

Targeting Women

Direct to Consumer Advertising in
Women's Magazines

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Direct to Consumer Advertising (DTCA)

- ◉ Prescription drugs
- ◉ Aimed at consumers
- ◉ Only allowed in the United States and New Zealand
- ◉ Loose FDA regulation
- ◉ Billions of dollars spent on ads

Research Question

- How does DTCA directed toward women of different age groups vary in content and frequency?

Thesis

- This study shows an increase in ad frequency and DTCA variety as the average age of readership increases.
- Age is also related to both the text and image content of the ads.

Literature Review

- ◉ Benefits of DTCA
- ◉ Detriments of DTCA
- ◉ Women
- ◉ Age

Literature Review

● Benefits of DTCA

- > Increase awareness
- > Widespread communication
- > De-stigmatization
- > Empowers consumer
- > Increase communication with doctor

- (Sokol et al. 2010, Mastin et al. 2007, Sufrin and Ross 2008)

Literature Review

◉ Detriments of DTCA

- Only advertise expensive drugs
- Limited, misleading information
- Promote lifestyle, not facts
- Health focus on drugs
- Over prescribing
- Strain on doctor-patient relationship
- Creation of new customers

- (Sokol et al. 2010, Mastin et al. 2007, Sufrin and Ross 2008, Abel et al. 2008, Fenter 2006, Grow et al. 2012, Metzl 2003, Blose and Mack 2012)

Literature Review

◉ Women

- > Focus on women
- > Use of stereotypes
- > Disease constructed around gender
- > Guilt and cultural expectations
- > Medicalization of normal experiences

- (Sokol et al. 2010, Fisher and Ronald 2010, Chananie 2005, Metzl 2003)

Literature Review

● Age

- > Perception of information
- > Older groups use more medical care
 - Vulnerability to adverse effects
- > Moms and wives targeted
- > Depression less stigmatized in younger women

- (Ball et al. 2012, Sokol et al. 2010, DeLorme and Huh 2009, Carter and Datti 2006)

Social Construction Theory

- ◉ Process of constructing of reality
- ◉ Social context
- ◉ Social interaction
- ◉ No inherent meaning
- ◉ Construction and reconstruction
- ◉ Truth relative to each person

Methodology

- Content analysis
- Four women's lifestyle magazines chosen
 - > Represent different age groups
- 21 issues analyzed for each magazine
 - > 7 from 2010, 2011, 2012
- Coded for type of drug, appeals, image content
 - > Bell et al. 2000, coding for appeals

Methodology

● Appeals

- > Effectiveness
 - Effective, reliable, powerful, prevents
- > Social-Psychological Enhancements
 - Normal, active, happiness, confidence
- > Ease of Use
 - Easy, fast, gentle, simple to use
- > Safety
 - Safe, non-addictive, works naturally, no drowsiness

Methodology

◉ Image content

- > People present in ad
 - Women, men, children
- > Race and age
- > Activity of the women
- > Emotional state

◉ Key Words

- > Proven, safety, ask your doctor, diet, exercise

Findings

- ◉ Drug and ad frequency
 - > Ad frequency increases with age
 - > Variety of drugs advertised increases with age
 - > Antidepressants most frequently advertised

Table 1: Frequency of Conditions Represented in DTCA

| | <i>Seventeen</i> | <i>Cosmo</i> | <i>O Magazine</i> | <i>Good Housekeeping</i> | Total |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Asthma | 0 | 5 (25%) | 5 (6%) | 5 (3%) | 15 (6%) |
| Beauty Concerns | 0 | 0 | 12 (16%) | 7 (5%) | 19 (7%) |
| Osteoporosis | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 (8%) | 12 (5%) |
| High Cholesterol | 0 | 0 | 4 (5%) | 13 (9%) | 17 (7%) |
| Fibromyalgia | 0 | 0 | 9 (12%) | 11 (7%) | 20 (8%) |
| Depression | 0 | 5 (25%) | 15 (19%) | 24 (16%) | 44 (17%) |
| Overactive Bladder | 0 | 0 | 6 (8%) | 7 (5%) | 13 (5%) |
| ADHD | 0 | 0 | 2 (3%) | 6 (4%) | 8 (3%) |
| Contraception | 0 | 10 (50%) | 0 | 0 | 10 (4%) |
| Acne | 10 (100%) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 (4%) |
| Rheumatoid Arthritis | 0 | 0 | 2 (3%) | 13 (9%) | 15 (6%) |
| COPD | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 (9%) | 14 (5%) |
| Vaginal Dryness | 0 | 0 | 8 (10%) | 6 (4%) | 14 (5%) |
| Diabetes | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 (2%) | 4 (2%) |
| Atrial Fibrillation | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 (3%) | 5 (2%) |
| Other | 0 | 0 | 14 (18%) | 24 (16%) | 38 (15%) |
| Total | 10 (100%) | 20 (100%) | 77 (100%) | 151 (100%) | 258 (100%) |

Findings

● Appeals

- > Effectiveness appeals more frequent in higher age groups
- > Social-Psychological appeals more frequent in lower age groups

Table 2. Average Ad Frequency and Average Appeal Frequency

| Magazine | Average # of Ads per Issue | Avg. Effectiveness Appeals per Ad | Avg. Socio-Psychological Enhancement Appeals per Ad | Proportion of Effectiveness to Socio-Psychological Enhancement Appeals |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| <i>Good Housekeeping</i> | 7.190 | 1.88 | 0.305 | 6.16 |
| <i>Oprah Magazine</i> | 3.667 | 1.66 | 0.211 | 7.87 |
| <i>Cosmo</i> | 0.952 | 1.44 | 0.389 | 3.70 |
| <i>Seventeen</i> | 0.476 | 0.20 | 0.50 | 0.40 |

Findings

◉ Image Content

- > Presence of men highest in oldest age group
- > Presence of children highest in oldest age group

Table 3: People Present in the Advertisements

| | <i>Seventeen</i> | <i>Cosmo</i> | <i>O Magazine</i> | <i>Good Housekeeping</i> |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Women Present | 10 (100%) | 9 (45%) | 56 (73%) | 105 (68%) |
| Men Present | 0 | 2 (10%) | 5 (7%) | 26 (17%) |
| Children Present | 0 | 1 (5%) | 3 (4%) | 17 (11%) |

Analysis

◉ Ad Frequencies

- Affect on construction of health
 - Relevant diseases
 - Underrepresentation of prevalent diseases
- Reinforces gender roles

Analysis

◉ Appeal Frequencies

- > Younger groups
 - Emphasis on social enhancements
- > Older groups
 - Emphasis on effectiveness

Analysis

- ◉ Image content
 - > Reinforces gender roles
 - Medication for children
 - > Most ads show no activity

Conclusion

- Relationship between age and frequency/content of DTCA
- Social implications
 - > DTCA could skew health construction
 - > Reinforce gender roles

Questions?