

## **FEMALE GENDER IMAGES IN AUSTRALIAN ADVERTISING: A COMPARISON OF MAGAZINES TARGETING CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Since the late 1960's, research into gender stereotypes in advertising has been prolific. Adolescent females, growing up in western society, are continually exposed to unrealistic images of women. With the emergence of more and more magazines targeting children and adolescents, it raises the question of whether the female images portrayed in these publications reinforce prevailing stereotypes of women and support unrealistic body ideals. In addition to a lack of diversity in the images of body type and size, advertisers have neglected portraying diversity of ethnicity and race. This in effect, not only creates discrimination, it marginalizes whole groups of people by portraying an inaccurate representation of society. Adolescents in general, look to images represented in the media on which to base their concepts of self and society. This study examines the diversity of the female image shown by advertisers in the Australian editions of Barbie, Girlfriend and Dolly magazines. Limitations are noted and future research issues are discussed.