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Thesis: To what extent does the media have a negative influence on body image and self-esteem, and how can we change the understanding of an “ideal” body image?

The Media’s Negative Effect on Body Image and Self-Esteem

Annotated Bibliography

De, Sonali, and Rituparna Chakraborty. "Body Dissatisfaction Among Female University Students: Metacognitive Awareness." *Psychological Studies* 60.3 (2015): 257-264. Academic Search Complete. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.

There are a number of factors that affect body dissatisfaction among female college students. Social pressures and popular media appear to be the main factors that negatively affect the perception of body image and self-worth (body dysmorphic syndrome, bulimia, anorexia, diminished self-esteem, and strict dieting). A group of female university students who fall into a normal-weight category on the BMI scale were interviewed on their overall feelings towards their body image. The responses were evaluated by different ideals associated with body image, and the study resulted in more than half of women being discontent with their body image and 70% aware of their own thoughts of their body image.

“Body Dissatisfaction Among Female University Students: Metacognitive Awareness” is a secondary source that analyzes the relationship between body image and metacognitive awareness of the media’s influence. This article is a scholarly source

because of its sophisticated language and detailed charts of the dimensions associated with body image. The information is entirely objective, being based solely on facts and statistical analysis. This article is relative to my research on body image and the media because introducing metacognitive awareness of body image and the media can further my knowledge and extend my research analysis.

Fernandez, Sofia, and Mary Pritchard. "Relationships Between Self-Esteem, Media Influence And Drive For Thinness." *Eating Behaviors* 13.4 (2012): 321-325. Academic Search Complete. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.

This secondary source depicts the relationship between the media and the drive for thinness for both men and women. How men and women perceive themselves regarding self-esteem and appearance is a major contemporary issue. The relationships between media influence and drive for thinness and self-esteem and drive for thinness are linked with how the body image of men and women are affected. The participants were originally enrolled in a general psychology course and were to complete an online survey about eating behaviors and exercise behaviors. Responses from the online survey measured media influence, social self-esteem, and disordered eating symptoms. In conclusion, women exhibited more of a drive for thinness, while both men and women were equally affected in regards to social self-esteem.

This article is considered a scholarly source because of the tables inserted in the text that convey the statistics from the primary source analysis of the experimental study results. Although both men and women were equally affected in regards to social self-esteem, women seemed to be much more sensitive to the media's portrayal of body image. It is interesting to be able to analyze influence of the media on body image while

comparing the responses of both men and women (not gender-exclusive). Because the drive for thinness is a major component of the ideal body image, the information in this article can provide more relevant research on the causes of eating disorders.

Grabe, Shelly, Janet Shibley Hyde, and L. Monique Ward. "The Role Of The Media In Body Image Concerns Among Women: A Meta-Analysis Of Experimental And Correlational Studies." *Psychological Bulletin* 134.3 (2008): 460-476. Academic Search Complete. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.

In general, the media is linked to women's satisfaction with their bodies, increased concern with appearance, and increase in eating disorders and similar habits. Regardless of various techniques and methods, media exposure creates an inevitable and negative effect on body image and corresponding issues. Because the mass media is constantly depicting the stereotypical body image for men and women, body image disturbance is exponentially increasing. The thin ideal that is dominating the media is unattainable. Meta-analysis through experimental and correlational studies links the media and body dissatisfaction.

This article is a secondary source because it reflects on the content of a primary source study. In addition, it is scholarly because it provides a myriad of citations of highly credible sources. The article is completely objective, seeing that the opinions of the writers are not understood in the analysis of the study. In my opinion, the media should be monitored in response to its negative influence. This source is ideal for research because it specifies the problem with the media in that it portrays ideal body images for both men and women, thus creating body image disturbance for both genders and leading to a number of related issues.

Greene, Sophia B. *Body Image: Perceptions, Interpretations and Attitudes*. New York, NY: Nova Science Publishers, 2011. Print.

Body Image: Perceptions, Interpretations, and Attitudes describes the multiple dimensions of body image, such as perceptual and behavioral dimensions. Body image is defined as the mental picture of the body as it is perceived through one's understanding. Many studies and research contribute to the the various aspects associated with body image, including distortion, the media, eating disorders, sociocultural influences, body image and exercise, and plastic surgery.

Body Image: Perceptions, Interpretations, and Attitudes is a secondary source that accumulates all sorts of facets linked to media and body image. This literary analysis is a scholarly article because of the college level language and jargon and the various studies accredited to highly reputable sources. This source is the most ideal for research on media and body image because it provides a great spectrum of associated aspects (distortion, eating disorders, plastic surgery etc.) It would also be very interesting to look more into the relation of the media and the obsession with plastic surgery. There is such a wide variety of studies and researched topics that could improve the credibility of my writing.

HAAS, CHERYL J., et al. "An Intervention For The Negative Influence Of Media On Body Esteem." *College Student Journal* 46.2 (2012): 405-418. Academic Search Complete. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.

It is understood that media exposure introduces body image as unattainable perfection, which harms the way men and women perceive themselves today. The pressure of the media causes individuals to think negatively about their appearances.

According to a study by a department of Introductory Psychology, exposing college students to the myths about body image is a solution for a much healthier body image. After 160 female college students were separated into two groups (one group was exposed to media while the other group had no media exposure), the group that was exposed to media pertaining to thin and attractive models received intervention that told the truth about the skewed perception of body image. Results lead to the conclusion that intervention and education about body image to uncover myths about body image was significantly effective in teaching women to have respect for themselves.

This secondary source is a scholarly article because of its incredible detail and description of analysis. This article is relative to the correlation between body image and the media because of its interpretation of the possible solution that exposing college students to the myths of the ideal body image will create a healthier body perception. This analysis is helpful towards my research because it introduces a new method to teach women to appreciate their body image.

KAŹMIERCZAK, NATALIA, RAFAŁ PATRYN, and ANTONI NIEDZIELSKI. "Influence Of Mass Media On Emergence Of Eating Disorders Amongst Young People." *Polish Journal Of Public Health* 123.4 (2013): 301-304. Academic Search Complete. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.

Society suggests that the effects of mass media and cultural factors play a major role in striving to obtain the ideal body image. A group of respondents were given a questionnaire to fill out that was originally intended for people with eating disorders; the majority of respondents showed risk factors for anorexia. 99% of the participants agreed that physical appearance is extremely important, while 92% said they were dissatisfied with their appearance. The unhealthy

obsession to achieve an ideal body image can eventually lead to anorexia and other eating disorders. Risk factors for anorexia are motivated by appearance and “ideal” beauty as defined by the media. A significant factor that contributes to eating disorders is how people perceive them; a few of the participants agreed that anorexia is physically appealing.

This secondary source is a scholarly article because of the abundance of graphs that display the statistical analysis of the correlating studies. It pertains to my research of body image and the influence of the media because the media’s portrays “ideal” beauty as being unrealistic. This secondary source furthers my claim that the media is a leading cause of eating disorders, such as anorexia. Although not diagnosed, many of the participants in the study were quick to show tendencies of anorexia. The issue of anorexia is tied to the media’s influence on the misconceptions of body image.

Nerini, Amanda. "Media Influence And Body Dissatisfaction In Preadolescent Ballet Dancers And Non-Physically Active Girls." *Psychology Of Sport & Exercise* 20. (2015): 76-83. Academic Search Complete. Web. 22 Feb. 2017.

According to a recent study, ballet dancers have greater body dissatisfaction than non-physically active preadolescent girls. Although the BMI of the ballet dancers were lower than that of the non-active girls, the ballet dancers were far more concerned with their body image. Because being athletic requires a certain appearance, leanness, and performance, athletes are pressured to look a certain way. Although there was no difference in the perception of the media, the ballet dancers had much more disturbing eating behaviors and held the athletic-internalization to a high standard. Athletes involved in such sports as dance and gymnastics have the pressure of looking like the “ideal” athlete (similar to thin-ideal internalization). One solution

is to provide intervention for education about healthier body images and inform women about the skewed perception of the ideal body image.

This article is a secondary source because it analyzes information from a primary source. It is a scholarly source because of the many citations that give credit to reliable and sophisticated sources. This secondary source caught my attention because it introduced the issue with athletes and body image and the influence of the media and sociocultural pressures. I can also understand and relate to the issue because I was a gymnast for five years and was obsessively concerned with my body image. Inserting my own experience as well as relating it to a credible study can further convey the negative influence of the media and the sociocultural pressures in society. Newsome, Teresa. "7 Ways Social Media Can Affect Your Self-Esteem." Bustle. Bustle, 26 Jan. 2016. Web. 22 Feb. 2017.

Social media has a hidden agenda of destroying self-esteem. Although it might feel nice to feel connected to the outside world, social media brings the pressures of having to look and act a certain way. According to a University of Chicago study, social media is linked to feelings of low self-worth. Advertisements in the media cause people to conform to an ideal image. It is proven that social media is a leading cause of depression as people are obsessed with comparing themselves to others. There is a false sense of real relationships, while being connected through social media.

"7 Ways Social Media Can Affect Your Self-Esteem" is a secondary source that is a popular source because it contains no citations or accredited information to relevant studies. This web article is not written at a college level nor is written for an academic audience. Although the point of view is a little less objective than that of a scholarly article, it provides a broader range of factors that are not only affected by the media but specifically social media. It is easier to

address the issue of body image when ties in with social media because the millennial are distinctively familiar with social media.

O'Riordan, Siobhan S., and Byron L. Zamboanga. "Aspects Of The Media And Their Relevance To Bulimic Attitudes And Tendencies Among Female College Students." *Eating Behaviors* 9.2 (2008): 247-250. Academic Search Complete. Web. 22 Feb. 2017.

Media pressures are related to bulimic tendencies in a variety of ways for a number of reasons. 106 female college students were asked to participate in a questionnaire in which an Eating Disorder Diagnostic Scale measured results; bulimic tendencies were found to be quite common in female college students, but not obvious. The ideal body image was found to be 15% smaller than the average woman's body. Sociocultural pressures have a significantly negative impact on eating disorder attitudes. Society continues to exude a strong emphasis on body shape and appearance, which adversely affects the way people tend to perceive their own body image.

This secondary source is a scholarly source because it provides the reader with a variety of different charts that display the correlation between various factors affected in the referenced study of the media and body image. The effect of the media on body image has a great impact on eating disorders, such as bulimia. This source would improve my research because it links anorexia and bulimia, both disorders affected by the negative influence of the media. Therefore, full coverage of the media's negative effect on the causes of eating disorders would be a significant addition to my research paper.

SMEESTERS, DIRK, and NAOMI MANDEL. "Positive And Negative Media Image Effects On The Self." *Journal Of Consumer Research* 32.4 (2006): 576-582. Academic Search Complete. Web. 22 Feb. 2017.

Exposure to extremely thin or heavy models isn't the only effect of the media on body image; exposure to moderately thin or heavy models is proven to lead to self-enhancement. Two factors are involved in the study behind proving the positive effect the media has on body image: the exposure to various model builds and the analysis of the of the participants' responses. The first experiment dealt with the exposure of the media and an advertisement questionnaire, while the second experiment provided accessibility to a variety of terms that compromised thin, heavy, and neutral body images. The results led to the conclusion that exposure to extreme body images negatively affected body-image perception, while moderately thin and heavy body image exposure had a positive effect on body image perception.

This secondary source is a scholarly source article because of its college-level writing and its approach to the analysis of the study, including detailed charts and graphs. Although this source is quite objective, it seems to have an agenda of convincing advertisers to use moderately skinny or heavy models (as to extremely skinny models) in their magazine issues etc. Because the article introduces a feasible solution for the media's negative influence on body image, I could intertwine both body image exposure to moderately thin and heavy models with the exposure to body image myths.

