Sex Roles (2011) 65:1–12
DOI 10.1007/s11199-011-9966-8

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

"Putting on" Sexiness: A Content Analysis of the Presence of Sexualizing Characteristics in Girls' Clothing

Samantha M. Goodin · Alyssa Van Denburg · Sarah K. Murnen · Linda Smolak

Published online: 3 May 2011

Abstract Objectification theory (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) proposes that women from Western cultures are widely portrayed and treated as objects of the male gaze, leading to the development of self-objectification, in which girls and women internalize these societal messages and view their own bodies as objects to be evaluated according to narrow standards of (often sexualized) attractiveness. Prompted by findings from the American Psychological Association Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls (APA 2007), the present study considers girls' clothing as a possible socializing influence that may contribute to the development of self-objectification in preteen girls. Accordingly, in this content analysis, we examined the frequency and nature of "sexualizing" clothing available for girl children (generally sizes 6–14) on the websites of 15 popular stores in the US. Sexualizing clothing was defined as clothing that revealed or emphasized a sexualized body part, had characteristics associated with sexiness, and/or had sexually suggestive writing. Clothing was also coded for childlike characteristics, such as child-like fabric (e.g., polka dot pattern) or a modest, non-revealing cut. Across all stores and all articles of clothing, 69% of the clothing items were coded as having only childlike characteristics, 4% as having only sexualizing characteristics, 25.4% as having both sexualizing and childlike characteristics, and 1% as having neither sexualizing nor childlike characteristics. "Tween" stores like *Abercrombie Kids* had the highest proportion of sexualizing clothing. The findings are discussed within the framework of the development of self-objectification.

Keywords Self-objectification · Clothing · Gender roles · Femininity · Sex object · Sexy · Content analysis

S. M. Goodin · A. Van Denburg · S. K. Murnen · L. Smolak
Kenyon College,
Gambier, OH, USA

S. K. Murnen (✉)
Psychology Department, Kenyon College,
Gambier, OH 43022, USA
e-mail: Murnen@kenyon.edu

Introduction

In December of 2007, under pressure from outraged parents and activists, *Walmart* pulled a pair of pink girls' underwear off the shelves of its junior section, because the underwear had the words "Who needs credit cards…" printed across the front and "When you've got Santa" printed across the back ("Walmart yanks," 2007). In 2002, *Abercrombie Kids* refused to stop selling thong underwear in children's sizes with "wink wink" and "eye candy" printed across the front. The company's statement in response to protest and criticism asserted that "the underwear for young girls was created with the intent to be lighthearted and cute" ("Abercrombie's sexy undies," 2002). Currently, *Abercrombie Kids* is still selling "cute butt sweatpants" and "skinny" jeans that are "fitted with a little stretch for a sexy look to give you the perfect butt" (*A&f girls* 2010).

Such examples illustrate the increasingly "sexy" nature of the clothing that is marketed to and worn by young girls in the US. The American Psychological Association (APA) Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls (APA 2007) places these examples in the context of a wider trend in US culture in which girls are increasingly confronted with sexualized material. Research has demonstrated the pervasiveness of the sexual objectification of women and its negative effects (e.g., Moradi and Huang 2008), but additional research is needed to understand the pressures of objectification on

girls that might affect their development. Objectification theory (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) proposes that repeated exposure to objectifying experiences leads to self-objectification, in which girls or women internalize societal messages that sexually objectify them and others—leading them to view their own bodies as objects to be evaluated according to narrow standards of attractiveness. Although research into the self-objectification of girls is still in its early stages, evidence of self-objectification has been found in girls as young as 11 (Lindberg et al. 2006). In response to the APA Task Force Report (2007), the present study considers girls' clothing as a potential socializing influence that contributes to the cultural objectification of pre-teen girls. This content analysis examines the pervasiveness and nature of the sexualization of girls' clothing sold on the websites of 15 popular stores in the US, analyzing the clothing according to type of store, type of clothing item, and any sexualizing and/or childlike characteristics.

Sexual Objectification of Women

According to the APA Task Force Report (2007), girls in the US are exposed to both implicit and explicit messages from parents, role models, peers, and the media that promote a limited image of women focused on sexual attractiveness. The body ideal promoted for women in Western cultures is unrealistically thin and increasingly "sexy." About one-half of advertisements in a variety of magazines were found to depict women as sex objects (Stankiewicz and Rosselli 2008), and the sexualization of women in advertisements increased significantly between 1983 and 2003 (Reichert and Carpenter 2004). Peter and Valkenburg (2007) concluded that there is increased sexual content in the media, particularly with the advent of the internet. Pornographic pages on the internet increased by 1,800% between 1998 and 2004 (Paul 2005), and even in mainstream advertisements and media, women are shown as adopting a "pornified" sexuality. For example, beauty practices that used to be portrayed only in pornography are now appearing in popular culture, such as thong underwear and stiletto heels.

It is believed that this thin, sexy image is also being transmitted to girls. Numerous studies cited by the APA Task Force Report (2007) examined the sexual objectification of women in video games, television shows, magazines, music, and movies that are readily available to children and teenagers. For example, in magazines aimed at adolescent girls, there is a dominant focus on the importance of females attracting males by their physical appearance (e.g., Ward 2003). In addition, peer conversations, modeling, and teasing have been found to shape views about appearance, reinforce the thin ideal, and contribute to body dissatisfaction in girls aged nine and older (Clark and Tiggeman 2007; Dohnt and Tiggemann 2005). Parents' modeling and comments about their children's appearance or weight can also have similar effects, according to a study by McCabe et al. (2007) with preschool children, in which some of the children expressed concerns about losing weight.

Development and Effects of Self-Objectification

Cultivation theory (Gerbner et al. 1994) asserts that exposure to repeated themes and images over time leads a person to assimilate these themes into their view of the world. Accordingly, exposure to sexually-objectifying media has been linked with self-objectification, body surveillance, body shame, and anxiety over appearance (e.g., Grabe et al. 2008; Monro and Huon 2005), as well as with an acceptance of the normative belief that women are sexual objects (Peter and Valkenburg 2007; Ward 2002; Ward and Friedman 2006). In their study with seventh-grade girls, Grabe and Hyde (2009) found that exposure to music television videos (MTV), with their highly sexualized portrayals of women, was directly associated with self-objectification. In girls aged 6–12, various studies have found that exposure to media, particularly television, predicts appearance-related concerns, dieting awareness, and body dissatisfaction (e.g., Dohnt and Tiggemann 2006; Harrison and Hefner 2006). Further, it has been argued that pre-teens are particularly vulnerable to this barrage of society's messages because they are in the process of developing identities (Strasburger and Wilson 2002). At a time when self-esteem can be fragile, girls might be drawn toward certain sexualized roles that seem to promise popularity, attractiveness, maturity, power, and social acceptance (APA Task Force 2007).

As girls begin to think and act according to the images they have seen and the messages they have received on a daily basis that promote the sexualization of women and girls, they begin to participate in their own objectification: they begin to monitor their own bodies according to narrow societal standards of feminine physical attractiveness (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997; McKinley and Hyde 1996). Scores on measures of self-objectification indicate that some fifth-grade girls in the US, regardless of race, have already begun to self-objectify (Lindberg, et al. 2006; Harrison and Fredrickson 2003). Fifth-grade girls were the youngest tested in these studies, but additional studies have found that girls as young as age six are critical of their bodies, expressing body dissatisfaction and interest in dieting (Dohnt and Tiggemann 2006; Flannery-Schroeder and Chrisler 1996; Smolak and Levine 1994, 2001; Tanofsky-Kraff et al. 2004; Truby and Paxton 2002).

Several studies have found evidence for the negative effects of self-objectification on girls, although most research in this area has focused on adolescent girls or women. In girls aged ten and older, self-objectification has been associated with increased body shame and dieting behaviors (Lindberg et al. 2006), as well as with anxiety, disordered eating, and depression (Harrison and Fredrickson 2003). Self-objectification—with its heightened consciousness of one's own body—may also constrain girls' physical movements and impair motor performance; in a study by Fredrickson and Harrison (2005) with girls aged 10–17, girls who scored higher on a measure of self-objectification threw a softball less effectively and with a more restricted range of motion. In girls aged 13, self-objectification was found to be directly related to body dissatisfaction, dieting, anxiety, depressive symptoms, and decreased confidence in math ability (Grabe and Hyde 2009). Many studies have found similar results with women and older adolescent girls, as well as evidence for heightened risk of eating disorders, sexual dysfunction, depression, and low self-esteem among women who self-objectify (see Moradi and Huang 2008, or Tiggemann 2001, for a comprehensive review). Additional studies with young women have found that self-objectification may also disrupt cognitive functioning, as chronic attention to physical appearance reduces cognitive resources for other tasks (Fredrickson et al. 1998; Gapinski et al. 2003; Hebl et al. 2004). Considering the harmful effects of self-objectification, it is important to examine its development in girls and to address possible societal influences that might promote the objectification of girls.

Clothing as a Socializing Influence for Self-Objectification

We propose that clothing can function as an additional way to socialize girls into a sexually objectified role. Previous research on clothing suggests that it can function to help an individual express identity related to gender, age, and social class (Kaiser et al. 2001). In a recent study of adult women, it was found that clothing choice helped women negotiate feelings of self-confidence (Tiggemann and Lacey 2009). Starting in the 1950s specific clothing items were developed for girls who were not yet teens (Cook and Kaiser 2004). This "subteen" group of the 1950s was renamed "tween" by the 1990s in the fashion industry, and clothing was marketed specifically to this group (as were new media sources such as *Nickelodeon*, *Teen People*, and *Cosmo Girl*). As George (2007) argued, marketers cater to tween girls' vulnerabilities and desire to emulate older girls, and so the clothing sold to younger girls has become more mature—and more sexualizing. The sexualization of women in the culture has trickled down to some of the clothing for pre-teens, leading girls to confront the issue of sexual identity at a young age. According to Cook and Kaiser (2004), "Whether any particular tween girl embraces it, retreats from it or wavers somewhere in between, overt sexuality is a mode of self-presentation against (or within) which every female has to position herself" (p. 222).

While it is unclear to what extent clothing for girls is sexualizing, there is evidence that it is gender stereotyped. For example, a content analysis of children's Halloween costumes (Nelson 2000) found few gender-neutral costumes (9% of all costumes), and costumes for girls covered a relatively small range of roles. While many boys' costumes emphasized heroes' supernatural powers or skills, many girls' costumes exemplified the traditional model of feminine passive beauty: 16% of girls' costumes examined were Princesses, 12% were Beauty Queens, and 4% were Brides. In addition, fewer villain costumes were available to girls, and instead of being threatening or gruesome, many of these costumes emphasized the cute or erotic nature of the would-be villain. Nearly all clothing has culturally-coded gender markers, and clothing is one of the most significant indications of gender identity, even for very young children (Barnes and Eicher 1992; Pomerleau et al. 1990). As such, it is important to consider what kind of gender identities are being offered to girls in the selection of clothing that is available to them.

Merskin (2004) discussed the fashion and advertising industries' use of the infantilized, sexualized female model, in which the line between girls and women has become blurred. Adolescent-looking women are shown in provocative clothing or poses, while mature women are dressed or made up to look like young girls. Simulated innocence, vulnerability, and an element of the forbidden are mixed with sexual availability and willingness to create a woman-girl hybrid that is intended to elicit a man's gaze, fascination, and desire in order to sell a product. Considering the prevalence of this sexually objectified woman-girl in fashion and advertising as well as in pornography, it is of concern that mainstream girls' clothing may be following this trend as well. While there is anecdotal evidence to indicate that girls' clothing can indeed be sexualizing, with this content analysis, we carefully examined the prevalence and nature of this phenomenon.

Present Study

Content analysis is a procedure that gained popularity starting in the early 1900's, and has been used in a variety of different fields including psychology (Rudy et al. 2010). In this procedure, "specific message characteristics are systematically and objectively identified, with the purpose of making inferences about the contexts, causes, and effects of these messages," (Rudy et al. 2010, pp. 705–706). It has been a particularly useful tool to examine gender role-

related portrayals, and in that realm there has been much analysis of the media but relatively little of other cultural phenomena (Rudy et al. 2010).

The present study adds to the body of content analysis literature by examining the degree and nature of sexualization in girls' clothing. It was expected that there would be sexualization evident in some clothing items available to girls, but that sexualization would not be widespread or as obvious as in some of the examples provided by *Abercrombie*. Instead, based on findings in our pilot study, it was anticipated that much of the clothing with sexualizing characteristics would also have childlike characteristics. This might allow marketers, parents, or girls to make the argument that the clothing was not really sexualizing but "lighthearted and cute," as *Abercrombie Kids* tried to do with its pink polka-dotted "eye candy" underwear ("Abercrombie's sexy undies," 2002). Further, it was expected that sexualized clothing would be more prevalent in particular stores and among particular clothing items. For example, "tween" stores should be most likely to market sexualized clothing since they represent places where girls can "try on" the identity of a young woman. With respect to particular clothing items, Jeffreys (2005) argues that female clothing items function to show both women's difference from men and their deference to them, as sexual objects to men's desires. For example, a professional man might be expected to wear a suit that disguises his underlying body shape while a professional woman might be expected to wear a more form-fitting suit with a skirt that shows her legs and is accompanied by high-heeled shoes. Given this signaling function of clothing, we predicted that clothing items such as bras and dresses would be more likely to be sexualizing since they are associated distinctly with women.

Hypotheses

The major purpose of the study was to examine the prevalence of sexualized clothing among the stores. While most of the clothing items were expected to be child-like, it was expected that there would be some clothing items that mixed childlike and sexualizing characteristics and a much smaller proportion with only sexualizing characteristics. Two specific hypotheses were tested. 1) The proportion of sexualizing clothing versus childlike clothing was expected to vary by store type, such that "tween" stores would have the highest proportion of sexualizing clothing and children's stores the lowest. 2) The proportion of sexualizing clothing would also vary by clothing item, with clothing items that serve to differentiate between women and men (e.g., bras and dresses) more likely to have sexualizing characteristics than items not distinctive to women (e.g., jeans and tops).

Method

Stores Coded

In the present study, girls' clothing on the websites of 15 popular national stores in the US was examined for evidence of "sexualization." The stores were selected so as to represent a wide variety of types of stores. The stores were grouped into categories by a research team of undergraduate students and a faculty member (the third author) based on experiences and impressions of the stores that were validated by certain store characteristics. First, department stores that sell clothing as well as other goods were split into three different groupings based on the social class that they target. The category of high-end department stores included *Saks*, *Neiman Marcus,* and *Nordstrom*, which have higher-priced clothing items. The category of general department stores included *Kohl's* and *J.C. Penney*, which are geared towards middle-class consumers. The category of bargain/discount department stores included *Kmart, Target*, and *Walmart*. Stores that sell only clothing and other fashion items were grouped into one of three categories: children's stores that have no adult equivalent store, including *Children's Place* and *Gymboree*; "tween" stores that are limited to pre-teen and teen clothing, including *Aeropostale P.S., Abercrombie Kids*, and *Justice*; and stores that sell children's clothing along with clothing for teens and young adults in the same store, including *Old Navy* and *Gap Kids*, which were labeled specialty stores.

The younger children's stores had girls' clothing items from sizes 4 to 16, as did the bargain department stores. *Old Navy* girls' clothing started at size five, *Justice* started at six, and the remaining stores started at size seven, except for *Abercrombie Kids* which started at size eight. Generally the largest clothing size was 14 or 16, except at *Justice* where it was 20. It was not possible to completely control for the size of the clothing in the analysis given variability across the stores. However, these clothing sizes are all intended for children. Adolescent girls will typically wear "junior" sizes.

Coding Strategy

Over a period of 10 days in June, 2010, color pictures were printed of every clothing item on each store's website. The very small number of items on the sites that could not be classified as bras, dresses, shirts, shorts, skirts, swimsuits, tops, pants, or underwear was excluded. All other items were counted and then examined for both sexualizing and childlike characteristics.

While previous content analyses have coded media images of women as sexual objects and have occasionally included clothing as one part of their overall coding system,

they typically did not analyze the clothing in depth. For instance, one study simply asked coders to rate clothing worn by female video game characters in terms of its "revealing nature" and "sexiness," with minimal definition given (Miller and Summers 2007). Another study asked raters to code for the presence (yes or no) of "sexually revealing clothing," defined as: "any garment that was worn in order to enhance, exaggerate, call attention to, or accentuate the curves or angles of any part of the body… and which, by design, would arouse interest of physical intimacy from others" (Downs and Smith 2010). We found no similar studies that examined children's clothing and only one study that focused on creating a specific coding system for sexualizing clothing. White (1995) developed a content analysis technique to measure the sexiness of women's business clothing, providing scores for entire outfits worn by TV show characters. Her system focused primarily on how "revealing" each item was, either in terms of "absence" of clothing (via neckline or length) or "tightness" of clothing. She also coded red or black clothing as sexualizing, which we do as well. While our coding system incorporates the other studies' common focus on revealing clothing as sexualizing, it also details additional ways that a clothing item can be sexualizing. The present coding system was informed by previous research, but developed further through observation and discussion over a period of several months by the research team. Each group member examined many clothing items and brought them up for discussion to develop a common coding system that was piloted and then refined further. The first and third authors operationalized the final coding system based on this work.

An item of clothing was coded as sexualizing if it (a) revealed a sexualized body part, (b) emphasized a sexualized body part, (c) had characteristics associated with sexiness, and/or (d) had writing on it with sexualizing content. Sexualized body parts included the chest, waist, buttocks, and legs. For example, bikini swim suits were coded as revealing, since they exposed the waist and frequently part of the chest, and they were also coded as emphasizing if they clearly outlined each breast with triangular pieces of fabric. Back pants pockets that were highly decorated (e.g. with writing, sequins, butterflies, etc.) were coded as emphasizing, since they drew the eye's attention to the buttocks. Clothing items that were made of slinky lingerie-like material (especially if red, magenta, or black) or that featured leopard or zebra print were coded as having characteristics associated with sexiness. Similarly, a top that said "juicy" across the chest or a pair of underwear with "who needs credit cards?" printed on the front would be coded as having sexualizing writing.

Clothing could also be coded as childlike in print/color/pattern and/or in cut. For example, a top with a butterfly print design in pastel colors would be considered to have a childlike print. Likewise, a dress with frills on the bottom hem or a large decorative bow in front would be classified as having a childlike cut, as would a spaghetti-strap tank top that was attached to a white shirt layered underneath. It was also possible for one clothing item to have both sexualizing and childlike characteristics, such as a mini-skirt that had zebra print in tie-dye colors, or a low-cut dress with spaghetti straps that also had ballerina-like frills on the skirt.

After determining if a clothing item had sexualizing and/or childlike characteristics, clothing items were categorized into one of four categories. Clothing items that had at least one childlike characteristic and no sexualizing characteristics were coded as "childlike" (CH). Clothing items that had only sexualizing characteristics were coded as "definitely sexualizing" (DS), while those that had both sexualizing and childlike characteristics were coded as "ambiguously sexualizing" (AS). Some clothing items had no childlike characteristic but were also not sexualizing, and these were coded as "adultlike" (AD). An example of such an item would be a grey shirt-waist dress.

Validity of the Coding System

In order to test the validity of the coding system, a small study was conducted in which college students (N=31 women and seven men) in statistics and research methods classes rated the degree of sexiness of nine different clothing items, using a scale where 1 = *not at all sexy* and 7 = *very sexy*. They rated three bathing suits, three dresses, and three shirts, presented in a random order to them in small groups over a computer screen. For each type of clothing, a childlike (CH) item was presented, an ambiguously sexualizing (AS) item, and a definitely sexualizing (DS) item. The participants were told that these were clothing items available for girls up to size 14 (age 14). A one-way repeated measures ANOVA followed by Tukey's HSD test ($p<.05$) compared the ratings of the three types of shirts, and there was a significant difference with the CH shirt judged the least sexy (M=2.29, SD=1.18) compared to either the AS shirt (M=3.55, SD=1.18) or the DS shirt (M=3.97, SD=1.10), $F(2,74)=29.89$, $p<.001$, which were not judged different from one another. A similar pattern emerged for the dresses, with the CH dress judged less sexy (M=2.84, SD=1.20) then either the AS dress (M=4.03, SD=1.20) or the DS dress (M=4.26, SD=1.31), $F(2,74)=22.24$, $p<.001$, which were not judged different from one another. Finally, for the bathing suits the pattern was the same with M=2.76, SD=1.46 for the CH bathing suit, M=5.42, SD=1.38 for the AS bathing suit, and M=5.79, SD=1.38 for the DS bathing suit. This was a significant difference, $F(2,74)=117.75$, $p<.001$, and the Tukey's test

showed that the AS and the DS bathing suits were both judged sexier than the CH bathing suit.

Reliability of the Coding System

Initially, one trained coder (the first author) completed the coding for every item in every store. Then, inter-rater reliability for the coding system was checked on two levels: the decision about whether the item contained a sexualizing characteristic, and then into which of the four categories an item should be placed. A second trained coder (the third author) looked at the pictures of all the clothing items to note whether each had any sexualizing characteristics, and agreement with the first coder was very high at 98%. (A research group was consulted to resolve the few disagreements.) Similarly, the second trained coder classified items from six of the 15 stores to determine categorization, and there was agreement of 95% on the final coding of each clothing item. All disagreements involved differentiating between DS and AS categories, and in such cases the more conservative choice was chosen (AS instead of DS).

Results

Prevalence and Nature of Sexualizing Clothing

A total of 5,666 clothing items were examined. Across all stores, 226 clothing items were coded as DS (4%). Of these 226 clothing items, 172 (75.8%) revealed sexualized body parts, 105 (46.3%) emphasized sexualized body parts, 17 (7.5%) had characteristics associated with sexiness, and 1 (.4%) had sexy writing (note that these are not mutually exclusive categories). Similarly, of the 1,440 AS clothing items coded, 785 (54.5%) revealed sexualized body parts, 1018 (70.7%) emphasized sexualized body parts, 104 (7.2%) had characteristics associated with sexiness, and 27 (1.9%) had sexualized writing. The total number of AD items found was quite small at 83. Thus, while there was evidence of sexualization in girls' clothing it represented a minority of the clothing items available for girls.

Of all the clothing items coded as having sexualizing characteristics, the overwhelming majority (86.4%) had childlike characteristics as well and were thus classified as ambiguously sexualizing. These results were consistent across almost all stores, clothing types, and store types. The only exceptions were *Abercrombie Kids* and the pants clothing category, both of which had more DS items than AS items. In particular, at Children's Place, Gymboree, Kmart, and Justice, more than 95% of the items with sexualizing characteristics also had childlike characteristics. Of the clothing types examined, underwear, swimsuits, and dresses had childlike characteristics present in at least 90% of the items with sexualizing characteristics. Finally, at children's stores, bargain department stores, and higher-end department stores, more than 97% of all clothing with sexualizing characteristics also had childlike characteristics.

Hypothesis 1: Frequency of Sexualizing Clothing by Store Type

A chi-square analysis was conducted to see if the frequency of the four clothing categories varied by store type. The number and percent of items classified in each clothing categorization by store type are shown in Table 1. The chi-square was statistically significant, $X^2(15)=519.48$, $p<.001$, indicating an association between the variables that resulted in the following patterns: 1) high-end department stores had relatively more AD clothing compared to other store types; 2) tween stores had relatively more DS clothing and fewer CH clothing items than other types of stores; and 3) both bargain and children's stores had relatively fewer DS items than other stores. Across all of the store types, tween stores had the most DS items at 10.4%, while children's stores had the least with no items coded as DS. Although AD clothing items were rarely found in most stores, they comprised 7.7% of the items at high-end department stores.

Next we examined the association between the actual store and the categorization of the clothing items, and this chi-square was also statistically significant, X^2 (42)= 1630.74, $p<.01$. These data are presented in Table 2. *Abercrombie Kids* had relatively more DS clothing items than other stores (44% at *Abercrombie Kids* versus 4% overall). Further, if the DS and AS clothing items are added

Table 1 Percent and count of clothing items by categorization by type of store

Type store		Clothing categorization				
		CH	DS	AS	AD	Total
Bargain Dept Stores	Count	1209	24	446	1	1680
	Row%	72.0	.1	26.5	0	
Children's Stores	Count	464	0	104	0	568
	Row%	81.7	0	18.3	0	
General dept Stores	Count	529	19	191	1	740
	Row%	71.5	2.6	25.8	.1	
Higher-end Dept stores	Count	482	52	175	59	768
	Row%	62.8	.7	22.8	7.7	
Specialty Stores	Count	778	20	236	1	1035
	Row%	74.7	2.1	23.1	.1	
"Tween" Stores	Count	455	111	288	21	875
	Row%	57.0	10.4	30.7	1.9	
Total	Count	3917	226	0	83	5666
	Row%	69.1	4.0	25.4	1.5	

Categorization labels: *CH* childlike, *DS* definitely sexualizing, *AS* ambiguously sexualizing, *AD* adultlike

together, they represent 72% of *Abercrombie Kids*' clothing. Several stores had more than one-third of their items coded as either DS or AS, including *Neiman Marcus* (38%), *Nordstrom* (37.7%), *Justice* (36.4%) and *Kmart* (34%). On the other hand, at *Children's Place* only 10.2% of the items had sexualizing characteristics. *Saks* has relatively more AD clothing items than other stores, with 10.4% of clothing items categorized as AD.

Hypothesis 2: Frequency of Sexualizing Clothing by Clothing Item

A chi-square test of association examined the association between type of clothing and clothing categorization, and there was a significant association, X^2 (24)=113.5, $p<.01$. These data are shown in Table 3. The highest percent of DS items was found for bras (9.1%) and pants (9.1%), and there were no underwear categorized as DS. For AS items, the highest percent occurred among swimsuits (64.1%) and dresses (51.5%); the lowest percent was found for pants (8.2%) and underwear (14.2%). Adding together the frequency of AS and DS items, more than one-half of dresses (56.2%) and swimsuits (67.1%) had sexualizing characteristics and almost one half of bras (44.7%) had such characteristics. The clothing items least likely to have sexualizing characteristics included tops (18.1%), pants (17.3%), and underwear (14.2%). Thus, as hypothesized, clothing items distinctively associated with females were more likely to have sexualizing characteristics.

Table 2 Percent and count of clothing items by categorization by store

Store name		Clothing categorization				
		CH	DS	AS	AD	Total
Abercrombie kids	Count	42	99	63	21	225
	Row%	18.7	44.0	28.0	9.3	
Aeropostale P.S.	Count	167	3	47	0	217
	Row%	77.0	1.4	21.7	0	
Children's place	Count	245	0	79	0	324
	Row%	75.6	0	24.4	0	
Gap kids	Count	224	6	82	1	313
	Row%	71.6	1.9	26.2	.3	
Gymboree	Count	219	0	25	0	244
	Row%	89.8	0	10.2	0	
J. C. Penny	Count	139	11	50	0	200
	Row%	69.5	5.5	25.0	0	
Justice	Count	413	12	225	0	650
	Row%	63.5	1.8	34.6	0	
Kmart	Count	455	5	230	1	691
	Row%	65.8	.7	33.3	.1	
Kohl's	Count	390	8	141	1	540
	Row%	72.2	1.5	26.1	.2	
Neiman Marcus	Count	45	6	24	4	79
	Row%	57.0	7.6	30.4	5.1	
Nordstrom	Count	149	19	77	10	255
	Row%	58.4	7.5	30.2	3.9	
Old navy	Count	387	11	107	0	505
	Row%	76.6	2.2	21.2	0	
Saks	Count	288	27	74	45	434
	Row%	66.4	6.2	17.1	10.4	
Target	Count	555	14	133	0	702
	Row%	79.1	2.0	18.9	0	
Walmart	Count	199	5	83	0	287
	Row%	69.3	1.7	28.9	0	
Total	Count	3917	226	1440	83	5666
	Row%	69.1	4.0	25.4	1.5	

Categorization labels: *CH* childlike, *DS* definitely sexualizing, *AS* ambiguously sexualizing, *AD* adultlike

Discussion

Prevalence and Nature of Sexualizing Clothing

In this study we found evidence for a substantial, if not overwhelming, presence of sexualization in girls' clothing. A considerable percent (29.4%) of all the clothing items examined had sexualizing characteristics. Most of the sexualization in the clothing we examined was not as blatant as it was in the underwear with "Who needs credit cards…" written on the front, but we did find "cute butt

Table 3 Percent and count of clothing items by clothing categorization and type of clothing

Clothing type		Clothing categorization				
		CH	DS	AS	AD	Total
Bras	Count	115	19	74	0	208
	Row%	55.3	9.1	35.6	0	
Dresses	Count	294	35	384	33	746
	Row%	39.4	4.7	51.5	4.4	
Pants	Count	548	61	55	3	667
	Row%	82.2	9.1	8.2	.4	
Shorts	Count	608	36	152	0	796
	Row%	76.4	4.5	19.1	0	
Skirts	Count	169	20	43	3	235
	Row%	71.9	8.5	18.3	1.3	
Swimsuits	Count	167	15	325	0	507
	Row%	32.9	3.0	64.1	0	
Tops	Count	1894	41	387	44	2366
	Row%	80.1	1.7	16.4	1.8	
Underwear	Count	121	0	20	0	141
	Row%	85.8	0	14.2	0	
Total	Count	3916	227	1440	83	5666
	Row%	69.1	4.0	25.4	1.5	

Categorization labels: *CH* childlike, *DS* definitely sexualizing, *AS* ambiguously sexualizing, *AD* adultlike

sweatpants," thong-like underwear, push-up bras designed to create the look of breasts, leopard-print miniskirts, tiny string bikinis, ultra-short shorts, and other similar items. Sexualization most often occurred through clothing that emphasized a sexualized body part, such as shirts and dresses that were cut in such a way to create the look of breasts or pants pockets that called attention to the buttocks. The next most frequent form of sexualization was through revealing sexualized body parts, as do low cut shirts and bikini bathing suits.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 concerned the variability in sexualized clothing by type of store and type of clothing. It was found that the type of store was associated with the degree of sexualization such that tween stores were more likely to have sexualizing clothing, especially compared to children's stores. *Abercrombie Kids*, in particular, had the highest percent of sexualized clothing items, which is consistent with the media attention they have received. However, the tween stores were also more likely to start their clothing at larger sizes compared to children's stores, so it is not likely that very young girls are exposed to the most sexualized clothing which can be found in a tween store. For the second hypothesis, it was found that the type of clothing affected the amount of sexualization that occurred: swimsuits were the most likely to have sexualizing characteristics, followed by dresses. Since these clothing items help differentiate between women and men, it is perhaps not surprising that these items had more sexualizing characteristics than jeans or tops, which are commonly worn by both girls and boys. Jeffreys (2005) has indicated that clothing is often used to show women and men as different, and to portray women as sexual objects.

Also as predicted, the vast majority (86.4%) of clothing with sexualizing characteristics also had childlike characteristics. The considerable presence of clothing that mixed both sexualizing and childlike characteristics was found across almost all of the stores studied and may be relatively unique to girls' clothing. However in the existing literature, we were unable to find specific articulation, discussion, or study of this facet of girls' clothing. The current study presents the "ambiguously sexualizing" category as a new way to classify and evaluate girls' clothing in regards to sexualization.

We suggest that the co-occurrence of sexualizing and childlike characteristics makes the sexualization present in girls' clothing more covert and complicated. Conflicted parents might be persuaded to buy the leopard-print miniskirt if it was in a bright pink color or if it was tie-dyed. Advertisers have tried to use this ambiguity to argue, as *Abercrombie* did, that any "misrepresentation" of their pink "wink wink" underwear was merely "in the eye of the beholder" (*A&F girls* 2010). Similarly, *Ooh! La, La! Couture*, a high-end girls' clothing store, has been criticized for selling clothing that "has been likened to adult lingerie," particularly a leopard-print dress with a ballerina miniskirt trimmed with pink and black lace ("Disney child," 2010). The store argues that these critics have "grossly misinformed the public" and advertises their collection as "fun and funky, yet sweet and girly" (*Ooh! La, La! Courture* 2010).

However, our validity study challenges such marketers' claims: raters made no significant distinction between the ambiguously sexualizing items and the definitely sexualizing items in rating them for sexiness. Further studies are needed to investigate how parents and others perceive ambiguously sexualizing clothes. Nevertheless, even if "ambiguously sexualizing" clothes are not rated differently from clothes with only sexualizing characteristics, their presence is still of great importance for understanding cultural conceptions and portrayals of girls' sexuality. Sexuality has trickled down from women's clothing to mix with tutus and pastels, and the boundary between girls and women has become blurred and sexualized. Our results suggest that the trappings of sexiness are still visible beneath the bows or tie-dye colors, and we propose that dressing girls in this way could contribute to socializing them into the narrow role of the sexually-objectified woman.

Clothing and the Development of Self-Objectification

Since clothing is ubiquitous—on peers, on role models, on TV, in the stores, and on the girls themselves—it has the potential to function as an important socializing influence. Clothing has a unique role in our society as an indicator of identity and social status (Kaiser et al. 2001). In advertising and the media, clothing has become closely tied to attractiveness, popularity, and maturity. "Clothes make the girl, or so girls are led to believe, especially as they move into their preteen years. Clothing stores play to any nascent insecurity a girl may have about herself… luring girls with promises of being unique, being noticed, and fitting in" (Lamb and Brown 2006, pp. 26–37). Advertisers and clothing manufacturers have begun to target "tweens" (pre-adolescents) as potential consumers with increasing buying power (Lamb and Brown 2006). A number of studies have shown that buying certain clothing, particularly with popular brand names, is especially important to tweens who want to "fit in" (e.g., Simpson et al. 1998). While many girls have yet to develop a stable identity, clothing may provide an opportunity to "try on" new roles that have been held up as "cool" or desirable for girls and women (APA Task Force 2007).

Various studies have indicated that sexualizing clothing can influence how a woman is viewed by others, as well as how she thinks of herself and even acts. Women in

provocative clothing have been rated by observers as more flirtatious, seductive, promiscuous, and sexually experienced—and as less strong, determined, intelligent, and self-respecting (Gurung and Chrouser 2007; Koukounas and Letch 2001). Furthermore, seeing oneself in the mirror dressed according to a certain role may affect one's actions and thoughts about herself. This was vividly demonstrated in a study by Fredrickson et al. (1998), in which college students were asked to try on either a sweater or a swimsuit in front of a full-length mirror and then take a math test while wearing the swimsuit/sweater. The young women wearing swimsuits performed significantly worse on the math test than did the women wearing sweaters. In addition, among these young women, body shame and restrained eating were associated with higher scores on a measure of self-objectification as a consistent trait. Other studies found similar results with African-American, Latina, and Asian-American young women and with tests in logical reasoning and spatial skills (Hebl et al. 2004; Gapinski et al. 2003).

Girls as young as six or ten are unlikely to understand the full implications and possible disadvantages of "sexiness," and so cannot make fully-informed decisions about wearing clothing that hints at sexuality. They may see the rewards of wearing certain clothing—popularity, acceptance, feeling more mature—but they may be unable to understand the disadvantages of the role that these clothes represent. Girls may receive the message that sexiness is empowering, but rarely do girls learn about the potentially disempowering aspects of the sex object role (Murnen and Smolak 2011). Before girls are able to understand exactly what is happening, they may already be acting out or trying to live up to the role of the self-objectifying woman who agonizes over her body and her appearance in order to attract men (Smolak and Murnen 2011). They may have learned to evaluate and criticize their own bodies according to narrow standards of sexualized attractiveness, leaving them vulnerable to the host of negative effects that are associated with self-objectification (e.g., Lindberg et al. 2006; Harrison and Fredrickson 2003, Fredrickson and Harrison 2005).

Limitations and Future Directions

As a content analysis, this study is meant to inform and provide context for further investigation about the process and effects of self-objectification in young girls. Our results can be used to suggest clothing as a possible influence on girls that may lead to self-objectification, as well as to highlight directions for further research in this area. While our study focused solely on clothing available in store websites, future studies might be able to focus directly on the consumers—the girls themselves and their parents. In particular, investigating girls' attitudes towards sexualizing clothing would provide a more accurate picture about how (if) clothing fits into the process of socializing girls towards self-objectification. Is sexualizing clothing perceived as "cool" and "pretty," or is it just the norm? Do girls notice that anything is different about it? How do they feel when wearing it? What/who influences what clothes they wear? And even if such clothing items are available in many stores, do most girls actually like and wear them? Similarly, it would be interesting to explore parents' reactions to clothing with sexualizing characteristics. Do parents think the clothes are inappropriate at all, and if so, why do they buy them? Do they run into conflicts with their children over clothing? What limits do they set on what their child can and cannot wear?

Although we suggest that the availability and consumption of sexualizing clothing may contribute to the development of self-objectification in girls, further research is needed to test this hypothesis. Additional studies might explore any socializing influences (TV, magazines, peers, etc.) that precede or coincide with girls' preferences for sexualizing clothing, as well as any evidence of self-objectification (or its negative effects) that accompany or follow. For example, do girls who prefer sexualizing clothing also exhibit low self-esteem and experience body shame? Do they have more limited views of their own capabilities and future career goals? Do they spend more time on appearance and less on other pursuits?

In addition, further research with diverse populations and cultures is needed to examine the applicability of objectification theory as well as to examine the influence of clothing on the development and maintenance of self-objectification in women and girls. According to a meta-analysis by Moradi and Huang (2008), most research into objectification theory (and a substantial portion of the research cited in this paper) has been done with white college women of unspecified sexual orientation in the US, Australia, or Britain. However, the process of self-objectification as here conceptualized could be altered or even eliminated by many factors that vary according to culture or group, including: ideals of beauty and body shape, communication and propagation of these ideals, degree to which these ideals are internalized, and the power of other cultural dialogues that conflict with or support these ideals (e.g., government policy, religion, feminism, etc.). Wide variations exist on clothing and its meaning, both between and within cultures; for instance, the hijab worn by some Muslim women has been differently conceptualized as a sign of sexual objectification and as a sign of freedom from sexual objectification (Afshar 2008). Type of clothing and culture also appear to be associated with adherence to ideals about women's appearance: Dunkel et al. (2010) found that younger Muslim-

American women who wore non-Western clothing and a head veil were less likely to report pressure to attain the Western thin ideal standard of beauty, as compared to Muslim-American and non-Muslim women who wore Western-style clothing. Beyond religion and ethnic status, the influence of additional cultural variables, such as social-economic status, sexual orientation, nationality, gender, and age, must also be considered. Studies into the development of self-objectification in diverse populations represent a critical and promising field of inquiry.

Future studies might also improve upon shortcomings of the current study. First, since this content analysis only included summer clothing sold in June, it would be interesting to see if results would be similar for winter clothing, with fewer shorts and tank-tops being sold. In addition, because store websites typically offered each clothing item in their whole range of sizes available (generally 4–14 or 7–16), it was not possible to compare smaller and larger sizes of clothing. However, we did make sure that clothing items came in smaller sizes (size eight or less) as well before coding them as sexualizing, particularly with items such as padded bras and bikini swimming suits.

Examining the reliability and validity of the coding system is also important. We established high reliability in our coding, but not until after much study and training. Although we label the clothing "sexualizing," we do not know that the clothing actually is perceived as such by most observers. The perception of sexualization is very likely context- and observer-specific. Even though we coded bikinis as sexualizing, is the girl who wears them seen as more "sexy" than the girl who wears a tankini? We could not control for the size of clothing in our analysis, but it is likely that clothing is perceived as more sexualizing on a 12-year-old compared to an eight-year old. We also debated whether bras should be coded since they are not typically seen by others besides the person wearing them. However, girls' bras can create the look of breasts that aren't there, and there might be self-objectifying consequences of wearing a bra even though it cannot be seen by others. Other researchers interested in this topic might further study and refine the coding system.

Conclusion

We propose that sexualizing girls' clothing is an important socializing agent in which the social role of the objectified female is perhaps innocuously presented, "put onto" girls, associated with popularity and "coolness," and then eventually endorsed by the girls themselves. Clothing can function as both a contributor to and a sign of the process by which some girls begin to think and evaluate themselves according to a narrow, sexualized model of feminine attractiveness. Further research is needed to explore these hypotheses. We hope that our data on the prevalence of sexualization in girls' clothing as well as our coding system will be useful for future studies that investigate the development of self-objectification in young girls.

Acknowledgments Samantha M. Goodin is Kenyon College class of '10, Alyssa Van Denburg is Kenyon College class of '12, Sarah K. Murnen is a Professor of Psychology, and Linda Smolak is a Professor Emerita.

The authors would like to thank Genevieve Davison, Elaine Dicicco, James Dunckley, Nora Erickson, Kate Goldbaum, Jonela Kolasi, Kate Von Culin and James Weeks for their assistance in data collection.

References

A&f girls. (2010, June). Retrieved from http://www.abercrombiekids.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/division_10101_10851_12103_-1.

Abercrombie's sexy undies "slip". (2002, May 28). *CNN Money*. Retrieved from http://money.cnn.com/2002/05/22/news/companies/abercrombie/.

Afshar, H. (2008). Can I see your hair? Choice, agency, and attitudes: The dilemma of faith and feminism for Muslim women who cover. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 31*, 411–427. doi:10.1080/01419870701710930.

American Psychological Association, Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls. (2007). Report of the APA Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Retrieved from http://www.apa.org/pi/wpo/sexualization.html.

Barnes, R., & Eicher, J. B. (Eds.). (1992). *Dress and gender: Making and meaning in cultural contexts*. New York: Berg.

Clark, L., & Tiggeman, M. (2007). Sociocultural influences and body image in 9- to 12-year-old girls: The role of appearance schemas. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 36*, 76–86. doi:10.1207/s15374424jccp3601_8.

Cook, D. T., & Kaiser, S. B. (2004). Betwixt and be tween: Age ambiguity and the sexualization of the female consuming subject. *Journal of Consumer Culture, 4*, 203–227. doi:10:1177/1469540504043862.

Disney child star's clothing line deemed too racy by some. (2010, February 8). *Fox News*. Retrieved from http://www.foxnews.com/entertainment/2010/02/04/critics-slam-disney-child-stars-clothing-line-racy/.

Dohnt, H. K., & Tiggemann, M. (2005). Peer influences on body dissatisfaction and dieting awareness in young girls. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology, 23*, 103–116. doi:10.1348/026151004X20658.

Dohnt, H., & Tiggemann, M. (2006). The contribution of peer and media influences to the development of body satisfaction and self-esteem in young girls: A prospective study. *Developmental Psychology, 42*, 929–936. doi:10.1037/0012-1649.42.5.929.

Downs, E., & Smith, S. L. (2010). Keeping abreast of hypersexuality: A video game character content analysis. *Sex Roles, 62*, 721–733. doi:10.1007/s11199-009-9637-1.

Dunkel, T. M., Davidson, D., & Quarashi, S. (2010). Body satisfaction and pressure to be thin in younger and older Muslim and non-Muslim women: The role of Western and non-Western dress preferences. *Body Image, 7*, 56–65. doi:10.1016/j.bodyim.2009.10.003.

Flannery-Schroeder, E. C., & Chrisler, J. C. (1996). Body esteem, eating attitudes, and gender-role orientation in three age groups of children. *Current Psychology, 15*, 235–248. doi:10.1007/BF02686880.

Fredrickson, B. L., & Roberts, T. (1997). Objectification theory: Toward understanding women's lived experiences and mental health risks. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 21*, 173–206. doi:10.1111/j.1471-6402.1997.tb00108.x.

Fredrickson, B. L., & Harrison, K. (2005). Throwing like a girl: Self-objectification predicts adolescent girls' motor performance. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 29*, 79–101.

Fredrickson, B. L., Roberts, T., Noll, S. M., Quinn, D. M., & Twenge, J. M. (1998). That swimsuit becomes you: Sex differences in self-objectification, restrained eating, and math performance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75*, 269–284. doi:10.1111/j.1471-6402.1997.tb00108.x.

Gapinski, K. D., Brownell, K. D., & LaFrance, M. (2003). Body objectification and "fat talk": Effects on emotion, motivation, and cognitive performance. *Sex Roles, 48*, 377–388. doi:10.1023/S:1023516209973.

George, L. (2007, January 1). Eight-year-olds in fishnets, padded "bralettes" and thong panties: Welcome to the junior miss version of raunch culture. *Maclean's*, *119*, 37–40.

Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., & Signorielli, N. (1994). Growing up with television: The cultivation perspective. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (pp. 17–41). Hillsdale: Erlbaum.

Grabe, S., & Hyde, J. S. (2009). Body objectification, MTV, and psychological outcomes among female adolescents. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 39*, 2840–2858. doi:10.1111/j.1559-1816.2009.00552.x.

Grabe, S., Ward, L. M., & Hyde, J. S. (2008). The role of the media in body image concerns among women: A meta-analysis of experimental and correlational studies. *Psychological Bulletin, 134*, 460–476. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.134.3.460.

Gurung, R. A., & Chrouser, C. J. (2007). Predicting objectification: Do provocative clothing and observer characteristics matter? *Sex Roles, 57*, 91–99. doi:10.1007/s11199-007-9219-z.

Harrison, K., & Fredrickson, B. L. (2003). Women's sports media, self-objectification, and mental health in Black and White adolescent females. *The Journal of Communication, 53*, 216–232. doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.2003.tb02587.x.

Harrison, K., & Hefner, V. (2006). Media exposure, current and future body ideals, and disordered eating among preadolescent girls: A longitudinal panel study. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 35*, 155–163. doi:10.1007/s10964-005-9008-3.

Hebl, M. R., King, E. G., & Lin, J. (2004). The swimsuit becomes us all: Ethnicity, gender, and vulnerability to self-objectification. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 30*, 1322–1331. doi:10.11777/0146167204264502.

Jeffreys, S. (2005). *Beauty and misogyny: Harmful cultural practices in the West*. New York: Routledge.

Kaiser, S., Chandler, J., & Hammidi, T. (2001). Minding appearances in female academic culture. In A. Guy, E. Green, & M. Bannin (Eds.), *Through the wardrobe* (pp. 117–136). Oxford: Berg.

Koukounas, E., & Letch, N. M. (2001). Psychological correlates of perception of sexual intent in women. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 141*, 443–456. doi:10.1080/00224540109600564.

Lamb, S., & Brown, L. M. (2006). *Packaging girlhood: Rescuing our daughters from marketer's schemes*. New York: St Martin's.

Lindberg, S. M., Hyde, J. S., & McKinley, N. M. (2006). A measure of objectified body consciousness for preadolescent and adolescent youth. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 30*, 65–76. doi:10.1111/j.1471-6402.2006.00263.x.

McCabe, M. P., Ricciardelli, L. A., Stanford, J., Holt, K., Keegan, S., & Miller, L. (2007). Where is all the pressure coming from? Messages from mothers and teachers about preschool children's appearance, diet and exercise. *European Eating Disorders Review, 15*, 221–230.

McKinley, N. M., & Hyde, J. S. (1996). The objectified body consciousness scale: Self-objectification, body shame, and disordered eating. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 22*, 623–636. doi:10.1111/j.1471-6402.1996.tb00467.x.

Merskin, D. (2004). Reviving Lolita? A media literacy examination of sexual portrayals of girls in fashion advertising. *The American Behavioral Scientist, 48*, 119–128. doi:10.1177/0002764204267257.

Miller, M. K., & Summers, A. (2007). Gender differences in video game characters' roles, appearances, and attire as portrayed in video game magazines. *Sex Roles, 57*, 733–742. doi:10.1007/s11199-007-9307-0.

Monro, F., & Huon, G. (2005). Media-portrayed idealized images, body shame, and appearance anxiety. *The International Journal of Eating Disorders, 38*, 85–90. doi:10.1002/eat.20153.

Moradi, B., & Huang, Y. (2008). Objectification theory and psychology of women: A decade of advances and future directions. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 32*, 377–398. doi:10.1111/j.1471-6402.2008.00452.x.

Murnen, S. K., & Smolak, L. (2011). I'd rather be a famous fashion model than a famous scientist: The rewards and costs of internalizing sexualization. In E. Zurbriggen and T.A. Roberts (Eds.). *The sexualization of girls and girlhood*. Oxford University Press.

Nelson, A. (2000). The pink dragon is female: Halloween costumes and gender markers. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 24*, 137–144. doi:10.1111/j.1471-6402.2000.tb00194.x.

Ooh! La, La! Couture. (2010). Retrieved from http://www.oohlalacouture.com/about.shtml.

Paul, P. (2005). *Pornified: How pornography is transforming our lives, our relationships, and our families*. New York: Times Books.

Peter, J., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2007). Adolescents' exposure to a sexualized media environment and their notions of women as sex objects. *Sex Roles, 56*, 381–395. doi:10.1007/s11199-006-9176-y.

Pomerleau, A., Bolduc, D., Malcuit, C., & Cossette, C. (1990). Pink or blue: Gender stereotypes in the first two years of life. *Sex Roles, 22*, 359–367. doi:10.1007/BF00288339.

Reichert, T., & Carpenter, C. (2004). An update on sex in magazine advertising: 1983 to 2003. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 81*, 823–837. doi:10.1177/0887302X08327087.

Rudy, R. M., Popova, L., & Linz, D. G. (2010). The context of current content analysis of gender roles: An introduction to a special issue. *Sex Roles, 62*, 705–720. doi:10.1007/s11199-010-9807-1.

Simpson, L., Douglas, S., & Schimmel, J. (1998). Tween consumers: Catalog clothing purchase behavior. *Adolescence, 33*, 637–645.

Smolak, L., & Levine, M. P. (1994). Critical issues in the developmental psychopathology of eating disorders. In L. Alexander-Mott & D. B. Lumsden (Eds.), *Understanding eating disorders: Anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and obesity* (pp. 37–60). Philadelphia: Taylor & Francis.

Smolak, L., & Levine, M. P. (2001). Body image in children. In J. K. Thompson & L. Smolak (Eds.), *Body image, eating disorders, and obesity in youth: Assessment, prevention and treatment* (pp. 41–66). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Smolak, L., & Murnen, S. K. (2011). The sexualization of girls and women as antecedents of objectification. In R. M. Calogero, S. Tantleff-Dunn, & J. K. Thompson (Eds.), *Self-objectification in women: Causes, consequences, and counteractions* (pp. 53–75). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Stankiewicz, J. M., & Rosselli, F. (2008). Women as sex objects and victims in print advertisements. *Sex Roles, 58*, 579–589. doi:10.1007/s11199-007-9359-1.

Strasburger, V. C., & Wilson, B. J. (2002). *Children, adolescents, and the media*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Tanofsky-Kraff, M., Yanovski, S. Z., Wilfley, D. E., Marmarosh, C., Morgan, C. M., & Yanovski, J. A. (2004). Eating-disordered behaviors, body fat, and psychopathology in overweight and normal-weight children. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 72*, 53–61. doi:10.1037/0022-006X.72.1.53.

Tiggemann, M. (2001). Mental health risks of self-objectification: A review of the empirical evidence for disordered eating, depressed mood, and sexual dysfunction. In R. M. Calogero, S. Tantleff-Dunn, & J. K. Thompson (Eds.), *Self-objectification in women: Causes, consequences, and counteractions* (pp. 139–159). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Tiggemann, M., & Lacey, C. (2009). Shopping for clothes: Body satisfaction, appearance investment, and functions of clothing among female shoppers. *Body Image, 6*, 285–291. doi:10.1016/j.bodyim.2009.07.002.

Truby, H., & Paxton, S. J. (2002). Development of the children's body image scale. *The British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 41*, 185–203. doi:10.1348/014466507X251261.

Walmart yanks pink "credit card" panties off racks. (2007, December 12). *FoxNews.com*, Retrieved from http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,316580,00.html.

Ward, L. M. (2002). Does television exposure affect emerging adults' attitudes and assumptions about sexual relationships? Correlational and experimental confirmation. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence, 31*, 1–15. doi:10.1023/A:1014068031532.

Ward, L. M. (2003). Understanding the role of entertainment media in the sexual socialization of American youth: A review of empirical research. *Developmental Review, 23*, 347–388. doi:10.1016/S0273-2297(03)00013-3.

Ward, L. M., & Friedman, K. (2006). Using TV as a guide: Associations between television viewing and adolescents' sexual attitudes and behavior. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 16*, 133–156. doi:10.1111/j.1532-7795.2006.00125.

White, S. E. (1995). A content analytic technique for measuring the sexiness of women's business attire in media presentations. *Communication Research Reports, 12*, 178–185.