. The use of the word "White" in *ChromaWhite TRx* is not accidental either, it is a linguistic sign used to buttress the idea that white is clean, pure and is therefore the best. In this case the colour white works in conjunction with the word as a sign of the scientific, it reminds the reader of a pristine laboratory, a place of science where only the most rigorously tested products could be created. Not only is the lack of colour used liberally, the *dermalogica* products sit on a metal countertop which is so clean that their images are reflected in it, as if it stands in a laboratory. All of these markers combined speak to the idea that science is rigorous and truthful. The producers never have to ask the reader questions about their needs because they have no time for that, they are the scientists and their research and subsequent product will tell you, reader, what you need. All you have to do is sit back and allow them to do their work. They indicate that this authority extends to your skin as well in this text, because *dermalogica* has skin care therapists who specialize in *Face Mapping®*, meaning that they can analyse your face and tell you what is

wrong, because you lack the scientific knowledge to do it yourself. They are willing to guide you through the complications of skin care and guarantee everlasting skin health if you just let them.

5.4 Conclusion

Each of these advertisements is framed in a slightly different way, but the overall effects are strikingly similar. The *Elizabeth Arden* copy uses language and imagery that can be traced back to religious terms, implying that the use of the product will restore grace to any woman who uses it. *Elizabeth Arden* also relies on the implied purity of white light to position its product as the serum that will ensure that feminine beauty is attainable for black women. *L'Oreal (Figure 5.2)* uses a range of visual cues to signal that it is the leader in cosmetic skin care, from the scientific wording of the copy to the use of a celebrity on the pages, the combination of these cues signal that it is important to strive for more, and that the consumer can achieve this by introducing *L'Oreal* to their beauty regime. The last product, *dermalogica (Figure 5.3)*, does not use celebrity or religious connotation to secure the trust of the reader; it uses the power of science. Through scientific speak *dermalogica* creates the sense that it should be trusted by the reader above all others. The producers of this copy make use of specialised services that promise the reader that all their needs will be met individually, and in so doing create exclusivity.

Throughout these claims remains one constant however, that black women should be using beauty products because they need to be fixed and made better. These pages are designed to seem innocent but the underlying sophistication of the message allows for an oppositional reading if we allow ourselves to. Wolf (1991) has written extensively on the coded utterances that play on women's anxieties, tapping into our insecurities with striking efficiency that leaves even the most intelligent woman longing for the unattainable. In all three of these advertisements we are urged to do our best to recapture the past – an impossible task, to intervene and allow our skin to be revitalized, to listen to the scientists and do as we are told, all in the name of beauty.

As with any cult, sacrifices must be made, and in order to cleanse ourselves of our imperfections we have to give in and buy these products, in so doing ridding us of guilt. Until the next time that is, when we will see another one of these products and let the cycle of oppression begin again.

6 Chapter 6: Relaxing

6.1 Context

This chapter is concerned with the wide proliferation of advertisements which encourage black women to use chemical products to alter their bodies, with a specific focus on the use of hair relaxers as an example of this. Discourses about black people's hair are rich with descriptions of variation that hinge on one's gender and race, yet the portrayals of black women's hair in media tend to favour hairstyles that are chemically treated with hair relaxer creams This study around representations of black women and their hair attempts to move the discussion forward towards unpacking why these particular depictions are favoured in magazines such as *True Love* and *Destiny* magazine. I use the work of black women who have written about black women and their hair as a springboard into the analysis.

The authors who begin this analysis are Ribane (2006), Molebatsi (2009), Pool (2008), and Erasmus (1997). According to Molebatsi's analysis of the representations of black women's hair in television advertisements, research shows quite clearly that the power of white supremacy is still active in black women's lives. She uses evidence from these texts to show that black women are still forced, through the signs embedded in repeated media, to emulate white women by straightening their hair with hair relaxers rather than embracing the hair's natural state. For the author the use of chemicals to alter black women's hair indicates dissatisfaction with themselves, a state which she attributes to Colonisation. In Nakedi Ribane's (2006) anecdotal account of the beauty industry in South Africa, the author echoes Molebatsi's sentiments, writing that the use of these products is a sign that women feel unattractive being their natural selves. However, she differs from Molebatsi by suggesting that despite the rigors of cultural and political oppression, black South African women have managed to keep their self-respect alive by celebrating their own beauty ideals, and refusing to behave like their African American

counterparts. This manner of speaking about black women's lives is similar to Hanna Pool's (2008) as it is an account of her personal experiences, although it differs in that Pool's writing describes the seductions of straight hair. A seduction that Zimitri Erasmus (1997) is able to begin to unpack in her article where she argues that hair is at all times gendered, racialised and sexualized. Erasmus (1997) also argues that any hair that has been touched should be considered to be treated, whether it is treated with hair relaxer or combed into and afro, it has been worked on. She questions whether there is validity in one type of 'worked on' hair being considered more natural or not. These authors create the platform from which the analysis begins.

6.2 Hair matters

One of the most widely cited views about women who use hair relaxers is that they are not valuing the essence of who they are (Molebatsi, 2009; Ribane, 2006; Patton, 2006; Thompson, 2008), and this is the view that Molebatsi takes on. In her article about locating natural "hair-y-tage" (Molebatsi, 2009, p. 22) in shampoo advertisements, Molebatsi attests to the fact that the way that women express physical beauty is a determiner of social standing, freedom of expression and social change. She writes that the "multimodality" of advertising texts allows the reader to recognize, what lifestyles choices are preferred for the ideal beauty because these texts do not just advertise a product, they promote the lifestyle around the product. The author questions how the black South African woman is managing to move forward, past the apartheid discourses that governed what was ugly and unacceptable about her body. Molebatsi brings up an interesting point, that the Population Registration Act of 1950 successfully created a hierarchy within black people where people who had straighter hair and lighter skin were allowed to "pass" into a higher level of social existence. Tests were created that allowed people who were classified as coloured to pass for white and some black people passed for coloured depending on their skin tone. This hierarchical passing had real effects on their lived

experiences because the lighter you were, and the less curly your hair was, the higher you were allowed to climb out of the crippling brutality and poverty that the "blacks" who weren't so lucky were relegated to,

> "This treatment of applying bleaching chemicals to dark skin went hand-in-hand with the equally hazardous hair straightening creams. In this way, some saw elevation from a wretched life of ghettos to live in "coloured" townships and suburbs – depending on how light-skinned and soft-haired one was." (Molebatsi, 2009, p. 23)

What this shows is that the lighter your skin was and the straighter your hair was the greater social value you had in South African society.

In the most interesting argument in her article, Molebatsi echoes what many have argued when it comes to black women and their hair, that the promotion and use of hair straightener is an indication that black women are not comfortable with their natural heritage. Molebatsi speaks from an Afro-centric perspective and insists that the domination of these types of advertisements over other hair brands and styles, such as *Jabu Stone* which specialises in natural hair, are an indication that white supremacy has once again gotten away with standardizing whiteness as the ideal body criterion (Molebatsi, 2009).

Nakedi Ribane is an author, co-owner of a modelling agency, and South African actress who was a leading fashion model in the 1980s. She believes, like Molebatsi, that the use of hair relaxers is an acceptance of inferiority by black women. She gives a description of the beauty industry in the country from her own practical perspective. One of Ribane's central arguments is that despite the draconian laws of apartheid, black women were able to etch out a life for themselves in fashion and modelling that transcended the crippling oppression of the era. Ribane recounts a time in the 1950s when black beauty pageants became a form of entertainment that everyone could become excited about and participate in. She however expresses disappointment when she

explains that it was evident that many of these South African models and entertainers based themselves on their African American counterparts who were considered to be the blueprint for what black people in South Africa should aspire to. She writes that the images of the American celebrities appeared progressive to black South African entertainers, because they had straight hair, lighter skin and used make-up. This influence, she argues, caused the South Africans to imitate their American counterparts by straightening their hair, and using beauty products they had not used before. The author takes issue with these black South African models who refused to behave like their 'true' selves,

> "They [tried] to copy the black Americans, who are mistresses of deception in these beauty tricks and can do them so successfully that it becomes difficult sometimes for even professionals to suss out the fake – for example, hair extensions – from the genuine." (Ribane, 2006, p. 16)

In this statement expresses contempt at the deceptive nature of the beauty tricks Ribane describes. The author shows that she believes that the use of hair straighteners, braids and weaves is the refusal by black women to embrace who they are. This idea that black women are their real selves only when they reject straightened hair is interesting because is places a person's entire identity on a hair style, ignoring the other ways black women choose to present themselves. It does not take into consideration a range of other style choices that mark the body like clothes or jewellery. The idea that black women should embrace their true selves is echoed by other authors (Molebatsi, 2009; Patton, 2006; Thompson, 2008) who call for an oppositional beauty gaze that elevates 'natural' hair to promote the acceptance of black beauty on a large scale.

While Molebatsi (2009) and Ribane (2006) feel that use of chemicals in the hair is directly linked to the need to conform to Eurocentric ideals of femininity, Erasmus (1997) brings more complexity to this longstanding hair debate by arguing that all hair is political – it is gendered, racialised and sexualised. She draws on her personal experiences growing up in Port Elizabeth when she describes the 17 steps she took to "good hair" (1997, p. 13) during her childhood. Her central argument is that the issue of 'good hair' is not unique to her upbringing or South Africans alone, women around the world know all about hair that must be forced into submission by any means necessary in order to look good. She puts forward that the creation of a causal link between women who have straight hair and the idea that they want to be considered white is far too simplistic for this complex relationship with oneself. While Erasmus notes that the practice of 'relaxing' or 'texturing' hair is situated in racist-colonial notions of beauty, she also believes that there are multiple layers one must unpack in order to begin to understand black women and their relationships with their hair. The author puts forward that the very process of working on our hair, whether it is a simple combing or complex weaving, is an attempt to bring dead streams of hair to life, so the distinction between the use of hair relaxer or regular shampoos and conditioners is not as obvious as people might make it seem. In the end one must question whether there is such a thing as 'natural hair', Erasmus does not believe it exists,

> "These practices invest hair, biologically dead, with social meaning and value. Hair is gendered, racialised and sexualised. This makes it politicised." (1997, p. 16)

What this means is that any hair that is touched is immediately injected with meaning, taking on history and meaning that cannot be explained simply. Even hair that is not combed but left as it is holds political meaning, therefore singling out hair straightening might mask the complex relationships we all have with our hair.

There is an echoing of the idea of complexity in Hannah Pool's (2008) article concerning her own hair and the transition to straighter hair after maintaining an afro for many years. The author suggests that there are three categories of hair for black women – natural styles, processed hair and weaves. 'Natural styles' are described as hair that has been worked into a look but whose texture has been left in its natural form, such as braided hair or afros. The second category is 'processed hair', this includes hair that has been chemically processed, pressed or stretched out with a hot comb. The third is the use of wigs and weaves. Pool describes how any one of these categories in use has personal and political effects, they frame the person under the hair and inscribe behaviours before they even open their mouths to speak, she gives the example that when a white women uses extensions in her hair the response differs from that of a black woman who does the same. Black women have to behave in specific ways that are considered to be acceptable, but white women are allowed to explore a wider number of options where their bodies are concerned. In the same way that gender allows for men to behave in ways that would be considered unacceptable if they were performed by women, race acts the same way between white and black women. The argument in this article is that the personal is interwoven with the political and because of this internal contestation when a black woman is drawn in by the seduction of trying something new and different by straightening her hair, she will also have to deal with feelings of guilt and even embarrassment at the thought of selling out. In her account of the move from curly hair to straight hair Pool (2008) recounts that although she loved the newness of her straight hair she felt a sudden discomfort,

> "There was only one problem: it made me feel guilty. I felt like a traitor. And I became mildly obsessed about what signals I was sending out. If an afro says, "I'm confident enough to wear my hair as it comes," what does wearing my hair straight say?" (2008, p. 3)

Pool's article indicates that straightened hair is seductive for a number of reasons. The hair style is made desirable from the socialisation of black women into believing that their hair is unmanageable from a young age (Erasmus, 1997; Molebasti, 2009), to the lure of wanting to look like a celebrity or entertainer (Ribane, 2006), there is an internalised desire that encourages black women to straighten their hair. At the same time, arguments about the need for black women to be 'natural' create a contestation that causes anxiety about identity within black women.

My own view is that the complex relations black women have with their hair should not be hastily overlooked, as they are in Molebatsi (2009) and Ribane's (2006) writing. For Molebatsi the discussion about black women and their hair is clear, any hair that is not "natural" is not acceptable because it is an indication that the woman accepts racist ideas about herself. In Ribane's book she overlooks the salience of racist ideologies and misses an opportunity to affirm black women's resilience while being mindful of the powerful work of radicalised discourses. The authors overlook the complexities discussed by Erasmus (1997) and Pool (2008), which should be further unpacked in order to realize what the dominant discourses on hair are and how they affect changes in style within black women.

The debate over what constitutes as appropriate in terms of hair is longstanding, and one that this chapter cannot unravel in its entirety, just as the intersections between gender, race and class in black women's lives cannot be unwound in a few pages. For this chapter I aim to take the discussion further than the authors mentioned above by calling to attention the repetitive use of hair relaxer advertisements above other hair styles and products in popular media. The importance of these debates lies in the fact that there are multiplicities of hair styles available to

black women, but the advertisements shown in these magazines favour chemically straightened hair for black women.

6.3 The Analysis

The texts to be unpacked are a series of four advertisements for hair relaxer under the *Dark and Lovely* range of relaxers. There are other brands showcased in the magazines pages, but this brand has the most advertisements in circulation therefore it allows us to look at multiple texts from the same producers. The quantitative analysis showed that over the six month period there were 42 advertisements concerning hair that appeared on the pages of both magazines combined. Of those 42 advertisements 32 of them promoted hair relaxer creams explicitly by showing the actual product and using the term 'hair relaxer'. The remaining 10 advertisements were split into two categories – 'hair food' and alternative hair styles. The copy for 'hair food' or 'root stimulator' took up 6 advertisements. This type of product ties in with the hair relaxers because these hair care products must be used when one uses chemicals on their hair, they keep the scalp healthy and are said to keep hair from breaking after the relaxing treatment. What is most interesting is that there were only 4 advertisements left that dealt with alternative hairstyles, and in all cases the alternative was braided hair. These results show that our of a possible 42 advertisements for hair, only 4 of them promoted alternatives to hair relaxer, that amounts to an average of 9.5%, which is very low when you consider how many hair styles are available to black women. The texts will be analysed in three phases, as suggested by Frith (1998) and Fairclough (2001) – firstly the description of the text, secondly the interpretation of the surface meanings, and thirdly the relationship between the texts and the conditions of production will be analysed.

6.3.1 The surface meanings



Figure 6.1

All of the advertisements in this chapter wear the brand identity of the product *Dark and Lovely*. The colours used in the backgrounds are delicate mixes of blues and purples, running across all the advertising copy. The clothes that the models wear are silver and plum, made in colours that work with that palate



.

Figure 6.2

Although they advertise hair relaxer, each advertisement shows a different variation on the product, they are *Dark and Lovely Regular (Figure 6.1)*, *Dark and Lovely Precise (Figure 6.1)*,

Dark and Lovely Beautiful Beginnings (Figure 6.3), and *Dark and Lovely Moisture Plus (Figure 6.3)*. The names, packaging and advertisement indicate that these are different products, but essentially they are all hair relaxer creams made by the same company.



Figure 6.3

In the bulk of cases the pages show a single black woman, except in the case of *Beautiful Beginnings (Figure 6.3)* which shows a mother and daughter, on the left hand side of the page. The images of these women are cropped just below their shoulders to give the viewer a full head shot. The models do not face the viewer directly; they have their bodies facing out of the corner of the page while they turn their heads towards us, giving us a view of their hairstyle as well as the face. The women wear subtle make up around their eyes and on the lips, and their hands are professionally manicured. Their hair is just long enough to touch their shoulders and is styled in a manner which modern and sophisticated. This echoes the poses of the models on the product packaging.

The information about the product is placed inside an opaque column on the right hand side of the page, and across the models' shoulders if more space is required. This information details

the benefits of using that particular relaxer cream but providing scientific evidence from their production laboratories. Each page alludes to some technology that has been employed by the producers in order to improve on the last product. Technological 'breakthroughs' as a theme are extremely important in cosmetics advertisements because they indicate that the product has evolved into something more sophisticated than it was in its original incarnation, and they create a sense that the product should be trusted. Scientific language is authoritative and demands that the reader take notice. A strap runs across the bottom of every page, holding the parent company *SoftSheen Carson's* tagline within it – "My style. My Way". This line communicates to the readers that this is their choice, and encourages them to break out of the mould. It is an indication of independence and the rights women have over their bodies, which they can exercise by choosing to relax their hair.



Figure 6.4

Dark and Lovely Moisture Plus (Figure 6.3) shows campaign consistency is maintained by using a similar two-line call to action across all of the copy – for example, "Seal in moisture. Relax with confidence", "Don't settle for less than the original. Be simply Dark and Lovely". From this line of copy the reader is shown that this brand and this method of styling your hair is the unique and innovative because it was the first.

The work of advertising copy is to initiate interaction with the reader and create interest in the product by supplying cues that will prove to the reader that the product is part of an idealised lifestyle. This copy invites audience interest by being large and glossy which draws the eyes into the pages; it then invites interaction by asking questions such as “Want ultimate straightness and shine?” and “A moisturising relaxer system? Believe it”. This invitation to engage is described by media producers as a “call-to-action”, the intention is to get the reader interested in the copy enough to answer the question and begin to read the rest of the text. Embedded in the question is an assumption that the ideal reader must take at face value in order to participate in the interaction with the copy. In addition to that the producers provide telephone numbers for the call centre and a website address in case customers would like further clarification on the products. This allows the producers to give the impression of being approachable and open to questioning around their product.

The colours used in the copy are stereotypically feminine, with hues of pink and purple used to indicate that this is copy women should be interested in. Colour is useful in design because it does not require the reader to interact with written text to get the message across. The colours inform every element in the copy from the backdrops behind the models to the clothes and the make-up they wear, the desirability of femininity is present throughout the pages. The *Beautiful Beginnings* copy indicates how young people are taught to be aware of this coding. All of the mother’s clothes are pink and her daughter’s shirt is yellow with prink graphics printed onto it. The mother is an indication of what the daughter should grow up to be through the clothes that she wears and the style of her hair. It is because advertisements sell lifestyles that this copy becomes less about the product itself but selling this idealised femininity, which is framed positively on these pages.

The feminine ideal is taken further with the use of local and internationally celebrities to promote these products. Kelly Rowland of *Destiny's Child* is used on the *Dark and Lovely Regular* copy *(Figure 6.1),* and Nonhle Thema who is a South African television host is used in the *Dark and Lovely Moisture Plus (Figure 6.3)* copy. Both of these women represent a lifestyle that should be aspired to and their appearance on these pages further indicate that this product should be incorporates into the reader's life if she wants the life that these celebrities have.

The copy uses words linked to technological advances to indicate that the relaxer has scientific approval to back up its claims. These words are further buttressed by small, coin sized images that show computer enhanced hair follicles being treated by the product. This is a strategy employed by many cosmetics companies to indicate that the research is sound and the final product is safe for use. The provision of these so called scientific facts is intended to build the trust of reader in the product, and by providing positive information like this they imply that there is no negative information about the product. Hair relaxer may well damage the scalp and cause balding but they neither confirm nor deny that, they give the reader the positive and leave it at that. This information provides a sense of transparency and ensures that the ideal reader trusts that the product will benefit them.

Dark and Lovely ensures audience recognition by retaining the same format throughout the promotions, the viewer hardly has to confirm what brand this is if they have seen a *Dark and Lovely* print advertisement before. These advertisements show us what the intended buyer of the product is by using markers such as professionally coiffed hair, manicured nails and expensive clothes.

6.3.2 Exploding the text – ideological meaning

The word 'relaxer' provides the reader with a clear image detailing its work; it tells the reader that if their hair is very curly and they apply the mixture of chemicals onto their scalp, these chemicals will straighten their hair for them. While the reader sits back and relaxes their body, the magic in the treatment will turn their hair in to a straight relaxed state, from the tightly wound unrelaxed mess it was before. The word 'relaxer' also alludes to the idea that if a woman has curly hair and she does not apply these chemicals to it, she will not ever be able to relax, and will always be tense, worried about how unmanageable her hair is, as highlighted by Molebasti (2009) and Erasmus (1997). The use of the word 'relax' in this manner is in itself interesting because it positions women who do not use this product as uptight and unable to reach their inner beauty until they relax. All they need to do is follow the simple steps outlined for them by *Dark and Lovely* and they will be able to let their anxiety go while they relax their hair.

These discourses on the unmanageability of black women's hair are discussed by both Erasmus (1997) Molebatsi (2009), with the authors attesting to the fact that their struggles to style their hair in ways that were popular left lasting marks on their conceptions of beauty. Erasmus writes that in coloured communities good hair meant straight sleek hair that you had inherited from your parents, while bad hair was unfortunate and needed to be relaxed every few months to retain its straightness. Even then you couldn't expose the hair to water in public or it would revert to its naturally curly state, which was unacceptable and a cause of great embarrassment. This sentiment is echoed by Molebatsi whose conversations with family and friends show that good hair is still associated with white people's straight hair and bad hair is associated with black people's curly hair, despite the work of Black Consciousness and Afro-centricity.

The images in the hair relaxer adverts all feature phenotypically black women. Each advert shows an image of a single woman, with the exception of the *Beautiful Beginnings* range which shows a mother and her daughter. The *Beautiful Beginnings (Figure 6.3)* advertisements shows

a mother and her daughter staring out of the right hand side of the page into the distance while they sing into a hair brush. It is not clear what they are looking at, but their happiness is evidenced by the expressions on their faces and the catch phrase “it’s her time to shine”. This “no-mistake” hair relaxer indicates to the reader that the relaxing of hair must start when women are young so that they always appreciate the value of “healthy looking, straight hair”. The composition of all of the adverts is romanticized, soft pastel colours and blurred lighting give the image a whimsical feel which is reminiscent of old Hollywood glamour. The use of the celebrities and this glamour are intended to show the reader that this level of success is attainable if they just follow the instructions on the product label. While celebrity used to be virtually unattainable, reserved only for the most popular artists in music and film, now anyone can be part of ‘reality television’ making the idea of celebrity that much more attainable for the person sitting at home, paging through a magazine. These signs all work towards showing the reader that everything they desire is within their reach.

The images in the adverts are laid out in a manner which gives the women’s face and shoulders the majority if the space allocated to the advert, they use headshots in order to show the quality of the hair after use of the relaxer. The women’s bodies never face the reader directly, instead their backs face you at a three quarter angle and they look over either their right or left shoulder at you. The expressions on the women’s faces give a feeling of serenity, as if they are at peace. If the woman is a model for the product and not a celebrity, the reader is not given her name, she is just an ordinary woman who has no relevance outside of this hair relaxer. We cannot look into her eyes because she stares out of the page or closes her eyes as she tilts her head upwards, disengaged from the moment that she is in.

There are only two women who makes eye contact with the reader, the first is Nonhle Thema *(Figure 6.3),* as a television personality; she is elevated to a higher level of status which is indicated by the manner in which she looks out of the page directly at us. As she is the only local

television personality in these advertisements she is used as the face of the brand new *Dark and Lovely* product called *Dark and Lovely Moisture Plus*, which is different from the other relaxing creams because of its use of Shea Butter and "Moisture Seal Technology™ to fight dryness while relaxing". Nonhle Thema touches her hair, smiles widely and is active in her participation. The only other celebrity used in hair relaxer advertisements is the May 2009 *Destiny* which features Kelly Rowland *(Figure 6.1)* of the musical group *Destiny's Child* who also looks directly at the reader from the advertisement. Kelly Rowland's appeal is in her celebrity, but more than that, she is the most accessible member of the group *Destiny's Child*. It is far easier to relate to her than it is to relate to Beyonce who has reached stratospheric levels of success. So while you may not ever become a Beyonce yourself, you could stand next to her, because Kelly Rowland's level of fame is not out of your reach.

The notion that celebrities must demand more attention as they represent the most desired lifestyle and are worthy of special mention is directly linked to this eye contact. They manner in which the celebrity images are framed speaks directly to Sonja Laden's discussion on the redefinition of social structure by black South Africans for themselves, because "aspects of 'middle-classness' are brought to the foreground" (Laden, 2003, p. 199) when well known women the centre of attention and used in this manner. These two women represent the breakthrough that has allowed black people to participate in the middle class not only in this country, but in the world.

Another factor governing who appears on which pages is the money that advertisers are willing to pay to appear in the magazines. *Dark & Lovely* is a well known brand with a wider reach than some local brands such as *Jabu Stone*, whose products cater to 'natural' hair. The bigger brand has more money to spend on advertising than the smaller *Jabu Stone*; they can afford to spend R112. 674.00 every month on a double page advertisement. This price is what *True Love's* rate card details as the cost of the space in which the double-page Nonhle Thema advertisement

appeared. Magazines are businesses, and the job of the editors is to ensure that the readers continue to consume them, allowing more advertisers to appear on the pages for more money. What this shows is that the people who control the dominant discourses on hair are the ones with the money, because it allows them to produce these messages regularly and without competition.

6.4 Conclusion

As the authors have discussed above, all hair is processed in some way and in so doing it is imbibed with cultural meaning, regardless of style. While I do not agree that link between hair relaxers and accepting racist ideas about yourself is as clear-cut as Molebatsi and Ribane would argue, I find it troubling that the editors of the magazines only choose one type of representation to focus on. The analysis of the advertisements in the two magazines shows that one style of hair is given a platform despite the multiplicity of options available to black women. On one hand one has a lot of choice in theory, but on the other hand the choices are not discussed in the media to a great extent, meaning that the dominant discourse in media alludes to the greater validity of relaxed hair for professional, middle class black women.

From the analysis, I believe that this kind of hair is given greater preference because it is such an extreme form of self-policing. Firstly, the monetary cost of relaxing your hair and keeping it healthy, which is noticeable because as discussed above discourses around black hair are very specific, far outweighs the costs of leaving it curly, and relaxing it is an indicator of a status beyond working class. Hair must be maintained though retouching, oil treatments, professionally washing and straightening – a myriad of acts that involve time and energy. Yet this work is not acknowledged as being stressful and time consuming, it is celebrated, like most of the work women take part in to control their bodies. Secondly, hair relaxers are chemicals which have the potential to burn and scar the user of the product, a reality that is not mentioned in these magazines explicitly. Instead, one can observe that inside the pages of a magazine that

advertises hair relaxer, another advertisement will be places by the same company promoting hair care products designed to repair the hair and the scalp. *Dark and Lovely* does this with their *Oil Moisturiser & Ultra Repairing Cream* when they place the copy in the magazine with a call to action – "Tired of dray and damages hair? Don't despair ... repair!", as if the women have damaged their hair themselves without the help of the relaxer cream. Behind the glamour that is supposed to come with straight hair is a danger that is never spoken of openly and publicly. Lastly, the euphemism "relaxing", while innocuous, helps to create the romantic impression that having to alter ourselves with the help of chemicals is seductive in some way. It creates the expectation that this is normal and what we should aspire to in order to participate in professional spaces as women by implying that the steps outlined in the copy are essential for the appearance of intelligence and attractiveness.

7 Chapter 7: Erasure

7.1 Context

In this chapter I discuss the gradual erasure of black women though advertisements that police our bodies. The erasure of our specificities takes place under the guise of self improvement and allows the purveyors of this content to dictate the ways in which femininity is performed. The work of Sanger (2007 & 2008) details the ways on which South African magazines have constructed femininity, showing that magazine editors can choose to uphold dominant performances of gender or choose to take an oppositional stance. Wolf's (1991) work hones this idea by examining the portrayals of women in magazines that cater specifically to women, which in turn speaks directly to Odhiambo's (2008) analysis of the ways in which black women are framed in locally produced women's magazines. These discussions allow for a detailed reading of the representations of black women's bodies in the advertisements featured in these two magazines.

7.2 Wipe away your imperfections

Sanger (2008) notes that in certain magazines produced for a black readership, there is an attempt to confront constructions of black heterofemininities and masculinities. What this means is that in some publications the editors make a conscious effort to question the dominant ways that men and women are portrayed in media, and position their publications differently by producing copy in ways that deviate from the norm.

Sanger (2007) quotes the editor of *True Love* magazine in 2006, Busisiwe Mahlaba, as saying the magazine is very proud of the role that it played and continues to play in South Africa's transformation. Mahlaba attests to the fact that the magazine has informed, educated and equipped its readers with the tools required for change, and will continue to do so in the future

(Sanger, 2007). This assertion indicates that the editors of *True Love* magazine do attempt to challenge dominant constructions of femininity by educating their readers but the question is – how far will these magazines go in resisting essentialist ideas of femininity? Sanger's (2007) thesis shows that it may not be too far. She writes that in many ways magazines, such as the black women's magazine *True Love* and black men's magazine *Blink* have tried to "portray black women as agents in terms of their career aspirations, while simultaneously refusing to disturb the notion of hyper(hetero)femininity as essential and fixed" (2008, p. 279). On one hand, the magazines attempt to portray black women as independent career driven individuals; but at the same time the images and quotes that often accompany the text continue to emphasize women's heterosexualities in a manner that is far removed from being independent. There seems to be contestation within the editorial teams as to how far they can push the idea of being an independent woman, as they seem to still rely on essentialist notions of femininity in a large part of their productions.

During her study of English-medium magazines in South Africa Sanger (2007) had the opportunity to interview Siphiwe Mpye, the editor of *Blink*. In an attempt to move beyond the usual rhetoric of men's magazines *Blink* tried to take ownership of the processes governing identity by focusing less on sex, money and sport, and choosing to challenge notions of traditional black masculinities. The discussions in the magazines included gender-based violence and men's role in eradicating it, as well as their responsibilities as fathers. Despite the conscious nature of the editorial approach *Blink* closed down in late 2006 however, and Sanger (2007) suggests that this may have had to do with the provocative stance the editorial took in reframing constructions of black heterofemininities and masculinities.

Naomi Wolf's (1991) analysis of media takes this discussion further by looking specifically at the representations of women within magazines produced for women. Wolf supports Sanger's argument by writing that although women's magazines may to empower women in some way,

they also need to be aware of their bottom line and ensure that they make money, because the production of these periodicals is ultimately a business. This means that the producers of *Destiny* magazine and *True Love* magazine may aim to empower their readers, but they cannot afford to empower women out of needing and buying these periodicals, a need that comes from the cycle of self-loathing and self-help magazine producers rely on. While products are able to keep women's interest briefly, eventually every product loses its newness, it stops being original and is replaced by another. It is up to editors and advertisers to ensure that the constant dissatisfaction and need for the replacement product is maintained. By using the idea of self-determination to empower women, then taking that away by detailing the ways women's bodies are unacceptable, the producers succeed in setting the readers up for failure. This is one of the ways the magazine form gains an eternally captive audience bent on attaining an impossible perfection.

In his article looking at the representations of black women in two South African magazines, *Drum* and *True Love* magazine, Tom Odhiambo (2008) argues that the bodies of black women are the subject of both manipulation and an intensely critical gaze. These bodies embody both the value of the commodities on sale as well as offering themselves up for the reader as an object for consumption. The dominant narrative in these advertisements is that the women have discovered a product which allows them to achieve perfection. The product could be as small as underarm deodorant or as big as the new range of Apple Mac laptops on sale, they all add to the idea that we need to change our lives in order to be perfect. The products suggest that we need all these additional accessories to make life easier and the black female body provides a perfect space for displaying these commodities. It is not enough, however, to have any body work as the display, it must be a body that has been approved of as being correctly feminine. In this way the black female form becomes both the promoter of consumption as well as the consumable itself. He argues that the consumption of black women in this way allows for the purveyance of gendered stereotypes and that these representations undermine work done towards the

emancipation of black women and the creation of an egalitarian society. In one moment the black South African woman inhabits the role of the relatively new consumer of certain commodities, while simultaneously embodying the feminine prototype and being offered for consumption to other black women. This constant offering of black bodies is one of the ways women are policed into maintaining heteronormative ideals of femininity.

I believe that images advertise products, but more broadly, the signal the appropriate lifestyle choices to their readers. My analysis will show that one of the overarching themes of these advertisements is about control, and the gradual erasure of the consumer's specificity leading to satisfaction. While these assertions may not be overtly detailed in written texts, we can still look at the images on the pages for visual cues. The bodies appear to be perfect and invite the reader to consume them by looking at the pages and buying the product. Then by emulating the scene in their own lives the reader erases her specificity.

This offer of the body as something to be consumed and then rearranged has an especially important role which is never stated overtly – it is a diagram showing women the specific manner in which they should police their bodies. For clarity, an example of this would be advertisement below that shows black women how to use vaginal capsules to 'clean' their "intimate areas" (GynaGuard, 2009). Alone this copy might seem like an innocuous solution for "intimate irritations", but the history of women's use of vaginal cures such as this is longer and more complex than this new product. Boikanyo (1992) writes that in 1992, while running information workshops for women on cervical cancer, the Women's Health Project found that the use of vaginal potions among black South African women in rural areas was widespread. The potions that the women admitted to regularly using included: alum in a powdered form, vinegar in water, methylated spirits in water, iced water, ice cubes, and brown paper. Discussions with women showed that they used potions for a number of reasons – to reduce the body's natural

lubrication during sex, to tighten the vaginal canal after multiple births, and to enhance the 'flavour' of the vaginal canal in order to ensure that their partners would stay in the relationship and not cheat with other women. Most of these were used to reverse the effects of sexual arousal such as wetness prior to or during sex. The women said that they had to use them because they were often accused of being promiscuous by their partners if they did not do anything to alleviate the problem of wetness. Alum powder is inserted into the vagina to dissolve or a cotton wool plug is soaked in alum solution and inserted into the vaginal canal to reduce moisture during sexual intercourse.

What these conversations showed the Women's Health Project is that many women are aware of how their bodies function, but actively attempt to 'correct' this by using these remedies. Although women are aware of how their bodies work, that their vaginas are formed in such a way that is protected and self-cleansing, the use of these methods says a great deal about how shame is created around women's sexually and their bodies. They show agency, but it is not feminist agency. This research indicates how susceptible women are to abuse and sexual exploitation.

In the analysis below I discuss three methods of erasure – erasing women's faces through *Clinique* makeup, erasing their scent and hair through *Shield* deodorant, and erasing sexual autonomy through *GynaGuard*. I argue that the erasing of women's 'imperfections' and the portrayal of the perfect policed body is just another symbolic way for women to be subjugated by being wiped away.

7.3 The Analysis

7.3.1 The surface meanings

The face



Figure 7.1

Clinique (Figure 6.3) is a brand whose name indicates its commitment to technological advancement where its products are concerned. All the products are allergy tested and most are fragrance free, in order to cater to those customers who have sensitive skin. *Clinique even better* is makeup that promises to erase your need for makeup altogether. The copy falls on a single page, with the image taking up the top half of the page and the text filling up the bottom half. The image is of a bottle of the *Clinique* makeup that "evens and corrects" the skin tone. This description is written on the bottle in both English and French. Against this bottle stands a *Clinique* eraser and some blending tools to use with the product. The text below this image reads,

> "Wear new Even Better Makeup SPF15 and something amazing happens: Without any makeup, you'll see improved clarity, a more even skin tone, visibly diminished age spots. All in just 4 to 6 weeks."

This copy tells the reader that with a boost of Vitamin C, the dermatologists at *Clinique* have discovered a way for women to use their makeup, while the same makeup evens out the skin's tone, removing age spots and discoloration. After the reader uses this makeup for six weeks *Clinique* claims that they will not need to use it again because it will have rectified any skin issues they once had. It does however recommend that the reader use it with another *Clinique* product called *Even Better Skin Tone Corrector* for added, continuous benefits.

One of the most effective uses of design space is the well thought out use of white-space. White-space is a design term that dictates how much space should be left bare on a page, the adage 'less is more' governs this idea. The *Clinique* copy has done this very well by using minimal colour, the colour of the makeup, as the central theme on the page. The rest of the page is in black and white. The use of so much space creates a feeling of elegance because the page is not crammed with too much information. When a page is cluttered it is disturbing to the eye because it has to process too much, it is over-stimulated, this page is the opposite of that and this is intentional. A page like this works for a brand like *Clinique* which prides itself on being a leader in this billion dollar industry by showing the reader that if they are the best that they can be, their sophistication should be clear to those around them immediately. In addition to the design, sophistication is indicated through the name which is French, and the connotations that go with it.

By having the weight of their brand immediately recognised through the layout of the page, the producers of the text can then talk about what this product is and does. The text below the image

tells the reader about this new concealer called *even better makeup (Figure 6.3)*, but it does not try to give specific information about the product and what makes it different from its predecessor. It only tells you that *Clinique* has made something new with an added Vitamin C boost and that the reader should buy it. This is important to note because the producers could only do this with such a well known and respected brand in the field of cosmetics. They know that they hardly have to justify their claims because of who they are and the solid customer base they already have. The less information they give, the less they can be questioned about their product, which leads to claims that would be outrageous in any other context being accepted in the discourse of advertising. They do however make an effort to connect with the reader by using a friendly tone that indicates familiarity, speaking to the customers they already have while enticing potentially new ones at the same time. Relying on marked words such as “amazing”, “boost”, and “luminous”, the producers of *Clinique* engage the reader in the discourse of what is new and groundbreaking.

The Scent



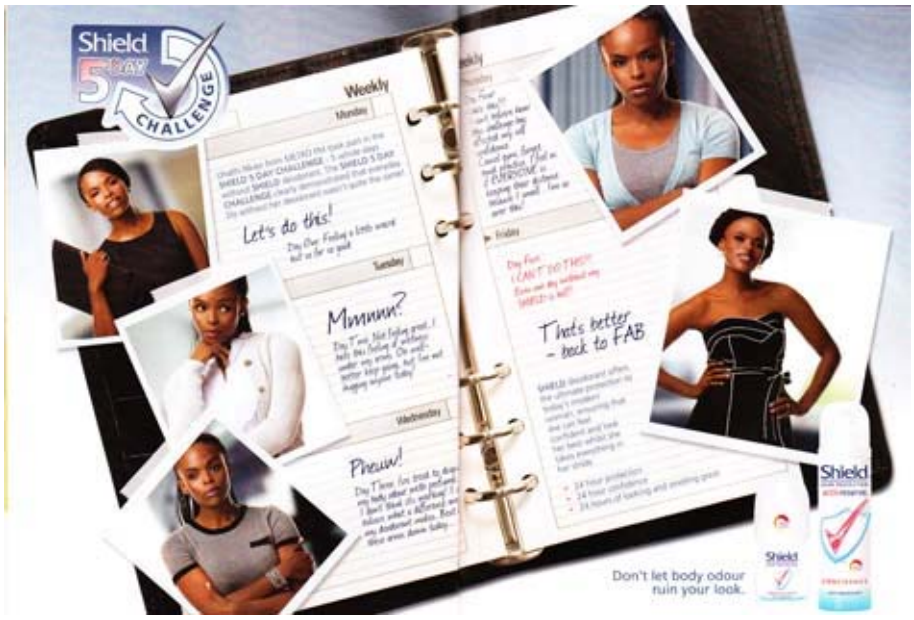


Figure 7.2

The *Shield 5 Day Challenge (Figure 6.3)* advertisement runs over three pages. The first page is image heavy with very little text; it is the opening for what will come in the next pages. The image is of a South African entertainment personality Unathi Nkayi. Her body is turned towards

the camera and she looks directly at the reader. Her hair is pulled back to reveal a perfectly made up face. Her right arm is raised, showing off a muscled bicep that signalling that she is physically fit and leads an active life. She is wearing a grey sports shirt which is an indication that she has been or is about to be involved in some sort of sporting activity. The armpit is completely hairless indicating that some sort of hair removal method has been used. Over the armpit we can see a superimposed image of the *Shield* tick from the logo. The can of *Shield activreserve* body spray is placed in the bottom right corner with four lines of text next to it. The opening line says "Don't let body odour ruin your look", which sets up the narrative that will run through the next two pages. This copy shows pages of what is meant to be Unathi's diary for the week. Her test is to write down what it feels like to be part of this *Shield 5 Day Challenge* which allows the reader to have a brief look into her life.

The first page of the *Shield* advertisement is bold and designed to be noticed as a standalone advertisement or as part of the complete three pages of copy. Celebrities are used widely in advertorial copy because they are so recognisable and this is no exception. Unathi Nkayi is a radio personality and singer and because of this she represents the independent career woman – someone you should want to emulate. By being the spokesperson for this product she lends credibility to its effectiveness. The use of the diary on the second and third pages allows the producers to use what should be read as her words to convince the reader to buy the product. This is satisfyingly voyeuristic for the readers who might be curious about Unathi by letting them into the diary of a celebrity. This campaign began on radio in March 2009 and as a captive Metro FM audience watched, Unathi studiously updated her online blog daily as she undertook the challenge. In addition to that she would comment on her progress regularly during her radio show on Metro FM. So while this campaign ran in print and online publications, the audio dairy was updated concurrently. This is in line with celebrity culture today, where anyone can be famous with the right marketing. The online and audio blogs mirrored the daily diaries in

television programs such as Big Brother and Pop Idol, giving her fans a way to follow her life, as modern celebrity demands.

The implicit assumption in this text is that hairlessness is an indication of good hygiene which leads to the absence of bad body odour. It is also implicit that every woman has bad body odour that they cannot smell themselves, but everyone around them can. This sets the rest of the copy up well because with those two ideas being framed as common knowledge there is only one way to move forward, and that is through the purchasing of this product. *Shield activreserve (Figure 6.3)* will not let you down and allow your body to embarrass you in front of everyone who is aware of your bad body odour.

The Intimate Wash



Figure 7.3

GynaGuard (Figure 6.3) brings to you the latest in vaginal odour control, "Because you can't scratch every itch!" (GynaGuard, 2009). The copy sits on a single page, most of which contains a large body of written text on the right side of the page, describing the benefits of using the various products *GynaGuard* has to offer. The three products in this copy are *Vaginal capsules*,

Essential Intimate wash and *Ultimate intimate wash*, and they are placed in the bottom left corner of the page. Above these products we can see a photograph of a single black woman; we can only see her face and her right hand. She faces us and looks directly into the camera. Her right index finger is positioned over her lips in a pose that indicates that we should be quiet. The entire page is designed using pink hues, from the colour of the main body of text to the product packaging. The bottom of the page has an information bar that gives the reader evidence that these products were rated as "superior" and "best" in a European survey. The producers' contact details are also provided in case the reader has any questions they would like to ask.

GynaGuard (Figure 6.3) is framed as a medical product which is there to help women combat an irritation that they find too embarrassing to openly discuss with friends, feeding into the shame women are encouraged to associate with their vaginas. The tone of the copy reads much like an advice column where a medical professional speaks directly to the reader offering them explanations as to why their body is behaving in a certain way. This copy is presented as information that women would keep with them and share with their friends for their reproductive health, which includes buying this product. The text explains what "vaginal flora" are and how their optimal performance can be disrupted, causing burning, discomfort and itching in the "intimate areas". This euphemism is interesting as 'intimacy' relates to something that is private and should not be discussed. It then offers a solution of this problem in its products. The intimate washes and vaginal capsules control itching and irritation, and they all come with an odour control solution so that no woman has to suffer the embarrassment of smelling unclean. This is ironic since the vagina is self-cleaning and more self-regulating than other parts of our bodies, like our mouths for example. There is no medical evidence that suggests that vaginas germ infested crevices that need constant cleaning through vaginal capsules, as this copy intimates.

Visually, the copy is hyperfeminine, employing colours and patterns that could only be associated with women. All the text is written in pink over a background that is pink, and that sits next to three products whose packaging is also pink. This use of colour combined with the photograph of the woman indicates that this is an issue all women share. The producers use the image of the woman to draw the eye in and get the reader to look at this page longer than they would normally. It is because the text is so long they need to use a devise like this to elicit interest from the desired audience.

7.3.2 Exploding the text – ideological meaning

The face

The name *Clinique* has meaning itself, before it is even attached to a particular product. It is a French brand and the use of this name carries with it the allusion to well crafted luxury brands. The use of the French translation beneath the English description is not accidental, but a well thought out strategy that tells the buyer that this product was made, or at least conceived of, in a modern European space, and should be trusted because of this. France specifically is associated with high fashion, luxury and beauty, with Paris being the fashion capital of the world. The European and French connotations work as particularly powerful signifiers of what the reader should aspire to.

This product's name uses the phrase "even better" which is a play on words indicating that this makeup is superior to any other, and that it achieves this by evening out the skin on the face more than the other products it competes with. The experiential knowledge that the ideal reader must have if they are to engage with this text is that everyone's skin needs correcting because no one is perfect; we just spend our lives working towards perfection. *Clinique* is the company with the power to help the reader with that. Additionally, the copy lets the reader know that she

needs makeup in order to hide her imperfections. If she would like to stop using makeup then she has to use this particular concealer, which is makeup itself, in order for it to erase her blemishes and allow her to stop using makeup. This copy is undoubtedly confusing and verges on the ridiculous when it claims that using makeup will help you stop needing to use make up, but because it is situated within advertising discourses it is acceptable to the preferred reader. There are a few reasons that text like these work in nurturing their target market and enticing them to spend. Firstly, looking at the copy in terms of dominant themes shows the emphasis on newness and the excitement it causes, even in the producers. The words that signal this excitement are “new”, “amazing”, “perfect”, “brighter” and “naturally luminous”, and in text that is barely 3 paragraphs long, that is a great deal of enthusiasm. So much enthusiasm that you could read this text and get lost in these promises before you realised what they were actually claiming. The other dominant theme is the description of the work that this product does without really explaining how it works. The words used here are “evens”, “corrects”, “erases”, and “undo”, all signalling that the current state of your skin is in need of help, *even better* help. What stands out about these themes is that combined they express excitement at the thought of erasing your specificity by concealing your face, an idea that is not contested in the field of cosmetics. *Clinique* gives you the tools you need to erase who you are until you get to the point where you no longer exist. It will be in that moment where you will be perfect.

The scent

Shield activreserve is the ultimate protection for today’s modern woman. The modern woman, as framed by this copy is one who is in control of her career, her private life, and most importantly, her wayward body. This deodorant helps Unathi harness one of the unsightly things that her body does so that she can continue to perform her femininity well. She goes through a range of emotions during this week long challenge that sees her moving from a confident, positive woman on day one, to someone who is unsure of herself and hates who she

has become by day five. Her positive feelings of self worth are directly linked to the control of her own body. We see this from the first page where her athleticism is signalled by the raised right arm, which ensures the reader is aware of the importance of striving for physical perfection through the gym. The gym is mentioned more directly on the third page when Unathi writes that she can no longer go to the gym because of her body odour.

There is no explicit directive concerning hair removal, but there are signs on the first page that indicate that this is the correct performance of femininity in this case. Unathi's raised arm is a marked expression of form because a raised arm is not the usual resting state of the limb. It is also marked, quite literally, by the superimposed tick over the armpit. Not only is this tick part of the *Shield* logo, but it indicates the correctness of the hairless underarm on this page. In addition to that, Unathi is a celebrity so she has some knowledge about being a modern black woman that the rest of the readers might not have so she lends credibility to the unwritten assumptions in the text.

The most dominant theme in this text is that in order to be in order to be a confident modern woman you must be able to control every aspect of your life. Unathi exercises control over her life by using this weekly diary shown on pages two and three. She controls her body by going to gym and erasing unsightly body fat, as indicated in the first picture, and by her reference to cancelling gym because she cannot use her *Shield* deodorant. She controls her body odour by erasing the hair on her body and applying this anti-perspirant. She wears make-up and in so doing erases the imperfections in her skin so that the reader does not see them. The producers of the advertisement control the look of the final images through the use of design programs such as Photoshop, which they use to airbrush the pictures thereby erasing any part of her that is not felt to be perfect. The entire process of getting this advertisement onto these pages is an act of controlling and erasing the imperfections.

The Intimate wash

The first module that catches your eye is the photograph of a black woman who is holding her finger against her lips in a signal that is well known for indicating that you should be quiet *(Figure 6.3)*. This image sets the tone for the entire page by letting the preferred reader know that a secret is about to be discussed. The colours used in the copy are also an indication of what is to come. Pink has been used liberally and since it is a colour widely used to represent femininity, we are given a clear indication that the subject will centre on women. The packaging for the product, which we can see underneath the image of the woman, is covered in the same pink hues appearing in this copy. The fact that the colour pink was chosen is important in itself because it indicates who the preferred reader should be, not only should it be a woman who can keep this secret, but it must be a woman who understands that this colour represents ultra-femininity, a quality you embody if you know and understand the value of feminine products such as these.

The tone of the text is conversational, with the author leading the way and explaining to the reader what the benefits of the product are. Questions are asked of the reader, but they are questions that you can only answer "yes" to, ensuring that the producers of the text retain control of the interaction. The agency here is clear, they are telling you what to do and you should agree to it for your own health. The ideal reader is rendered passive by the producers of the text who do not speak directly to the woman but feel entitled to speak about women.

The descriptions of the discomfort the woman, the ideal reader, are made to seem scientifically proven, while the voice of the producer remains caring and understanding. This text draws upon medical discourses in order to prove to the reader that they should trust this product. The phrases most used to give the reader the sense that this is a thoroughly tested and safe product are – "clinically tested", expert care", "pH levels", "leading gynaecologists", and "proven

formula". These phrases sound authoritative enough to convince the reader that the producers know what they are talking about. There is another contesting tone that appears in this text however. It is found in the references to colloquial terms that would not ordinarily be associated with a medical text, such as "on the go all day", "takes hold", "lands up with" and "gently rinses away germs and nasties" (GynaGuard, 2009, p. 177). This type of interaction is interesting in that it does two things; firstly it aims to assure the reader that the producer of the text is a friend you can talk to about anything, even vaginal irritation, which is "not something that you would openly discuss with friends". Secondly, it reassures the reader that they are not abnormal if they have these concerns. The switch between the two voices does seem strange however, as it is done so rapidly. The medical tone appears no fewer than 12 times on the page, and the friendly one 8 times, creating a contestation between medical and colloquial which is supposed to sound like a friendly doctor speaking to you but is actually confusing and misplaced at times. The authors seem to be undecided as to whether they want to employ a professional medical tone and simply tell the reader what to do, or use a friendly tone and coerce the reader into buying these products.

The vocabulary used focuses on descriptions of the physical aspects of the preferred reader's body, what the body goes through when it is in need of GynaGuard and the psychological toll this takes on the woman. The descriptions of the physical aspects centre on "vaginal irritation" but this term is only used once in the entire text, as the author prefers to use euphemisms to describe the vagina. The word "vagina" itself is only used twice with the rest of the texts using other indicators for the same organ at least 19 times in this small text. The phrases that appear with the most regularity are "intimate needs", "intimate care", intimate regions", "sensitive regions", "down there", "Intimate care, for you know where" and "sensitive intimate areas" (GynaGuard, 2009, p. 177). This use of words that do not refer directly to the vagina are unsettling because the producers want the reader to believe that this is a medical text, even

though they do not want to use medical terms but insist on infantilising women by behaving as though we cannot handle talking about our vaginas. It is as if the word is a big secret they cannot let escape. The use of euphemism is backed up by the image of the woman holding her index finger to her lips in signal to the reader that this entire issue must be kept secret. The knowing voice of the author uses euphemisms that indicate understanding – understanding that this is an issue to be kept secret, understanding that the reader who inhabits the feminine role knows to keep it secret, and above all understanding that women need to be ushered through the performances of their own bodies.

The information bar at the bottom of the page gives evidence that this product is rated as being "superior" to other products that are similar but the reader is not given the name of the tests performed, the rating system, or where they were performed. All we are told is that *GynaGuard* is the best based on European tests. The entire claim rests on the assumption that the women who read this copy will just be satisfied with knowing that some test was done somewhere in Europe once. It is a further insult and infantilising of the reader by publishing baseless claims and calling them facts.

7.4 Conclusion

Clinique's (Figure 6.3) technique of using shared knowledge, such as the innovative technologies that begin in Europe and France as the beauty and fashion capital of the world, allow the creators of the copy to make claims about the product which do not need to be justified through evidence. This permits the producers to display the product on the magazine pages without any reasons for the existence of "even better" being supplied. The copy does not allow for a debate into the use of make up at all, it only requires the reader to decide which make-up is best for

them. By doing this *Clinique* encourages the erasure of black women's specificity by promoting a product that covers their imperfections.

Shield (Figure 6.3) is more literal as the copy shows the body that represents the correct performance of femininity. Unathi is used for more than a deodorant campaign; she is presented as the blueprint for policing the black woman's body. The copy signals hair removal, physical fitness, and restraint of the body's natural behaviour as essential for femininity, and Unathi's celebrity reinforces this idea. Through the use of the diary in various media forms these ideas are repeated.

GynaGuard (Figure 6.3) is interesting in its brazen disregard for medical facts, such as the vagina's ability to self-clean, opting to use fear to instil trust in its product. Not only is this product offensive because it tells women to be ashamed of how their bodies work, it is also dangerous because it misinforms the reader under the cloak of pseudo-science. The danger of this product is compounded by the fact that it also encourages women to keep this information secret, thereby ensuring that the ideal reader would not want go to a medical professional to ascertain whether or not this information is true. The copy works on providing incorrect information, which is also dangerous as it keeps women in the dark about their own bodies. The text that mimics a medical document is necessary for effectiveness since women are aware that they do need to take care of their health, yet in the context of heath this advertisement provides false information. If a woman feels enough discomfort or itching to require the use of this product for an extended time, then a gynaecologist should be consulted immediately so that the issue and its causes can be diagnosed. The use of products like these allow for a misdiagnosis that would be potentially fatal if the woman has a larger medical problem such as cervical cancer, which is treatable if diagnosed early enough.

This product is irresponsible and dangerous, and its appearance in publications that claim to empower women is troubling. While Sanger's (2007 & 2008) work has shown that there is a contestation between creating oppositional representations and maintaining the status quo, I contend that the magazine editors still have a responsibility to the readers to provide accurate information where health, especially sexual health, is concerned.

In this chapter I have used the analysis of three advertisements to draw attention to the rewards given to women who are able to control their bodies through certain products, and in so doing erase the body's 'imperfections'. As discusses in the previous chapters, complete control is impossible and the pursuit of it ultimately leads to even greater dissatisfaction. What this chapter has shown however, is that although women cannot control everything perfectly, they can erase various parts of themselves in the pursuit of perfection. Whether it is through the use of makeup or vaginal potions, erasing who you are is a theme that runs throughout these magazine advertisements.

8 Chapter 8: Overview and Discussion

8.1 Context

This chapter aims to show through quantitative research that the four categories discussed in the previous chapters, and described as the 'Subjugation' categories for the purposes of this chapter ('Consumption', 'Simple Steps', 'Relaxing', and 'Erasure'), are large enough and appear with sufficient regularity to warrant in-depth analysis. Through the use of trend graphs I will show the wider patterns in the advertising, I will then analyse the data in more detail showing the rates of appearance of all the four categories. In addition to that, this chapter will compare the magazines to each other, showing that the effects of the advertising differ amongst their readers because of variations such as circulation figures, target market, and the sheer number of advertisements that appear in each issue.

Before I begin the quantitative data analysis I will provide a brief overview of media ownership, the state of advertising during the publication of these issues, and further information about the demographics and readership figures of the two magazines.

8.2 Overview

8.2.1 Media Ownership

With an estimated turnover that is in excess of R5, 5billion per year, Media24 describes itself as being the leading publisher in Africa. The group is primarily owned by Naspers, one of the largest media groups on the continent, which has an 85% controlling interest in the publisher (Naspers, 2010). Media24 publishes no less than 60 print titles with earnings in the region of R5, 9 million per month with a total readership of 9, 6 million people across the country. Both *True Love* magazine and *Destiny* magazine appear under the banner of Media24's magazine

section, with *True Love* magazine falling under custom publishing division Thought24 and *Destiny* magazine under Ndalo Media. Thought24 publishes four magazines catering to black women in South Africa – *Move!*, *Move! Parent*, *Real* and *True Love*. Ndalo Media, a relatively new comer in the industry and its first publication was *Destiny* a magazine for business-minded women. *Destiny Man* is the second magazine published by Ndalo Media and it has a similar concept as its predecessor. The magazine caters to a male readership and was first published in June 2009. The difference in ownership of the divisions is that *Thought24* is wholly owned and run by Media24, whereas Ndalo Media is a joint venture between its Managing Director Khanyi Dhlomo and Media24 through a 50:50 share agreement (Ndalo Media, 2007).

Large multinational media companies such as Media24 raise the question of whether or not media monopoly leads to the control over the final media product by its owners. Control over media production is control over what discourses are made popular and thereby given the platform to gain momentum and power. While discussions may be had around freedom of the press and media's independence, it is important to take note of this power and that all media is created within dominant discourses, media does not exist separately from them. As chairman of Johnnic in 1999, Cyril Ramaposa wrote that although media owners seemed to prefer to remain in the background and not interfere with media production, the reality was somewhat different as they had a number of "institutional mechanisms" (Ramaphosa, 1999) to ensure that the media reproduces their views.

Having said that, ownership is not the only factor that controls what is published. The other factors affecting production of media, other than media ownership, include the political system, race, culture and economic contributions such as income distribution, of which the ownership of media is just a part (Bennetts, 2004). A rigorous study of the effects of ownership would have to provide an agreed upon definition of how ownership could affect production, for example the definition could just cover direct editorial mandates from the controlling interests, or it could be

expanded to cover the choices employers make with regards to who is appointed editor of a magazine or head of advertisement sales. This in depth assessment of ownership and its effects lies beyond the reach of this study, but some comments on the differences in representations can still be made.

In this study it is interesting to note that the research detailed below shows the number of advertisements that can be categorised under the 'Subjugation' label were far reduced in percentage allocation in *Destiny* magazine, which is jointly owned by Media24 and Ndalo Media. Yet Media24's wholly owned *True Love's* representations of the same category reached nearly 50% every month. I concede that ownership is a single variable in a plethora of effects that may govern editorial content, and as such making a direct link to the quality of content based on ownership alone cannot be where research ends. However, it remains important to be aware of media ownership in the study of production. These numbers will be discussed further in the analysis section below.

8.2.2 Advertisers

The South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) was founded in 1975 and aims to provide comprehensive, unbiased, thoroughly researched information pertaining to media audiences and product consumptions around the country on a regular basis. The foundation releases information gathered in surveys on advertising trends every six months through the All Media and Products Survey (AMPS). The AMPS 2008A survey showed that there was an overall increase in magazine readership from 2006, moving from a reach of 37.5% of the adult population to 40.4%, even though there was little change from 2007-2008. The total magazine readership of 12,632-million, was heightened primarily by growth in the Northern Cape readership, with SAARF citing females aged 16-24 as the biggest contributing population group

(South African Advertising Research Foundation, 2008). As in 2007, the women's magazine sector remained largely unchanged, reaching 29.9% of South African adults, and totalling 9,355-million readers.

In 2008 *Finweek*, South Africa's leading financial weekly, predicted that media advertising expenditure would experience the biggest drop in almost a decade by year end, and only start to pick up in the second half of 2009 (Finweek, 2008). These predictions proved to be true when adspend declined by about 5% in the first half of 2009. In his article detailing this decline, Koenderman (Finweek, 2008) asserts that adspend is a sensitive indicator of economic stability, moving in line with private consumption expenditure. He suggests that marketing executives rush to adjust their advertising budgets as soon as they sense a change in the consumer sentiment. They are likely to pull back spending if the forecasts predict a dip in expenditure, and raise their advertising expenditure if they predict a rise in the future.

Having said that, he points out there are three reasons why advertising expenditure did not fall as low as some had predicted in 2007 and 2008. Firstly, he writes that the economic recession was not felt equally in every sector of the economy, with the worst hit being banks and vehicle sales, both of which are interest-rate driven while advertising is not. Secondly, advertising did not suffer in the same way because during trying financial times larger companies tend not to cut down expenditure too greatly as it is their lifeline to consumers. In fact, there are marketers who prefer to maintain their adspend during tough economic phases in order to win market share relatively cheaply when their competitors decide to cut back (Finweek, 2008). Examples of these multinational corporations are Procter & Gamble, Unilever, and Tiger Brands who supply groceries and essentials to consumers, which have the highest advertising presence in *True Love* magazine. Thirdly, he attests to the fact that cut-backs in advertising during tough economic times are usually short lived, as the entire business is based on nurturing and growing the customer base. This means that producers cannot afford to lose the consumers' attention for

an extended period of time. We can see how this works if we look at the way magazines maintained the profitability during the recession. For example, *True Love* magazine has more pages in each issue than *Destiny* magazine, allowing it to sell more advertising space every month. My preliminary data analysis showed that on average *True Love* magazine exhibits 54 advertisements every month, while *Destiny* magazine maintains an average of 28 advertisements in total[2].

8.2.3 **Readership of these magazines**

Louw (Fin24, 2009) reiterates the point Koenderman (Finweek, 2008) makes that advertising sector of the economy was not hit as hard by the recession, showing that glossy women's magazines have dealt better with the recession than other print publications during the recession (Fin24, 2009). The Audit Bureau of Circulations (Finweek, 2008) showed that in 2009 newspaper circulations dropped by 10%, but that magazine circulation only dropped by 4% during the same period, despite the tightening of expenditure by consumers across the board. *True Love* was seen to be especially buoyant as it controls a large segment of its target market – upwardly mobile black women. There may have been a slight drop in readership but its publisher, Thought24, assert that the dip had hardly any effects on the readership because the readers just shared the magazines with more people, thus creating greater circulation of the periodicals after they were bought. Jonathan Harris, chief executive and publisher of Thought24 is quoted as saying, "*True Love* and *Move* are the largest brands in their segment of the market and there is a desire by advertisers to win more of our target market" (Fin24, 2009).

The latest readership figures for newspapers and magazines from the South African Advertising Research Association's All Media and Products Survey, SAARF AMPS 2009A (2008), detail the numbers for 2009. The readership for *Destiny* magazine sits at about 186,000 people. As the

[2] This is the number of advertisements and should not to be confused with actual pages the advertisements take up in every issue, which accounts for more pages since some advertisements run over multiple pages.

first business and lifestyle magazine for women in the country, *Destiny* performed exceptionally well in the economic climate, trebling its readership in the first two years of its existence, despite having to find its footing during such a turbulent economic atmosphere (Fin24, 2009). This upward trend indicates that the readership gained is a loyal one, willing to commit its limited disposable income to a new concept.

The readership of *True Love* far surpasses that of *Destiny* and stands at 2,943,000 people which is almost 16 times the readership of *Destiny*. The numbers show that *True Love*, which had been in existence since 1972, has a wider reach than its counterpart which was launched in 2007.

From these surveys we can see that during times where consumers have to tighten their belts a new discerning customer appears, one who does not just throw her favourite publications in the shopping basket without too much thought, but one who chooses her favourite periodicals carefully before spending that money. The fact that *True Love* has such a wide reach, and can therefore be said to be one of those publications that black women choose when they can only afford one, shows that the power of magazines cannot be underestimated. It follows that advertisers must be clamouring to get their products into the monthly issues, keeping both of these publications afloat and circulating through most of the country.

8.3 The advertisement trends specific to these publications

The following section will shed light on the appearance of the four categories in the two magazines. I will show the regularity of appearance within the magazines, and discuss what this tells us about the producers and the ideal reader.

8.3.1 Advertising allocation

The pie charts below are a visual description of the average spaces that the two categories cover in the magazine as a whole.

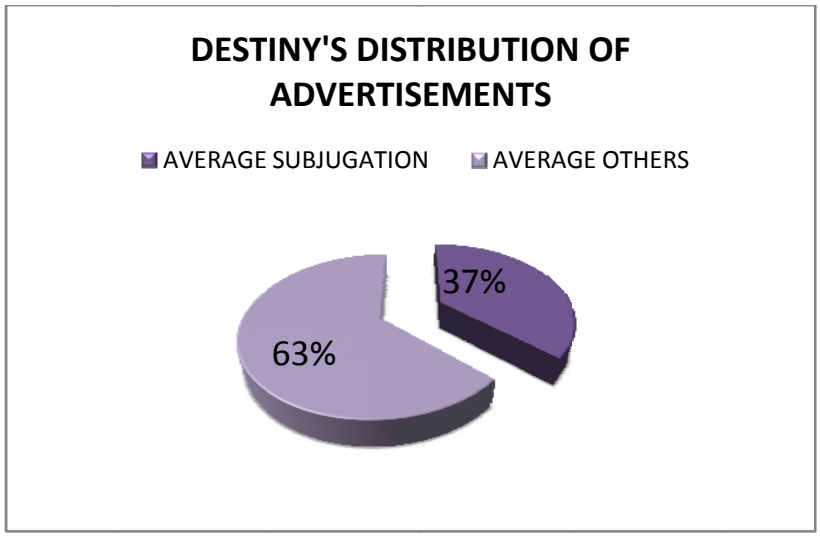


Figure 8.1

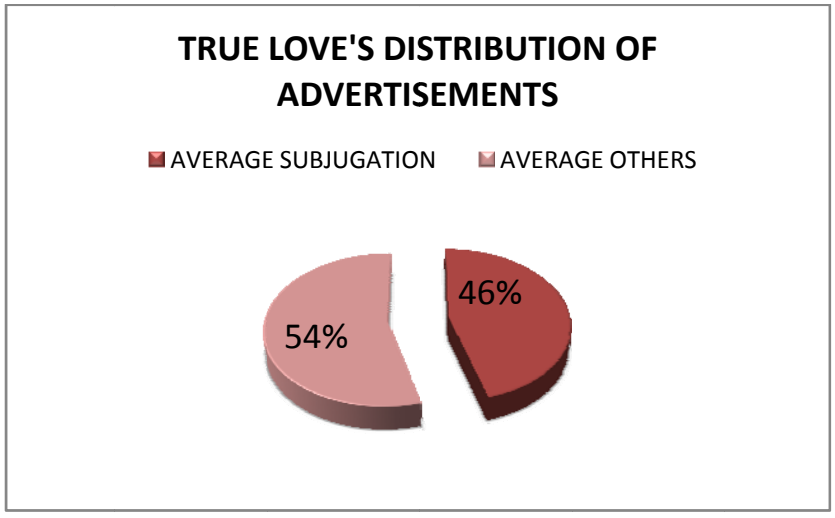


Figure 8.2

On average the 'Subjugation' category fills 37% of *Destiny* magazine's monthly advertisement output *(Figure 6.3)*. The section named 'Others' sits at 63%. It is important to remember that here we are looking at the number of advertisements, not the number of pages in the magazine. What this means is that we can see the average of all the advertisements which appear on this magazine but we do not get a sense of the exact number of pages this may take up. Most of the copy falls under the 'Others' category which will be discussed in a separate section below. The section of advertisements which do not frame women under the 'Subjugation' category, in the

ways described in the previous chapters, sits at about 63% and this may be an indicator that the producers of *Destiny* try to maintain a positive portrayal of women on the whole.

The *True Love* chart above *(Figure 6.3)* shows that there is a significant difference in the roles that the two major categories play in this magazine. Like *Destiny* the 'Others' section outnumbers the four roles highlighted in this study, but in this magazine the 'Subjugation' category sits at 46%, a significant jump from the 37% of *Destiny* magazine. I believe that this leap can be attributed to the different roles that the two magazines see themselves as playing in the market. *True Love* positions itself as being "All a woman needs", targeting black women all over and not a niche market like *Destiny* which focuses on business matters. The advertising sales offices of *True Love's* publishers, Thought24, describe the ideal reader of the magazine as a black woman who is stylish, confident, outgoing and sexy. The publishers write that their goal is to be the bridge between what a woman is when she reads the magazine and who she wants to become in the future. Like most manuals of this kind their hope is to provide a blueprint that will provided steps to help the reader reach her ultimate femininity. As an "indispensable, loyal and listening best friend, the magazine inspires, comments, entertains and advises on all aspects of the readers' lives" (Thought24, 2009). By describing what women should become in order to be sexy, stylish and confident I believe that the editorial team utilises the male gaze to its full effect, because, as the analysis has shown in the previous chapters, when a woman is told to be these things it is for an unnamed masculine surveyor, both within herself and in the world around her (Berger 1972; Ferguson 1983; Mulvey 1989; Wolf 1991). This level of 'self-development' is relentless not only in the percentage of the advertisements that appear on the pages of this magazine, but also in that the magazines are published monthly, giving the message ample time to gain momentum and work effectively. On average 54 advertisements appear on the pages of every issue of *True Love*. As this number accounts for the individual advertisements and not the pages that the copy falls on, it means that the actual pages would far

surpass this quantity. The advertisements on the *Destiny* pages sit at half of this amount, accounting for an average of 28 different advertisements every month.

8.3.2 **Trend Charts**

Figures 8.3 and 8.4 below show the breakdown between the subjugation and "other" categories over the 6 months May 2009 – October 2009. The bars represent percentages of the total advertisements in each issue and show the trend in comparative contribution of each category over the relevant period.

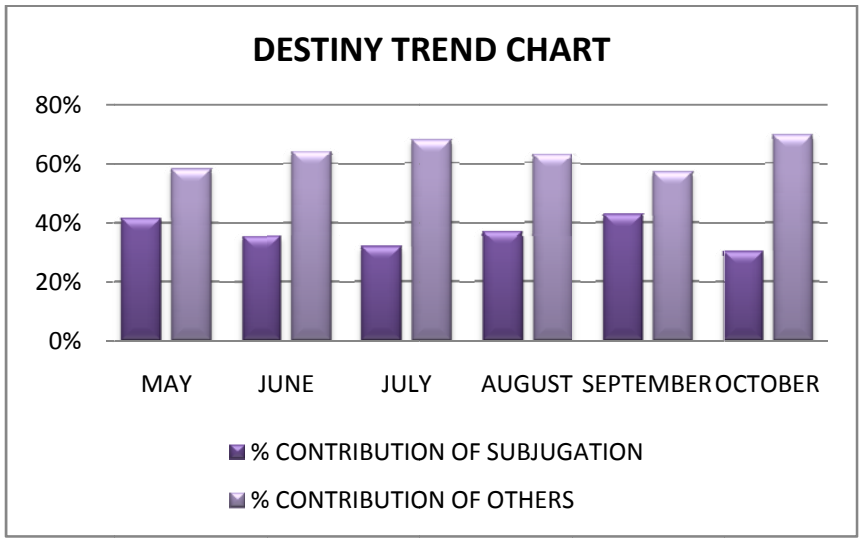


Figure 8.3

The chart above shows the difference in contribution between the categories. The 'Others' category maintained a wide margin throughout the period in question, only falling to a low of 14% on one occasion, the month of September 2009. The appearance of the 'Others' on more advertising pages than the 'Subjugation' shows that there is more advertising that does not obviously frame women in negative ways. However, the average of the 'Subjugation' category is 40%, a figure high enough to support further analysis of the trends affecting its occurrence.

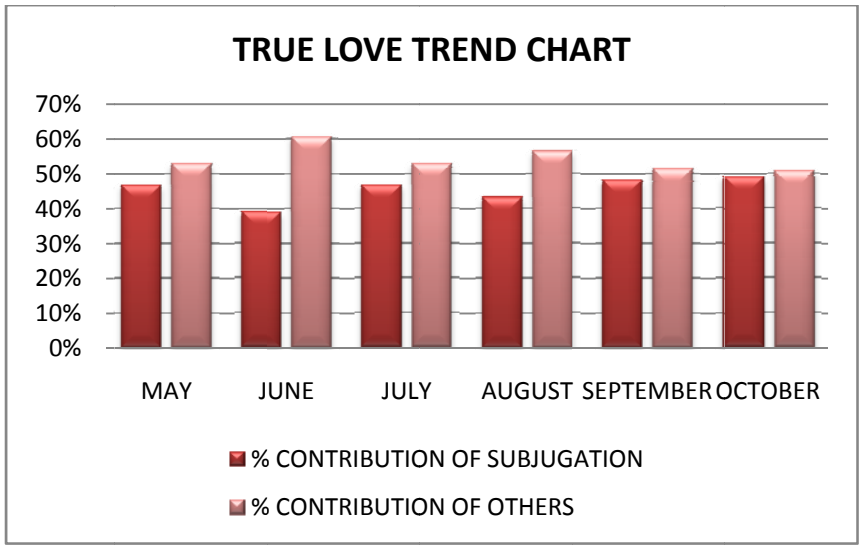


Figure 8.4

The chart above shows the difference between the categories in *True Love* magazine. It is interesting to see that the division between the 'Subjugation' and the 'Others' is not large, it is almost split in half, while the difference in *Destiny* is much wider. This trend chart for *True Love* shows a much closer interaction between the 'Others' and roles promoting women's subjugation. The greatest difference between the two categories is seen in June 2009 when the 'Others' accounted for 61% of the advertisements, while 'Subjugation' stood at 39% in the issue*();* a difference of 22%.

8.3.3 **Detailed Trend Charts**

These show the movement of the subjugation trends over time in more detail. The categories used below are the same ones discussed in detail in the previous chapters, namely 'Consumption', 'Simple Steps', 'Relaxing', and 'Erasure'.

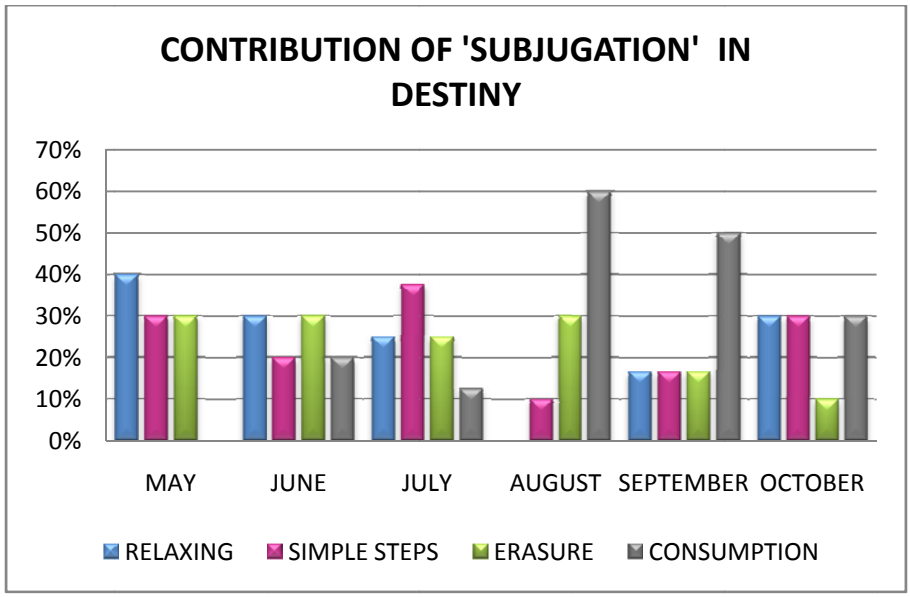


Figure 8.5

The trends in *Destiny* show a general decline in advertising from May to July, but we can see it start to pick up during the next three months. During the months under analysis we can see that the greatest shift in *Destiny* magazine was in the 'Consumption' category. This category had to do with the images of women being presented for consumption to other women. I argue that these are images created with the unknown masculine viewer in mind, and in so doing they become a blueprint for how the woman who reads this magazine, as the surveyor, should survey and police her own body. In this magazine we see a steep rise in the rate that these types of images appear over time. In the May issue there are no images of this type, but we can see a sharp rise over time culminating in the 100% domination of these advertisements over the other categories, because it is twice what the others are. The 'Relaxing' category is another with a wide range of movement. It begins with 'Relaxing' at its highest rate of appearance in May, but shows a steady decline until August when these advertisements do not appear in the issue at all. September and October show a re-emergence of the category as it appears to climb again into the following months. The two remaining categories, 'Simple Steps' and 'Erasure', show very

little fluctuation as the advertisements in this category encourage women to look their best through simple steps such as '3 in 1 face wash' and 'acne erasing moisturiser'. These themes seem to repeat themselves over all the issues, never being affected by the economic climate, and that may be because the idea that any woman can and should attain beauty is so entrenched within societies that these images are the norm in any women's magazine.

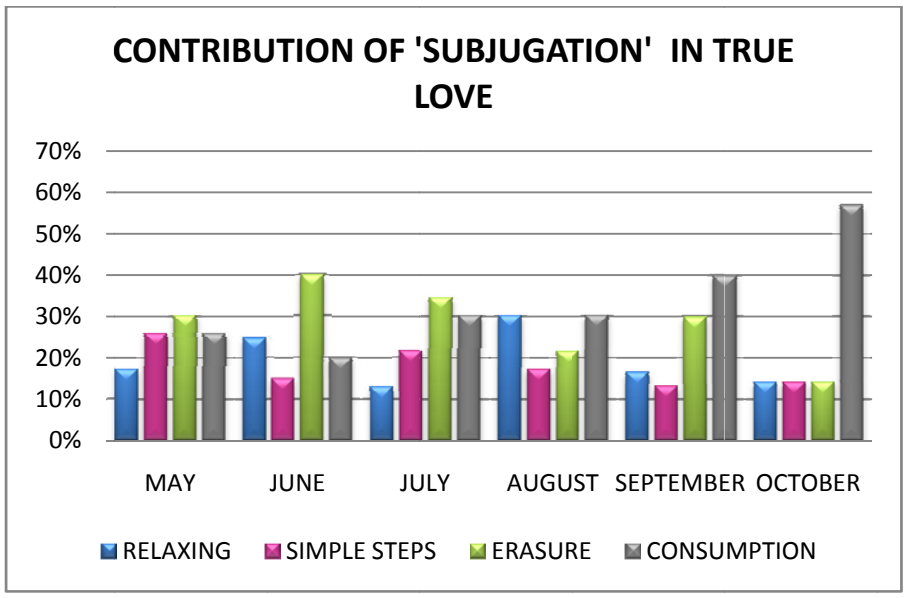


Figure 8.6

Unlike *Destiny*, *True Love* shows no major dips in the advertising during this period. This may be because *True Love* is an established brand drawing almost 3 million readers each month, and in so doing providing the most lucrative ground on which to advertise to black women in South Africa. The category in *True Love* with the highest growth rate is 'Consumption' which reaches its highest point in October with an allocation of 57% within the 'Subjugation' banner. As I have discussed above, this category trains the reader, showing her how to put herself together for the appreciation of the unknown masculine gaze. It is significant that this category would appear with such regularity because it confirms existence of what Ferguson refers to as the "Personal Achievement" (Ferguson, 1983, p. 115) of attaining the beauty that will lead to the ultimate goal – the perfect man. It should also be noted that the 'Relaxing' category does not shift during this

period which might mean that the editorial team of *True Love* is more invested in these kinds conceptions of femininity and so supply them at greater numbers, with more regularity than *Destiny*. The other categories show no real movement remaining at a more or less consistent rate during the six months.

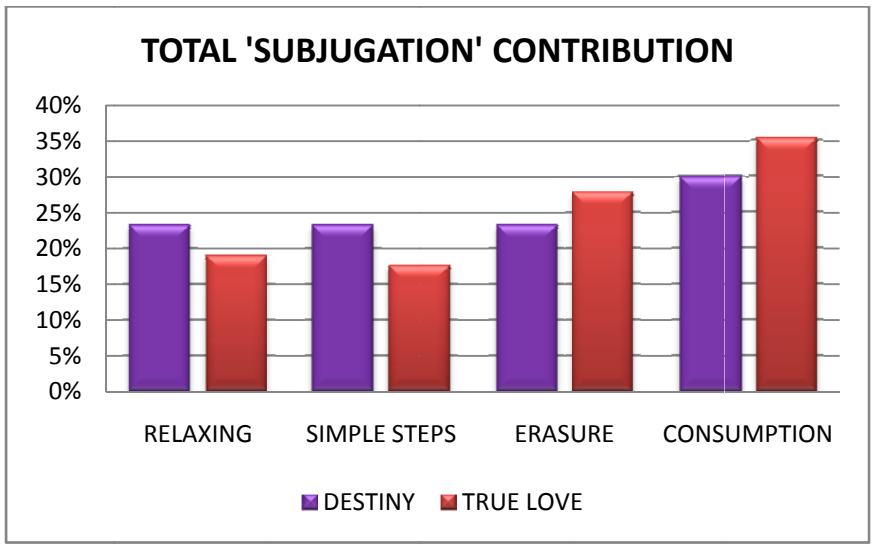


Figure 8.7

The chart above shows the percentage distribution of the 'Subjugation' categories in the two magazines. The chart does not show the exact numbers for the advertisements because the magazines do not produce the same number of pages (*Destiny* produces about 145 pages per month, *True Love* produces about 220 pages every month), this is why I am working on the average distribution of each magazine. The most noticeable feature of the categories is that 'Consumption' has the highest rate of occurrence in both of the magazines. In both magazines the high rate of appearance can be explained through the work that these magazines are supposed to do. Magazines are monthly manuals which deal with a chosen topic that can be discussed in a myriad of ways through the different articles in each issue, showing the reader the issues that they should consider important at any given moment. These magazines are both women's magazines and as such they provide a manual for women, explaining what they should

do in order to become the perfect version of themselves. 'Consumption' is about showing women images of other women who the producers consider to be successful in their quests for femininity, thereby cultivating and instilling in every woman the prototype for perfection. When these women on the pages are offered up for consumption it is less about selling a product than it is about selling a lifestyle, and image of perfection that the reader can then take on and attempt to achieve. In this study I have found that these self-described lifestyle manuals prioritise the use of visual cues to indicate to the consumer what the producers, or high priestesses(Ferguson 1983; Wolf 1991), consider to be appropriate behaviour for the ideal reader, this accounts for the high rate of 'Consumption' in both magazines.

True Love's 'Consumption' is the highest, showing that the advertisers single out their target market well. This magazine does not show a desire to promote financial independence in their audience but opts for a higher rate of advertisements that encourage good housekeeping, which is discussed in greater detail below. Supposedly feminine traits such as caring for one's family by buying the right groceries from the right store or taking care of your body for your man are encouraged in this magazine, further promoting that super-consumption moulds the reader into the perfect woman.

In *Destiny* magazine the remaining three categories account for about 23% of the 'Subjugation' advertisements in the issues. We can see that the space allocated to advertisements about personal grooming remains constant over every issue. This indicates that there is a relationship in this magazine between the categories named 'Relaxing', 'Simple Steps' and 'Erasure', showing that the lines between each are not always clear and that these concepts overlap in the discussion about what the appropriate presentation of a black woman's body is. The three categories work as a single unit, describing how the reader should mould herself from head to toe.

8.3.4 **Others**

I will summarise the findings of the 'Others' briefly in order to give a holistic view of the advertisement content. I have grouped these pages under four headings – 'Banking', 'Good Housekeeping', 'White Subjects' and 'No People'. Below we have three graphs, the first shows the detailed breakdown of the 'Others' category in *Destiny* magazine. The second shows the same for *True Love* magazine. The third graph takes all four categories and compares them according to the average appearance in both magazines.

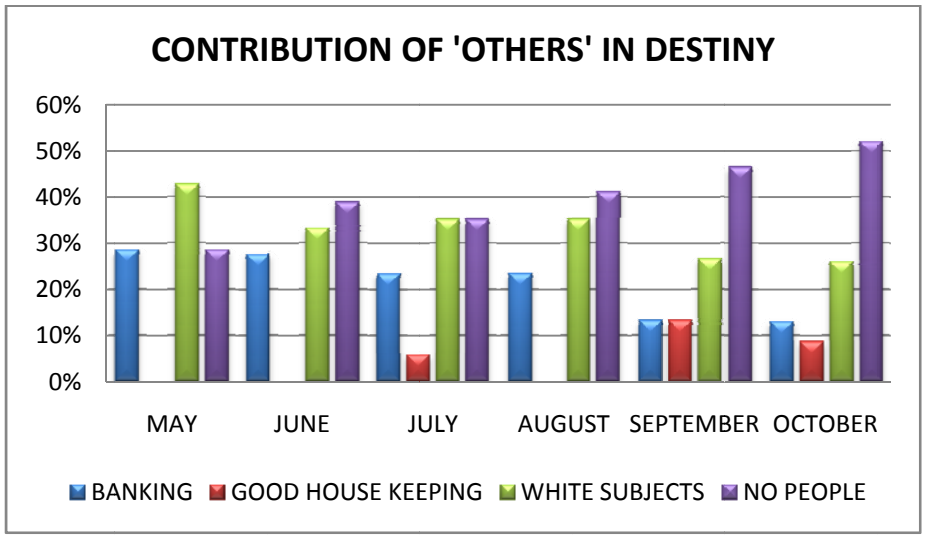


Figure 8.8

What we can see from this analysis is that the content that shows products on their own dominates the 'Others' category. This is because there is a prevalence of luxury goods such as motor vehicles, cellular phones, and jewellery on offer in this magazine. The second highest column represents white people who feature in the advertisements. Unlike *True Love*, *Destiny* aims to cater to female readers of all races who are interested in their focus on business reporting. What is interesting to note is that *Destiny* editors seem to make an effort to keep away from copy that falls under 'Good Housekeeping', opting to focus on banking instead. This

is very different from *True Love* which encourages women to look after their families more than it encourages readers to take care of their financial needs, through the advertising that appears on its pages.

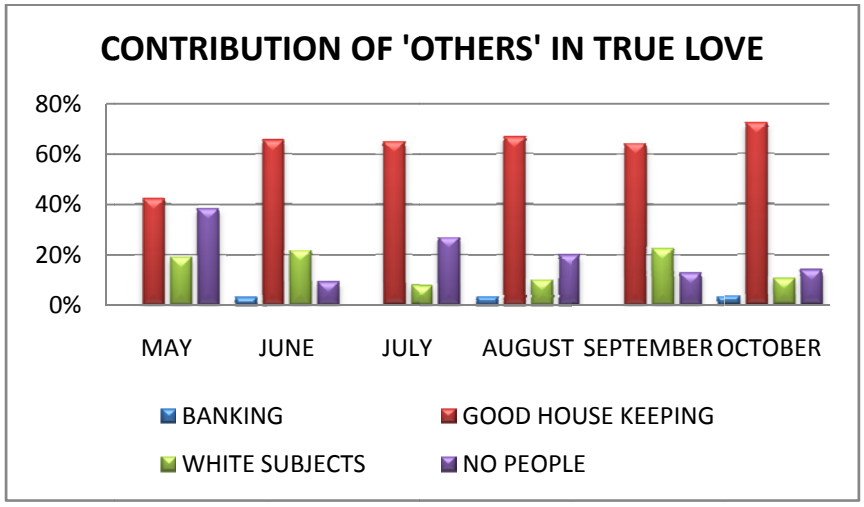
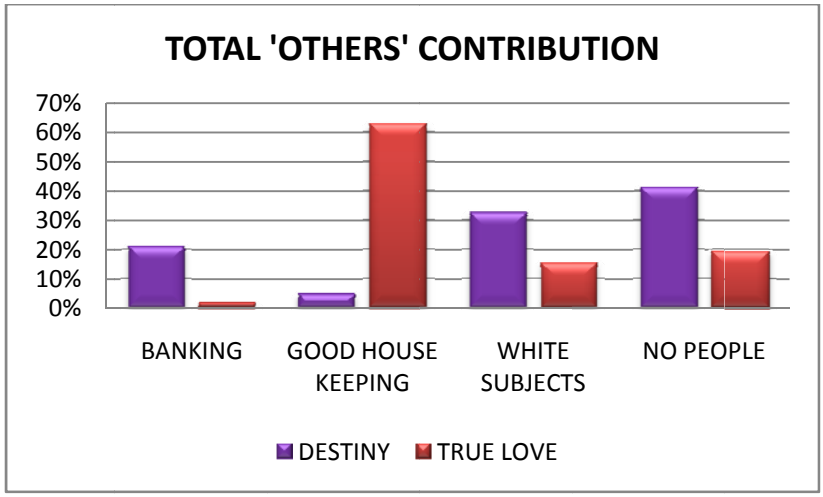


Figure 8.9

From looking at the allocation of advertisements in *True Love* we can immediately see a major difference between this magazine and *Destiny*. Here 'Good Housekeeping' obviously dominates the landscape, with advertisements for essential goods such as baby care products and household groceries appearing in as much as 21 out of 30 'Others' advertisements per issue. 'Banking' on the other hand is virtually non-existent on the pages of *True Love*, appearing on a single page, every other month. This adds up to a total of 3 pages of advertisements encouraging financial independence in the entire 6 months under analysis. This is staggeringly low for a magazine whose self-imposed mandate is to be the "trusted handbook for upwardly mobile black women in South Africa" (Thought24, 2009). The advertisements with no people in them are also lower than they are in *Destiny*. This can be explained by the recessionary dip in advertising sales during this time. As discussed earlier in this chapter, sales of luxury goods such as motor vehicles fell because the industry felt direct impact from the negative economic climate, while essential goods such as household goods maintained their grip on the market by refusing to pull

back their marketing expenditure. This creates a trend that is observable in the chart above where we see a high occurrence of 'Good Housekeeping' items.



The graph above gives an average overview of the recurrence of the themes in the two magazines. Here we can see very clearly the different approaches to advertising that the editorial teams take. *Destiny* focuses on the women-in-business, banking, and luxury goods component of their vision, and their advertising reflects this. *True Love* on the other hand is a manual for womanhood and favours historically feminine endeavours such as good housekeeping and some luxury goods.

8.4 Conclusion

In the analysis section of this chapter I began with a graphic depiction of the divide between the categories under the 'Subjugation' label and the 'Others'. What this showed what that the occurrence of these negative depictions are so widespread that they warrant further study. The quantitative analysis is able to give an overview of the regularity of occurrence in a manner than

qualitative analysis cannot. In so doing it highlights the need to study these 'feminine' categories rigorously in order to uncover the underlying messages about women.

The analysis of the advertisements has shown the roles that the magazines take on clearly. There may not be a direct link that can be drawn from ownership of media to the final product, but the evidence in this chapter indicates that influence from the founding editor of *Destiny* magazine may help in steering the magazine away from the more traditional roles that *True Love* magazine favours. The other power players are the advertisers themselves. Adding to Koenderman's (Finweek, 2008) discussion above, I hypothesized that the dip in adspend was due to recessionary in influences, but that these women's magazines maintained the high level of advertisements because of products such as skincare lotions and rice which are manufactured by multinational companies such as Procter & Gamble, Unilever, and Tiger Brands. These companies supply groceries and essentials, which take up a large part of the advertising space in women's lifestyle magazines, especially *True Love* in this case. I agree with Koenderman's assertion that it is necessary for these huge companies to maintain their advertising expenditure in order to win market share relatively easily during economic downturns and as such they would not cut back, they may even increase the amounts they spend.

From the analysis of the categories we can see that the magazines have different objectives. *True Love* is a seemingly low value (in terms of the monetary cost of the magazine for the consumer), high volume (in that the magazine has more pages than *Destiny* magazine), publication. However, it has a much wider readership than *Destiny* magazine, reaching almost 3,000,000 readers monthly. This means that the readers of the magazines actually pay through being exposed to a greater amount of advertising every month. The greater the advertising, the more that the consumers of the magazines spend on trends they discover in the publications. On the other hand, *Destiny* magazine is a high value, low volume magazine which focuses on a niche

market, leaving out a plethora of advertisements that the editors do not feel are aligned with their goals as producers of a business magazine. This difference is exemplified by the virtual non-existence of 'Good Housekeeping' advertisements in *Destiny* magazine, which opts to allocate more pages to 'Banking' in a single issue than *True Love* magazine does in the entire 6 months.

9 Chapter 9: Conclusion

9.1 Purpose of research

In this thesis I aimed to unpack the representations of gender and race in these two women's magazines, paying attention to the intersections of these identity markers as black women inhabit both subjectivities. This study highlighted that black women are relentlessly depicted in ways that subjugate them, drawing attention to the dominant discourses that circulate within women's magazines.

9.2 Overview of results

9.2.1 Consumption

Chapter Four of this study I began the analysis the four categories that showed the highest rate of appearance in these magazines. This chapter was useful in that it framed the study of advertisements, showing how all of the copy encourages consumption by the reader in some way. This analysis of *Peugeot*, *Sean John* and *D&G* showed that the advertisement pages do not need to rely on written texts in order to communicate a message, and that the images can be read on their own. In line with Barthes' work on the photographic image (Barthes, 1982), the power of these images lies in the denotative weight behind the photographs themselves, a power so potent that the depictions seem to be statements of truth about how the world is ordered. The photographs in the advertisements allow the ideal reader to consume the bodies of the women on the pages as they survey them, thereby providing a blueprint for the manner in which the reader should act as the surveyor of her own body. The analysis of these advertisements showed that the pages detail how women should utilize the male gaze on themselves in order to police their bodies at all times.

9.2.2 **Simple steps**

In Chapter Five I detailed the ways in which advertisements are framed as guidelines for women, using step-by-step guides to show the reader how they can achieve beauty. The framing of the advertisements differed slightly, but the overall effects are strikingly similar. The *Elizabeth Arden* copy used language and imagery that invoked religious terms, implying that the product has the ability restore grace to any woman. The copy also used the connoted purity of white light to position its product as the serum that will ensure that feminine beauty is attainable for black women. *L'Oreal* used a range of visual cues to signal the importance of using this product. From the scientific wording of the copy to the use of a celebrity on the pages, these cues signal what steps had to be taken in order for the reader to achieve *L'Oreal's* ideal for beauty. The last product, *dermalogica*, did not use celebrity or religious connotations to entice the reader, it relied on the power of science. Through words that mimic scientific language, *dermalogica* told the reader what steps she should take in order to be part of the exclusive club of the beautiful.

Throughout these claims remains one constant however, that the producers of the products will continue to provide black women with the steps necessary to ensure physical beauty. The idea of using simple steps to ensure that women know what to do in order to be beautiful speaks to Wolf's (1991) work on the coded utterances that play on women's anxieties, tapping into insecurities with striking efficiency that leaves even the most intelligent woman longing for the unattainable, idealised beauty.

9.2.3 **Relaxing**

Chapter Six of this study showed that black women's hair is always imbibed with cultural meaning, regardless of style. Further analysis of the advertisements in the two magazines

showed that relaxed hair dominated the representations, appearing on nearly all of the pages reserved for hair products.

I argue that these kinds of hair styles are given greater preference because it is such an extreme form of self-policing. The idea that women must pay in some way for participating in traditionally masculine spaces is discussed by Gqola (2007)in her work on 'women's empowerment' in South Africa. These payments are made in a number of ways. Black women pay through the monetary cost of relaxing their hair and keeping it healthy. After that, hair must be maintained though a plethora of acts such as retouching, oil treatments, professional washing and straightening, all of which require additional monetary payment, time and energy. Yet this work is not acknowledged as being stressful and time consuming, it is celebrated, like most of the work women take part in to control their bodies.

The analysis also showed that the damaging side effects of using hair relaxers were not directly acknowledged, but that black women's shared knowledge allowed the editors to place relaxer copy on pages that preceded advertisements for products that heal the burning and scaring caused by relaxer creams. *Dark and Lovely* evidenced this with their *Oil Moisturiser & Ultra Repairing Cream* when they place the copy directly after the *Dark and Lovely Moisture Plus* advertisements.

Finally, I argued that the euphemism "relaxing", while innocuous, helps to create the impression that having to alter ourselves with the help of chemicals is progressive in some way. The tag line "My style. My way." adds to the idea that this is what is expected in order for women to participate in professional spaces. All of the cues outlined in the copy show the reader the tools that are essential for the ideal performance of femininity.

9.2.4 **Erasure**

Chapter Seven I analysed three advertisements that draw attention to the rewards given to women who are able to control their bodies, and in so doing erase the body's 'imperfections'. The advertising copy that exemplified this was *Cinique* make-up, *Shield* deodorant, and *D&G* perfumes.

I put forward that *Clinique's* technique of using shared knowledge, such as the idea that innovative cosmetic technologies begin in Europe, especially France as the country considered to be the beauty capital of the world, allow the producers of the copy to make claims about the product which are not justified through evidence. The copy does not allow for a debate into the use of make up at all, it only requires the reader to decide which make-up is best for them. These types of advertisements promote products that cover the consumer's implied imperfections.

I showed how *Shield* used a more literal structure for the advertisement, as the copy shows the body that represents the correct performance of femininity. The copy signals hair removal, physical fitness, and restraint of the body's natural behaviour as essential for femininity, and Unathi Nkayi's celebrity reinforces this idea. Through the use of the diary in various media forms these ideas are repeated.

GynaGuard is interesting in its brazen disregard for medical facts, such as the vagina's ability to self-clean, opting to use fear to instil trust in its product. I believe that the copy is dangerous because it misinforms the reader about women's bodies, under the guise of medical evidence. The danger of this product is compounded by the fact that it also encourages women to keep this information secret, thereby ensuring that the ideal reader would not want go to a medical professional to ascertain whether or not this information is true. The use of products like these allow for the possibility of a misdiagnosis that would be potentially fatal if the woman has a larger medical problem and does not seek medical help.

Sanger's (2007 & 2008) work has shown that there is a contestation between creating oppositional representations and maintaining the status quo, I contend that the magazine editors still have a responsibility to the readers to provide accurate information where health, especially black women's sexual health, is concerned.

This chapter shows that although women cannot control everything perfectly, they can erase various parts of themselves in the pursuit of perfection. Whether it is through the use of makeup or vaginal potions, erasing the natural work black women's bodies do is a theme that runs throughout these advertisements.

9.2.5 **Overview and Discussion**

In Chapter 8 I began by giving an overview of the media landscape in South Africa, with specific focus on magazine production. This overview leads to the discussion of media ownership, magazine readerships, and advertising trends in the last three years.

I took the analysis of the categories further by studying the trends through time. This allowed for a wider view of the potential impact that these categories have on the readership. I began with a graphic depiction of the divide between the categories under the 'Subjugation' label and the 'Others'. What this showed what that the occurrence of the representations under the 'Subjugation' umbrella were so widespread that they warrant further study, beyond this thesis. The quantitative content analysis is gave an overview of the regularity of occurrence in a manner than qualitative analysis could not. The result was that the quantitative study and the qualitative analysis combined showed a need to study these categories further in order to uncover the trends over a longer period of time.

The wider analysis of the advertisements made visible the roles that the magazines take on. There may not be a direct link that can be drawn from ownership of media to the final product, but the evidence in this chapter suggests that influence from the founding editor of *Destiny* magazine steers the magazine away from the more traditional roles that *True Love* magazine favours. From the analysis of the categories it became clear that the magazines have different objectives. I argued that *True Love* is a seemingly low value (in terms of the monetary cost of the magazine for the consumer), high volume (in that the magazine has more pages than *Destiny* magazine), publication. However, it has a much wider readership than *Destiny* magazine, reaching almost 3,000,000 readers monthly. I believe that this shows that the readers of the magazines actually pay through being exposed to a greater amount of advertising every month. The greater the advertising, the more that the consumers of the magazines spend on trends they discover in the publications.

9.3 Limitations of study

The results indicate that there is a trend that favours specific representations of black women, as evidenced by the categories with the highest rate of appearance. While this study highlights and analyses these categories, it offers an interpretation of the media itself without the comments of the editors. With a greater amount of time for research, further study would benefit from interviews with the editorial staff in order to elucidate the thinking behind the selection of these advertisements.

The limitations on time did not allow for a longer publication period to be studied, but I believe that future research would also benefit from this. Further study should focus on a period of multiple consecutive years, which would provide a greater sample size, in order to see the changes in advertising expenditure. This analysis would show which types of advertisements are

favoured during specific months during the year, and allow the dominant discourses to be tracked.

9.4 Implications of research

Article 19 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has a right to freedom of opinion and expression. This freedom can be expressed in a number of ways, from cinema to speech, but the main significance of this article can be found in its recognition of the freedom of the media. Robertson (1991) writes that the freedom of the media is fundamentally important in ensuring that the other freedoms are upheld because it is the media that has the power to inform people in a modern democracy. In a modern democracy, rule by the people and for the people can only be maintained through access to information, and as such the media, which has the resources to gather and disseminate information for mass consumption, has the power to create a platform for debate.

In developing countries media can also play an important role in education and development, especially when the formal education system is inadequate and literacy is low. Media can highlight inequalities and provide protection to the population. Robertson writes,

> "In a society undergoing political transition, the media can encourage public debate. They can analyse ideologies, offer new visions, and expose shortcomings and inconsistencies in the policies of government and opposition. Through this process, they can help the individual members of society to realise their potential as independent, responsible people." (Robertson, 1991, p. 131)

This statement shows how important self-reflexive media is in a democratic society's growth. These two magazines are read by over 3,000,000 South Africans every month, and because of

this the editors have an opportunity to present a range of options to black female readers that stand opposition to the dominant ideologies.

South Africa has made strides in transitioning from apartheid to democratic rule, but there is one side-effect associated with state liberation that Essof (2001) believes should be cautioned against – once liberation has been achieved structures are established, processes are set in stone and marginalisation of women can then establish itself once again. I believe that these structures can be seen in the ways in which women are depicted in these magazines as having to perform gender within specific parameters. As I have shown in my analysis, these parameters do not allow for a multiplicity of expression, and ignore the various ways of being that black women inhabit in their daily lives. While we may seem liberated through the options that are now available to us, black women must remain cautious of the work that still has to be done, and question the ways we are portrayed in media. As Essof (2001) attests, women's struggles are open to compromise and may support systems and structures that are implicated in producing and reproducing their oppression.

The work that black women do may be challenging and we may feel like it is insurmountable at times, but we always have a choice. The agency that we have allows us to be critical and engage with the world despite oppression.

10 Bibliography

Barthes, R. (1982). The Photographic Message. In S. S. (Ed), *A Barthes Reader* (pp. 194-210). London: Vintage.

Bennetts, L. C. (2004, September 7). Changes in the ownership structure of the South African print media industry during the period 1990-2003. *Thesis (M.A.)*. Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa: University of the Witwatersrand.

Berger, J. (1972). *Ways of Seeing*. New York: British Broadcasting Corporation.

Bhavnani, K.-K. (2001). *Feminism & 'race'*. New York: Oxford City Press.

Boikanyo, E. (1992). So Much for Women-Sensitive Sexual Relations: The Use of Vaginal Potions. *Agenda, No 15, Women and Health*, pp. 3-6.

Bordo, S. (1997). *Twilight Zones: The Hidden Life of Cultural Images from Plato to O.J.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bordo, S. (1993). *Unbearable Weight - Feminism, Western Culture and the Body*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

Britten, S. (2005). *One Nation One Beer: The mythology of the new South Africa in advertising.* Johannesburg: PhD thesis, The University of Witwatersrand.

Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies That Matter*. London: Routledge.

Carby, H. (2000). White woman listen! In L. B. Solomos, *Theories of race and racism: A Reader* (pp. 389-402). London & New York: Routledge.

Casale, D. (2004, March). What has the Feminisation of the Labour Market 'Bought' Women in South Africa? Trends in Labour Force Participation, Employment and Earnings, 1995-2001. Durban, South Africa: School of Economics: University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Collins, P. H. (2002). Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought. In *Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Higher Education.* Boston: Pearson Custom Publishing.

Collins, P. H. (1991). Toward an Afrocentric feminist epistemology. In *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment.* New York: Routledge.

Covell, K., & Lanis, K. (1995). Images of Women's Sexuality in Advertisements: A Content Analysis of Black- and White-Oriented Women's and Men's Magazines. *Sex Roles, Vol 32* , pp. 639–649.

Cox, O. C. (2000). Race Relations. In L. B. Solomos, *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader* (pp. 75-82). New York: Routledge.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review, Vol 43,* 1241–1299.

Davies, M. M., & Mosdell, N. (2006). *Practical Research Methods for Media and cultural Studies: Making People Count.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

de la Rey, C. (1997). South African Feminism, Race and Racism. *Agenda, No. 32,* 6-10.

Deacon, D., Pickering, M., Golding, P., & Murdock, G. (1999). *Researching Communications.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2000). *Critical Race Theory: the cutting edge.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Destiny Magazine. (2009, September). *Destiny Magazine*. South Africa: Ndalo Media.

Destiny Magazine. (2009). *Destiny: Beautiful Powerful You.* Johannesburg: Ndalo Media.

Destiny. (2009, September). Clinique even better. *Destiny*. Ndalo Media.

Destiny. (2009, July). Dark and Lovely Moisture Plus Hair Relaxer. *Destiny*. Ndalo Media.

Destiny. (2009, August). D&G. *Destiny*. Ndalo Media.

Destiny. (2009, September). Peugeot. *Destiny*. Ndalo Media.

Dyer, R. (1997). *White.* New York: Routledge.

Erasmus, Z. (1997). 'Oe! My Hare Gaan Huistoe': Hair-Styling as Black Cultural Practice. *Agenda, No. 32*, 11-16.

Essof, S. (2001). African Feminisms - Histories, Applications and Prospects. *Agenda, No. 50*, 124-127.

Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and Power.* London: Pearson Education Limited.

Ferber, A. L. (1999). Constructing Whiteness. In M. B. Solomos, *Racism* (pp. 213-223). New York: Oxford University Press.

Ferguson, M. (1983). *Forever Feminine: Women's Magazines and the Cult of Femininity*. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

Fin24. (2009, November 22). *Women magazines trump recession*. Retrieved March 24, 2010, from Fin24.co.za: http://www.fin24.com/articles/default/display_article.aspx?ArticleId=1518-1786_2562410

Finweek. (2008, November 6). Fasten your seatbelts. *Finweek*, pp. 68-69.

Finweek. (2009, December 17). The worst of times. *Finweek*, p. 42.

Foucault, M. (1981). The Order of Discourse. In R. Young, *Untying the text: a post-structuralist reader* (pp. 48-77). London: Routledge.

Frith, K. T. (1998). *Undressing the Ad: Reading Culture in Advertising*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Gilman, S. (2002). Black Bodies, White Bodies: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality in the late Nineteenth Century. In S. Jackson, & S. Scott, *Gender: A Sociological Reader* (pp. 392-400). London: Routledge.

Goldberg, D. T. (1999). The Semantics of Race. In M. B. Solomos, *Racism* (pp. 363-377). New York: Oxford University Press.

Gqola, P. D. (2001). Blackwomen, Feminisms, and Postcoloniality in Africa. *Agenda, No. 50*, 11-22.

Gqola, P. D. (2007, April). How the 'cult of femininity' and violent masculinities support endemic gender based violence in contemporary South Africa. *African Identities, Volume 5, Issue 1*, pp. 111-124.

Guillaumin, C. (1999). The Changing Face of 'Race'. In M. Bulmer, & J. Solomos, *Racism* (pp. 355-361). New York: Oxford University Press.

Hadland, A., Louw, E., Sesanti, S., & Wasserman, H. (2008). Introduction. In A. Hadland, E. Louw, S. Sesanti, & H. Wasserman, *Power, Politics and Identity in South African Media* (pp. 1-16). Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Hall, S. (1997). Introduction. In S. Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (pp. 1-11). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Holland-Muter, S. (1995). Opening Pandora's Box: Reflections on 'Whiteness' in South African Women's Movements. *Agenda*, 55-62.

hooks, b. (1987). *Black Looks: race and representation*. New York: Routledge.

Howard-Hamilton, M. F. (2003). Theoretical frameworks for African American women. *New Directions for Student Services, Volume 2003, Issue 104*, 19-27.

Jackson, S., & Scott, S. (2002). Introduction: The gendering of sociology. In S. Jackson, & S. Scott, *Gender: A Sociological Reader* (pp. 1-26). London: Routledge.

Laden, S. (2003, July). Who's Afraid of a Black Bourgeoisie?: Consumer Magazines for Black South Africans as an Apparatus of Change. *Journal of Consumer Culture, Volume 3, No 2*, pp. 191-216.

Latha, R. H. (2001). Feminisms in an African Context: Mariama Bâ's so Long a Letter. *Agenda, No 50*, 23-40.

Levett, A., Kottler, A., Burman, E., & Parker, I. (1997). *Culture, Power and Difference: Discourse Analysis in South Africa*. Cape Town: UCT Press.

Linder, K. (2004, October). Images of Women in General Interest and Fashion Magazine Advertisements from 1955 to 2002. *Sex Roles, Vol 51*, pp. 409-421.

Meyer, M., & Wodak, R. (2001). *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: SAGE.

Miles, R. (2000). Apropos the idea of 'race' ... again. In L. B. Solomos, *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader* (pp. 180-198). New York: Routledge.

Mohanty, C. T. (1996). Under Western Eyes: feminist scholarship and colonial discourses. In P. M. (Ed), *Contemporary postcolonial theory: a reader*. London: Edward Arnold.

Molebatsi, N. (2009). Locating African natural "hair-y-tage" in shampoo TV advertisements. *Scrutiny2, 14*, 21-30.

Mulvey, L. (1989). *Visual and Other Pleasures*. London: Macmillan.

Narunsky-Laden, S. (2007, August). CONSUMER MAGAZINES IN SOUTH AFRICA AND ISRAEL: Toward a socio-semiotic approach to magazine research. *Journalism Studies, Volume 8, Issue 4*, pp. 596-612.

Narunsky-Laden, S. (2008). Identity in post-apartheid South Africa: 'Learning to belong' through the (commercial) media. In A. Hadland, E. Louw, S. Sesanti, & H. W. (Eds), *Power, Politics and Identity in South African Media* (pp. 124-148). Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council.

Naspers. (2010). *Company Profile*. Retrieved March 24, 2010, from Naspers: http://www.naspers.com/index.cfm?content=2693&intParentContentID=2636

Ndalo Media. (2007). *Background*. Retrieved March 24, 2010, from Ndalo Media: www.ndalomedia.com

Ntshingila, H. (2009). *Black Jerusalem*. Johannesburg: Umuzi.

Odhiambo, T. (2008, April 1). The Black Female Body as a 'Consumer and Consumable' in Current Drum and True Love Magazines in South Africa. *African Studies, Volume 67, Issue 1,* pp. 71-80.

Patton, T. O. (2006). Hey Girl, Am I More than My Hair?: African American Women and Their Struggles with Beauty, Body Image, and Hair. *NWSA Journal, Volume 18, Number 2*, 24-51.

Plous, S., & Neptune, D. (1997). Racial and Gender biases in Magazine Advertising: A Content-Analytic Study. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *21*, pp. 627-644.

Pool, H. (2008, September 18). *Should you straighten your afro hair? | Life and style*. Retrieved February 23, 2010, from www.theguardian.co.uk: http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2009/sep/18/straighten-afro-tyra-banks

Qunta, C. (1987). *Women in Southern Africa*. London & New York: Allison and Busby Limited.

Ramaphosa, C. (1999, May 14). *The media, the editors, and the owners*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from Financial Mail: http://secure.financialmail.co.za/99/0514/covopin/guest.htm

Reuters. (2010, March 22). *Reuters US: Naomi Campbell*. Retrieved April 24, 2010, from Reuters: http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE62157N20100302

Ribane, N. (2006). *Beauty ... A Black Perspective*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

Robertson, M. (1991). *Human Rights for South Africans*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Russel, D. E. (1989). *Lives of Courage - Women for a new South Africa*. Bloomington, IN : iUniverse .

SAARF. (2008). *South African Advertising Research Foundation: Media Consumption Information from AMPS 2008A*. Johannesburg: South African Advertising Research Foundation.

Sanger, N. (2008, August). 'There's got to be a man in there': reading intersections between gender, race and sexuality in South African magazines. *African Identities, Volume 6, Issue 3*, pp. 275-291.

Sanger, N. (2007). *Representations of gender, race and sexuality in selected English-medium South African magazines, 2003-2005*. Cape Town: PhD Thesis: University of the Western Cape.

Shevelow, K. (1989). *Women and Print Culture*. London & New York: Routledge.

South African Advertising Research Foundation. (2008). *Media Consumption Information from AMPS 2008A*. Johannesburg: South African Advertising Research Foundation.

Tate, S. (2007). Black beauty: Shade, hair and anti-racist aesthetics. *Ethnic and Racial Studies Vol. 30 No. 2*, 300-319.

Thought24. (2009). *Thought24: True Love Magazine*. Retrieved March 23, 2010, from Thought24: Ideas happn here: http://www.thought24.co.za/articles/view/true-love-magazine

Threadgold, T., & Cranny-Francis, A. (1990). *Feminine, Masculine and Representation*. North Sydney: Allen & Unwin Australia Pty Ltd.

Treviño, J., Harrisb, M., & Wallace, D. (2008, March). What's so critical about race theory? *In Contemporary Justice Review, Volume 11*.

True Love. (2009, September). Elizabeth Arden Intervene. *True Love*. Media24

True Love. (2009, May). dermalogica ChromaWhite TRx . *True Love*.Media24

True Love. (2009, July). Dark and Lovely Beautiful Beginnings. *True Love*. Media24

True Love. (2009, July). Dark and Lovely Precise. *True Love*. Media24.

True Love. (2009, June). GynaGuard: Intimate care, for you know where... *True Love*. Media24

True Love. (2009, May). Sean John Unforgivable. *True Love*. Media24

Winant, H. (2000). The theoretical concept of the concept of race. In L. B. Solomos, *Theories of race and racism: a reader*. London & New York: Routledge.

Wolf, N. (1991). *The Beauty Myth*. London: Chatto & Windus Ltd.