CULTURE OF THINNESS OR PROTECTIVE EFFECT: HOW DOES AFRICAN AMERICAN BODY SIZE PERCEPTION AFFECT DATING ACTIVTIES?

by

CHERI MODZELEWSKI

(Under the Direction of Ron Simons)

ABSTRACT

Attractiveness level is an important aspect of dating in Western culture. Many previous researchers have shown that beauty is rewarded while those who do not follow the typical ideal may be disadvantaged. This typical ideal is the predominately white, middle class notion of thin as beautiful for women and muscular as ideal for men. Many researchers suggest this ideal is so prevalent that it dominates as the standard of beauty for all. However, other researchers say that bicultural groups like African Americans may through their unique cultural experience diffuse some of the effects these standards of beauty have on dating activities. Using this debate, this study seeks to ascertain how African-Americans young adults' body perception affects their likelihood of dating. Results show that there is a possible protection effect because females who perceive themselves as underweight are the least likely to be dating or in a serious relationship. Results for males are less conclusive and require future research.

INDEX WORDS: Body Size, Body Image, Dating, African-Americans, Adolescents/Young Adults, Culture of Thinness, Beauty Ideals.

CULTURE OF THINNESS OR PROTECTIVE EFFECT: HOW DOES AFRICAN AMERICAN BODY SIZE PERCEPTION AFFECT DATING ACTIVTIES?

by

CHERI MODZELEWSKI

B.A., Furman University, 2003

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2008

CULTURE OF THINNESS OR PROTECTIVE EFFECT: HOW DOES AFRICAN AMERICAN BODY SIZE PERCEPTION AFFECT DATING ACTIVTIES?

by

CHERI MODZELEWSKI

Major Professor:	Ron Simons
Committee:	Joyce Bell Dawn Robinson

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
May 2008

DEDICATION

To my family: Mom, Dad, Angela, Jessica, and Brian.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are several people I would like to thank. Thanks to my advisor, Ron Simons, for trusting in my abilities and giving me the extra push when I needed it. I am grateful for his helpful feedback, expert knowledge, and the patience he has shown throughout this process. I would also like to thank my remaining committee members, Dr. Joyce Bell and Dr. Dawn Robinson, for their encouragement and their many insights on how to improve my research. Also, I am appreciative of Ellen Granberg for her expert knowledge and guidance during this process. To Karlo Lei, thank you for all your technical and analytical support.

Lastly, special thanks to my family. I could not have done this without you. Your love and support help guide me through every adventure. Thanks to mom and dad for the encouragement to keep going when I doubted myself, and particularly to dad for his invaluable feedback.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

1. INTRODUCTION

As Americans grow larger, the effect of body weight and body image on daily activities is a growing concern. Over the last 25 years, levels of obesity have steadily increased. Recent years show a more consistent prevalence, which is about 34% of U.S. adults 20 years of age or older (Center for Disease Control 2007). In a society that places an extreme emphasis upon physical attractiveness, a person's size matters. Being physically attractive has been shown to increase an individual's life opportunities in many ways whether it be in the work market, the super market, or the dating market (Hatfield and Sprecher 1986). Many researchers in the area of body image suggest that the sociocultural environment that we live in affects men and women's body image and satisfaction levels. The sociocultural perspective emphasizes the way cultural values influence individual values and behavior. So definitions of physical attractiveness in any culture can affect behavior and the interactions of its members. While all cultures value attractiveness, Western culture especially places heavy emphasis on its conceptions of beauty as a standard one must achieve. Western or American culture idolizes thinness and various industries such as weight loss, cosmetics, exercise, and cosmetic surgery ensure that people continue to strive for the ideal (Orbach 1993). Despite the growing number of people who are overweight or obese, obesity remains stigmatized. Weightism seems to be one of the few remaining kinds of discrimination not dealt with in our society. From a young age, negative attitudes about being overweight are instilled through Western culture (Cramer and Steinwert 1998; Musher-Eizenman, Holub, Barnhart Miller, Goldstein, and Edwards-Leeper 2004). Youth begin to understand not only how to perceive others but how to perceive themselves. As

discussed later, youth are taught what acceptable standards of beauty are and learn to compare themselves to it (Cash and Pruzinsky 2002). A sense of body image is created and used along with other self standards in interpreting and reacting to every day situations and activities.

While America does have one dominant culture, it has been called a melting pot for good reason. Many people who live in America retain at least a part of their cultural heritage. By holding on to another culture, these groups live a bicultural lifestyle. One well-known group believed to be living a bicultural life is the African-American community. Bell (1990) suggests that black youth are socialized biculturally and thus must contend with two social worlds. African-American culture includes the cultural, philosophical, and historical tradition of the African-American people while mainstream culture focuses more on a white, middle class belief system (Root 1990).

Debate continues as to which cultural influence has the greater impact upon the values and behaviors of these individuals. Some researchers suggest that African-American culture, with its structural and interactional factors, serves as a protective barrier from some of the harsher, stigmatized values of the dominant culture (Cash and Henry 1995; Thompson, Rafiroiu, and Sargent 2003; Evans and McConnell 2003). For example, Granberg et al. (2006) found that racial socialization, as well as living in a homogeneously black area, helped larger females counteract negative self-perceptions. However, other researchers believe that the mainstream culture's idealization of attractiveness is having a powerful impact in general and is outweighing any effects that subcultures might be having. Cachelin et al (1998) studied four different ethnic groups and found no differences in rates of attractiveness for the female or male body. In addition, Allison et al. (1993) could only explain 2.1% of the variance in body preferences through ethnic differences. African American males and females, in particular, are important to

study because according to the Center for Disease Control (2007) they have the largest amount of obesity compared to other racial groups.

Because of the increasing concerns over body image and body weight in our society, there is a growing need to assess how body image affects daily activities. One of the most common activities, starting at adolescence and continuing on through various life stages, is dating. Dating is an activity often initiated by attraction. One of the first things people consider when looking for a mate is the other person's attractiveness level. Attractiveness often creates opportunity for dating, but people's perceptions of themselves are often reflected in their self-confidence and positive self-image and that may help to keep the dating process going. People have many different reasons for dating, including wanting to find a mate, seek companionship, or just to have fun. No matter what their reason is, people continue to date until they achieve their purpose in dating. Often dating consumes a great number of years of people's lives. Today, with adolescents dating earlier, marriage being put off until later, and a high divorce rate, dating consumes more years of our lives than it has previously. With adolescence as the time for identity development and the average age of marriage shifting to late 20s for males and females, studying young adults in their late teens and early twenties seems ideal for capturing the height of dating activity (Schoen and Standish 2001).

So, utilizing the bicultural debate related to attractiveness as a backdrop, this study explores how body image, that is how a person perceives his/her own body, affects dating activities for African-American young adults, both female and male.

2. ATTRACTIVENESS

Some might say that there is a biological, health component to beauty standards. Evolutionary psychologists suggest that standards of attractiveness are related to reproductive abilities and are very important for mate selection. Men and women are attracted to the opposite sex based on characteristics that show abilities to produce and care for children. Researchers suggest that, through the evolutionary process, it has been ingrained in us that certain characteristics are important in a mate (Braun and Bryan 2006). Women should be youthful and beautiful because this is a sign of health and fertility while ideal men show that they can provide through cues like social status, dominance, and earnings (Buss, 1988; Buss & Barnes, 1986; Braun and Bryan 2006). This perspective will be discussed later when the focus of this paper turns to mate selection.

Even with some biological evidence of attractiveness, anthropologists who study attractiveness across cultures suggest variations occur across and within cultures Hatfield and Sprecher 1986). Therefore, it can be said that there is a sociocultural element as well and that ideal body types may be socially constructed by a society's culture (Jackson 2002). Current dominant, white culture suggests that for a female to be beautiful she should be thin and for a man to be handsome he should be slender and muscular. However, idealization of thinness has often been seen as an evolutionary process, occurring particularly in the last century. From the thin boyish figure of the Flapper to the curvaceous silhouette of Marilyn Monroe back to the stick figure of Twiggy, America in the past has developed many different, acceptable beauty ideals (Hatfield and Sprecher 1986). The male body has also gone through a transformation.

Starting in the Greek and Roman days, the male body was idealized in the artistic sense. In the mid-nineteenth century, the artistic focus shifted to females, and it was not until the 1980s that the male body reemerged into mainstream Western media. Initially the photographs of the male body were marketed to gay men. However, since the 1990s, commercial images of the male muscular physique commonly found in advertising and thus portray the ideal male body type (Grogan 2007).

Across cultures the social construction of thinness and beauty shifts. In poor countries, being heavy is a sign of health and prosperity while thinness means malnourished and impoverished. In Latin and South America, parts of Asia, and the Pacific Islands, larger body size was also embraced positively as a sign of health and wealth. However, research shows that contact with the Western standard is effecting relations to body standards. In a study by Furnham and Alibhai (1983), African women who lived in Kenya and African women who had migrated to Britain from Kenya were both asked to look at different body figure drawings of women. Women from Kenya (who had not migrated) rated the larger figures more positively then the women who went to Britain, suggesting a cultural shift in standards of appearance.

While many anthropologists suggest that there is no universal standard of beauty, research from the early 1990s forward show that slenderness is becoming a common, recurring beauty ideal across more and more cultures. One example is a study Negrao and Cordas did in 1996. In looking at South American, South Korean, and Japanese women they found that whereas originally thinness indicated disease and poverty, these women now related thinness to the Western ideal of beauty. So, through mass media and globalization, the idealization of thinness has the ability to spread throughout many cultures.

Cultural Ideal of Thinness for Women

Western countries are dominated by the ideal of thinness. From magazine covers to various types of commercial messages, men and women who are successful look a certain way. Women are dangerously thin while men have muscular, athletic, slim physiques (Thompson and Stice 2001). Women, and girls in particular, are bombarded with these images from the media, parents, and peers. Many different industries from cosmetics to diet systems and products have profited from the American desire to be thin. In our society, notions of thinness are cherished and attributed positive stereotypes while being overweight is stigmatized.

This cultural ideal has not always been so prevalent. Biologically women are built to weigh more than men. According to Garner and associates (1980), women may have twice as much fat on their bodies as men. This is due to the fact that during certain stages of life, like puberty, pregnancy, and menopause, women increase their amount body fat. Evolutionary psychologists would suggest that, in the past, bigger women were more desirable because extra body fat was a sign of fertility and health.

While thinness has not always been the standard of beauty, Roberta Seid (1989) suggests several positive aspects of thinness as the new cultural ideal. First, thinness implies activity. Women are no longer passive, but instead lead active lives. Attached to this is the thought that those who are thin appear more natural and healthy. Second, thinness de-emphasizes physical differences between men and women. Androgyny helps to curtail ideas of biology implying destiny. During a time when women are entering the work force, minimizing sexual differences is beneficial. Lastly, this new beauty reflects the ability to take control of your own body and, as an extension, your whole life. Hesse-Biber (1996) also emphasizes the ideal of thinness as a means of control over family, work, and physical self.

However, in a country where statistics about obesity show that these body sizes abound, the likelihood of meeting this cultural ideal of thinness is slim and unrealistic. Seid (1994) suggests that only the very thinnest 5-10% of Americans can actually achieve this thin, supermodel ideal prevalent in America. Yet women, particularly white middle class women, still strive to meet this ideal (Lisa Williamson 1998).

Muscular Ideal for Males

Social pressure to look good and mold to the ideal began in the 1980s for men. Through cultural images and advertising, the shape and position of men altered. Frank Mort (1988) suggested, "Young men are being sold images which rupture traditional icons of masculinity. They are stimulated to look at themselves—and other men—as objects of desire" (194). Researchers suggest that beginning in the 1980s and continuing through the 1990s and 2000s, there has been a change in definitions of male masculinity. Chapman (1988) states:

> "the new man represents…an adaptation in masculinity. Men change, but only to hold on to power, not relinquish it. The combination of feminism and social change have produced a fragmentation in male identity by questioning its assumptions, but the effect of the emergence of the new man has been to reinforce the existing power structure, by producing a hybrid masculinity which is better able and more suited to retain control" (235).

Studies of toys and magazines also show that the body size ideal has changed for men in the last few decades. Like Barbie, GI Joe has transformed his body shape. GI Joe has become more muscular and chest heavy (Pope et al. 1999). An analysis of *Play Girl* magazine also shows that the ideal man has become slender but muscular. While body weight generally stayed

the same, the male physique became more chiseled and defined during the last few decades (Leit et al. 2001).

Benefits of Beauty/Costs of Ugly

Beauty affects daily interactions and people's perceptions at all ages. Attractive children are more popular, more academically competent, and better adjusted. On the other hand, children who are overweight are stigmatized. Other children are not as willing to play with overweight children and in a study where they created drawings of people, the children assigned more negative adjectives to the overweight pictures (Cash 1990)**.**

These prejudices that begin in childhood continue into adulthood. Overweight people are stereotyped as lazy, less intelligent, less hardworking or successful as well as less athletic or popular compared to slim people (Lewis et al. 1997; Teachman and Brownell 2001; Grogan and Richards 2002). In their study on stereotypes related to body size, Tiggemann and Rothblum (1988) asked college students from American and Australian schools to talk about stereotypes of fat and thin men and women. Similar to other findings, these students believed fat people to be lazier, less attractive, not as disciplined, more self-indulgent, and less happy. The only positive stereotypes of overweight people were that they were warmer and friendlier. Also, women were more heavily stereotyped than men. Interestingly, work on this type of stereotyping finds that one's own weight does not play a role in the stereotyping of fat people (Grogan 2007). Unfortunately, many of these stereotypes and prejudices against overweight people are put into action. Adults who are overweight or obese have a more difficult time getting jobs, getting into college, and renting property (Cash 1990).

On the other hand, adults who are viewed by society as attractive often find many benefits in their lives. More attractive people are seen as more socially competent, more socially appealing, and more adaptable. More attractive adults get more attention, better cooperation from others, more help, and more positive interactions with others in general. Interestingly, these positive stereotypes of attractiveness are affixed to strangers as well as friends, both males and females, adults and children and occur regardless of culture. Attractiveness and body image can affect work activities, school activities, sexual activities, exercise, ability to meet people, etc. (Cash and Flemming 2002). Weightism seems to be one of the last forms of acceptable discrimination and thus it is important to study body size and body image. In past research, one outcome that has received attention is dating. Not surprisingly, an attractive body increases dating and mating opportunities. While relevant for males, having an attractive body is especially important for female dating activity. In accordance with an evolutionary psychology perspective, researchers have found that body characteristics that reflect reproductive needs, like fertility and caretaking in females and strength and dominance in males, increased both self and other perceived physical attractiveness levels (Grogan 2007). Also, Cawley (2001) says that regardless of race, overweight girls have a lower likelihood of dating than their normally weighted peers. Western culture praises and rewards those deemed attractive while those who may not fit the ideal may have a harder time. While society's appraisal is meaningful, another more important appraisal is the one that we give ourselves.

3. BODY IMAGE

Often associated with ideal body size is the expression body image. Body image is an area of study that has received more and more attention as obesity and body issues have become more relevant to a larger number of people in our society. Researchers of body image point out that body image is a multidimensional concept that could include affective, cognitive, perceptual, and behavioral aspects. Schilder's classic defintion of body image, created in 1935, states "The picture of our body which we form in our mind, that is to say the way in which our body appears to ourselves" (17). Schilder is later credited with adding the psychological elements included today. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that even with these psychological and cognitive aspects included, it is generally agreed that body image is distinct from, though related to, ideas like self-image, self-esteem, and self-concept (Dewing 1989). When studying body image, there are two common ways the idea is applied either as a perception or appraisal or as attitudes or feelings related to a person's body (Slade 1994). The first assumes body image to be the extent to which a person's judgment or perception of his or her body size is accurate. The second definition focuses on an individual's assessment of his or her attitudes and feelings of attractiveness (Cash and Pruzinsky 1990; Thompson 1996).

Often, when researchers study body image, the research relates to feelings about the body and satisfaction with the body. In order to evaluate your body image though, you must have the ability to assess your own body, have an idea of what the culturally ideal body is, and be able to make comparisons (Smolak 2004). Previous studies find that self-perceived weight condition is not satisfactorily explained by actual body size (Chang et al. 2001). Self-perceptions also need a

level of comparison. While cultural connotations of what is facially attractive are hard to determine, cultural notions of body ideals run rampant within most cultures (Cash and Pruzinsky 2002). Data within child development suggest that, by 5 years of age, children are aware of the culturally defined ideal body and have learned to have a bias against overweight people (Cramer and Steward 1998; Musher-Eizenman, Holub, Barnhart-Miller, Goldstein, and Edwards-Leeper, and, 2004).

Feedback on appearance throughout childhood and adolescence may have a formative impact on body image. Research suggests that repeated teasing, criticism, and comparisons from parents as well as peers can have lasting effects on a person's body image. Two core messages are taught to adolescents through the process: looks affect worth and the look I have is unacceptable. While body image is affected by interactions and responses from other people, it also has the ability to shift/affect how people relate and interact with others (Cash and Pruzinsky 2002). It's almost a reciprocal process, interactions continue to affect body image while body image further affects reaction and interaction (Rieves & Cash, 1996). For these reasons, it is important to study how a person's self-perception affects different aspects of their lives. Hopefully future research will address many aspects of people's lifestyles, but this study will focus on specifically on dating for reasons that will be discussed later.

Body image work has branched out in order to see how it affects people's lives across the lifespan. Researchers observe that the double standard of aging is reflected not only in media images but in every day life. As men age they look distinguished, but as women age they are deemed less attractive (Ussher 1993). Women consistently remain unsatisfied with certain areas of their body throughout the years (Grogan 1997). Lamb et al. (1993) found that men too become dissatisfied with their bodies. However, interesting research on body image role-models finds

that older people are less likely to use media images as role models. In fact, they are less likely to have a body image role model. Men cite no particular role model and if women cite anyone, it is usually a family member (Lamb et al. 1993).

Body image studies that include social class as a factor have produced mixed results. Wardle and Marsland (1990) found that females in the higher social classes were more concerned with weight and dieted more often. Orbach (1993) says that in the recent past class differences in body concern were more apparent because it was only the upper and middle classes who had time and money to follow clothing designs. However, more recent studies suggest that Western cultures are becoming more homogeneous across the social classes in terms of focusing on the thinness ideal (Bordo 2003). Studies as far back as the 1960s suggest that ideals for men and women's body shape and size do not vary across social class (Wells and Siegel 1961; Grogan 2007).

Gender differences research is a growing area within body image work. Many researchers suggest that boys and girls have different cultural notions of ideal body types and different issues surrounding their body images. Much of the research on body image and dissatisfaction has been with female populations because of the prevalence of female body dissatisfaction and the associated problems (Thomspon 1996). Much of this research reflects the important impact of the "culture of thinness" on the girls (Smolak, Levine, and Thompson 2001). Cohane and Pope (2001) did a meta-analysis of 17 studies on male adolescent body image. Many boys have body dissatisfaction issues, but are not consistent in their choice of ideal body size. Some boys believe being skinnier is better while others think that a bigger body size is better. Much of this stems from the notion that at some point during adolescence, boys' desire to gain muscle becomes equal to or more important than losing weight (Ricciardelli and McCabe 2001).

Female Body Image

The body has consistently been a source of dissatisfaction for females. Most of the literature on women's body image reverts back to the thinness ideal. Across the years, whether in adolescence or middle age, women's bodies are a source of attraction, power, and self-esteem in our culture. Susie Orbach (1993) says that from a young age women are taught to see their bodies as a commodity. She suggests that it is because of the Western objectification of the female image that many women have body image issues. Through this objectification, multimillion-dollar industries like dieting, gyms, and cosmetic surgery strive to help women reach their ideal.

Through various forms of body image assessment, findings generally remain consistent for women. Women typically wish to be thinner than they currently are no matter if they are average weight, underweight, or overweight (Huon et al 1990; Wardle et al. 1993; Tiggeman and Pennington 1990). Researchers find that women have a greater preoccupation with weight and appearance than men and that the areas of concern for women are generally in the lower half of the body: hips, thighs, stomach, buttocks (Cash et al. 1986; Cooper et al. 1987). Work on body size perception finds that women of all shapes and sizes overestimate their body size which shows that these unrealistic images of body size are being perpetuated (McCabe et al 2006; Emery et al. 1995). Tiggeman and Lynch (2001) found that this issue persists throughout the lifespan for women. While the meaning of weight changes because women are realistic about the fact that weight gain is inevitable with age, body dissatisfaction remains relatively stable. However, while this body dissatisfaction remains stable, the psychological effects of body

dissatisfaction do seem to decrease with age (Tiggemann and Lynch 2001; Cash and Pruzinsky 2002).

Body image has a significant effect on women's lives. Women's focus on their appearance undermines their well-being and is linked to eating issues, depression, and other psychological difficulties (Cash and Pruzinsky 1990; Thompson 1996; Cash et al. 1997). Women who have negative body images are also more likely to have poor social self-esteem and greater social anxiety (Cash and Flemming 2002). Also, negative body images are seen as a high-risk predictor of eating disorders (Cash and Pruzinsky 2002).

Male Body Image

While work on females and body image abounds, work on males and body image is a recent phenomenon. While cultural images of men are not new, the extent of their use and the streamlining of shape is. "There is a general consensus that most men aspire to a muscular mesomorphic shape characterized by average build with well-developed muscles on chest, arms, and shoulders, and slim waist and hips, rather than an ectomorphic (thin) or endomorphic (fat) build" (Grogan 2007: 81). Most research on body perception agrees that a moderately muscular (but not overly muscular) body with low levels of body fat is ideal (Pope et al. 1999; Cafri and Thompson 2004). This male ideal tends to be tied to masculinity and power. While the cultural notions of beauty are becoming more influential for males, they still tend to have better body images than females (Grogan 2007).

Since a cultural ideal for males has become more prevalent and more influential, much research suggesting that men do not have body image issues is being revised. A Fallon and Rozin (1985) study using nine male silhouettes found no discrepancy for college students between their

ideal, what they thought females would prefer, and perceived figure. Men, therefore, seemed relatively satisfied with body image. More recent research has used similar figures but unlike Fallon and Rozin, they did not take averages across the sample. Mishkind and colleagues (1986) actually found that averaging the score was the reason no discrepancy was found. Unlike women who consistently wish to be smaller, men's ideal varies more. Mishkind et al. (1986) found that 75% of the men in their study reported body ideal discrepancy. About half of these wanted to be thinner and the other half wanted to be bigger. Therefore, an important difference between men and women is that body dissatisfaction for men is not just about being smaller like it is for women, but also could be related to wanting to be bigger. So while originally men were seen as more satisfied, Mishkind et al. (1986) suggest that men are dissatisfied with their bodies as well.

Researchers believe that the cultural shift in importance of body appearance for men has created a more notable link between self-esteem and body satisfaction (Pope et al. 2000; Thompson and Cafri 2007). Franzoi and Shields (1984) found that the most significant determinants of men's body satisfaction are physical attractiveness (measured by facial features), upper body strength, and physical conditioning (stamina, energy, weight). A British study found men age 18-25 agreed with the aforementioned body type as being ideal and linked to being healthy and fit. However, while these men felt confident that they could reach this ideal, they lacked the motivation and feelings of importance to do so. In the same study, 16-17 year old males also believed in the male ideal as lean and muscular, but felt more pressure to mold themselves to this ideal. All of the young guys were concerned with the way they looked, saying they either needed to lose weight or gain muscle (Grogan and Richards 2002). Fawkner (2004) did a study in Australia on body image and media imaging of the body. She found that appearance was important to men and did affect their daily activities and interactions. Both

Fawkner's study and another study done in Britain by Gillian Adams et al. (2005) suggest that male body satisfaction is influenced by evaluations of family, friends, and particularly romantic partners.

Many new questionnaires and techniques have been created given the emergence of male differences in body satisfaction. Using computer software, several studies have been able to more accurately assess the body images that males desire. In studies from the United States, Austria, and France, college age males preferred a more muscular body type than their current shape and believed that females preferred the muscular body as well (Pope et al. 2000; Frederick et al. 2005). In a study assessing self-perception, men tended to overestimate their body size to a similar extent as women. Some researchers suggest that heavier men will underestimate their body size in order to fit more closely to the average male ideal figure (Smeets et al. 1998). Others found that men with higher BMIs overestimated their body sizes. More work still needs to be done to understand how and why this discrepancy in men's body size perception occurs, but whether they overestimate or underestimate, men seek to be closer to the ideal male body size.

4. IS THE CULTURAL IDEAL OF THINNESS A WHITE MENTALITY? RACIAL DIFFERENCES

Most of the research on body image and attractiveness has focused on white, middle class women. More recently, however, studies have begun to investigate how this culture of thinness affects other races within our society.

African American Women and Body Perception

Originally, research suggested that African-American women held more positive body image views than both White and Latina women (Cash and Henry 1995), and that the idealization of thinness is not as prevalent in African-American communities (Parker, Nichter, Vuckovic, Sims, and Ritenbaugh 1995; Kemper, Sargent, Drane, Valois, and Hussy 1994). However, more recent work on body image and black women has presented conflicting findings regarding whether the culture of thinness is pervasive within minority cultures. Below both sides of the issue are discussed.

Protection from Culture of Thinness

Researchers suggest that African-American youth deal not only with mainstream cultural expectations but also, within the group, black cultural expectations. Bell (1990) suggests that black youth are socialized biculturally and must contend with two social worlds. Chang et al. (2003) adds "attitudes toward body size and preferences for particular levels of fatness are mediated by local social and cultural factors, and perceptions may vary in predictable ways

among population subgroups" (333). African culture is entrenched in the cultural, philosophical, and historical traditions of the African-American people. Within this culture, human characteristic qualities are stressed over physical ones (Ross 1997). On the other hand, Euro-American culture focuses particularly on physical characteristics as well as physical gratification, power, material affluence, and competition (Bell et al. 1990).

Rucker and Cash suggest that because black women have different internalized ideals of body size they have more body satisfaction. Based upon their culture, blacks have different criteria for viewing their bodies and forming their body images. Black women do not see thinness as a requirement for attractiveness (Singh 1994). Instead, they depict attractiveness in terms of femininity, shapeliness, having some hips, and generally utilizing the shape they have (Allan, Mayo, and Michel 1993; Falconer and Neville 2000). Most important to attractiveness is "making what you've got work for you" (Parker, Nichter, Nichter, and Vuckovic 1995: 108; Falconer and Neville 2000).

In their qualitative piece on body image issues in African-American girls, Hesse-Biber et al. (2004) talked with adolescents about their body image and what constitutes physical attractiveness. Similar to what other researchers have found, these girls suggest it is not your size, but how you work with it that matters. The females in this study speak of weight in terms of a God-given trait. As one girl stated: "He [God] developed me to come out tall and I guess sort of chubby and big feet and I guess that's just the way he wanted me cause I think if he wanted me different that he would have made me in a different way" (Hesse-Biber et al. 2004: 56). Central to the concept of beauty is looking good. Related to your body, this means accentuating the positive through clothing and hairstyle, but also important is the way you carry yourself and

your personality. For African-Americans, according to these researchers, beauty is not just about body size, but more about overall investment in appearance and self-confidence.

Some researchers suggest that creating different internalized ideals is a coping strategy of stigmatized groups within a culture. Crocker and Major (1989) say that members of stigmatized groups may form adaptive coping strategies for self-protection. They may form standards of beauty from within group social comparisons instead of between group comparisons where they would be comparing themselves to the mainstream standards of beauty (white beauty ideals) (Crocker and Major 1989; Evans and McConnell 2003). Members of stigmatized groups may engage in psychological disidentification where they receive their basis of self-esteem from some other domain than the one where they are stigmatized. For example, since black women's beauty is generally different and often seen as inferior to white women, black women would be more likely to disregard using this standard as an aspect of their self-esteem (Crocker et al. 1998; Steel and Aronson 1995; Evans and McConnell 2003).

Studies have also shown that blacks do not identify with mainstream standards of beauty (Hebl and Heatherton, 1998; Quinn and Crocker, 1998; Evans and McConnell 2003) and instead, black women are more open to different forms of beauty. Black women may be using other influences besides media and society (like family, significant others, etc.) in order to form body image. Hesse-Biber et al. (2004) believe that for young black women having a solid sense of racial identity increases self-esteem and self-acceptance of their different body types.

Because of these differences, both black men and black women place less emphasis on thinness as a main factor for attractiveness, and black culture is more accepting of larger size women. (Root 1990, Powell and Kahn 1995). In general African-American women tend to be more satisfied with their bodies (Kemper, Sargent, Drane, Valois and Hussy 1994; Greenberg

and LaPorte 1995). Black women report less negative feelings about being overweight and less negativity towards other overweight people within society (Hebl and Heatherton 1998; Quinn and Crocker 1998). African-American females are 7 times more likely see themselves as not being overweight (Wilson et al. 1994; DiGioacchino et al. 2001) Despite the fact that African-American women have significantly higher BMIs than whites or Asians, they have higher body satisfaction than white women (Rucker and Cash 1992; Akan and Grilo1995; Altabe 1998).

Thinness Ideals Affect African-American Females

In contrast to these studies, some recent research shows that thinness is becoming an important cultural ideal within the African-American community as well (Lester and Petrie 1998). Many researchers, especially those who study eating disorders, suggest that the culture of thinness is so pervasive in American society that it is hard for any group to escape the effect. Some research reports few or no dissimilarities regarding body size preferences among minority races (Abrams et al. 1993; Garner 1995; Pumariega et al. 1994, Wilfley and Rodin 1995). In her study on body image satisfaction, Dittrich (1997) found no differences in body dissatisfaction across the ethnicities included (white, Asian, Latina, black, Native American, and mixed ethnicity). These studies support the hypothesis that the more assimilated a woman is into the Western (white) culture, the more constant and entrenched the pressure to resemble the mainstream image of beauty.

Cultural shifts in fear of fatness and body size dissatisfaction have been linked to higher socioeconomic status and assimilation into American, white culture (Abrams et al. 1993; Klemchuk et al. 1990; Wilfley and Rodin 1995; DiGioacchino 2001). A study reported in an African-American magazine, *Essence*, found that over 50% of the respondents were at risk of an

eating disorder and 39% said that food controlled their lives. This drive to be thin is taking its toll on black adolescent females. With this pressure comes a desire to be thinner and decreased body satisfaction (Root 1990). African-American females have body image issues and like other females, more negative body images are contributing to lower self-esteem, depression, more risky sexual behaviors, and greater risk of obesity in this population as well (Molloy and Herzberger 1998; Cohane and Pope 2001).

In their study, Striegel-Moore et al. (1995) concluded that black females even had a higher drive for thinness than white girls but that this was related to criticism for being too fat. Schreiber et al. (1996) also saw a drive for thinness with about 40% of their respondents believing they needed to lose weight. There were no racial differences in this desire. Harris (1995) found greater body mass linked to lower body satisfaction, less satisfaction with specific body parts, and less favorable overall evaluations of physical appearance. Heavier black women were less satisfied with overall body appearance, but more likely to report higher satisfaction with specific body parts (Falconer and Neville 2000).

When comparing differences between black women and white women, several studies have found no difference in body dissatisfaction. Demarest and Allen (2000) looked at white, African-American, and Asian women and concluded no difference in body shape dissatisfaction. Further research took into account BMI, age, and marital status but again found no difference in body dissatisfaction. These researchers suggested that race and socioeconomic status (SES) could be confounded and that bias may occur because attitudes about body size and shape can be associated with SES (Caldwell, Brownell, and Wilfley 1997; Sobal and Stunckard 1989). More recently Cachelin et al. (2006) supported Caldwell et al.'s (1997) findings. Controlling for BMI, age, and SES, they also found no difference in levels of body dissatisfaction.

So, while many studies suggest that black culture protects females from body dissatisfaction and eating disorders, Root (1990) suggested that this assumption lacks an appreciation of the complexity of within group differences in the formation of body image. Stice and Shaw (1994) found that the more a person is exposed to and internalizes certain cultural beauty ideals, the more emotional distress and body dissatisfaction they will have. Other researchers have found that deeper identification with one culture will have an important impact on body image. Women who rejected their black identity and idealized white identity experienced greater dietary restraint, fear of fat, and drive for thinness (Abrams et al. 1993, Digioacchino 2001).

African-American Men and Body Perception

Studies on body image in African-American boys and men are extremely limited. Men are generally less concerned with being fat currently or becoming fat. Regardless of actual weight, African-American men are more satisfied with their bodies than black women and also have more positive body images than white men (Demarest and Langer 1996; Demarest and Allen 2000; Cash and Pruzinsky 2002). When assessing body size, black men discern themselves to be slightly smaller than they actually are as opposed to white men who think themselves slightly bigger than their actual size (Digioacchino 2001). Chang et al. (2003) find similar results to Digiacchino and suggest that this shows how ethnic differences in body perception are relevant for not just women, but men as well.

5. DATING EXPERIENCE

Dating has changed greatly throughout the last few centuries and as such, there seems to be a dating culture that has evolved. Previously, the dating process was more of a courtship, which included both adult supervision and the goal of marriage (Whyte 1990). Nowadays marriage is being put off until later and later in life and dating is beginning at an early age. So, dating is no longer just part of the courtship process, but instead fulfills many other functions for adolescents (Smith, 1962). Skipper and Nass (1966) suggest four main functions of dating: recreation, socialization, status achievement, and mate selection for marriage. McCabe (1984) adds that dating is a time of sexual experimentation and a way to achieve companionship with other-sex members. He suggests that this contact with the opposite sex is a way of achieving intimacy. Often times dating functions overlap with each other. It seems as adolescents move into young adulthood their reasons for dating shift. Older adolescents generally seem to seek more personally fulfilling relationships and include socialization, intimacy, and companionship in their reasons for dating (Roscoe, Diana, & Brooks, 1987). Furman and Wehner (1997) suggest that one reason for this may be that attachment and care giving become more important in late adolescence and adulthood when a person is trying to shift these needs to someone besides parents. As people grow older dating becomes an important and common aspect of life. The desire to find someone often grows stronger and dating becomes a more frequent and important activity,

Furman and Shaffer (2003) indicate that the prevalence and characteristics of dating vary by age. Dating likelihood increases with age. Females generally date males that are older and guys date older females until late adolescence when they then date younger females. African-

American guys are more likely to choose older partners in general (Carver, Joyner, and Udry 2003). By age 18, 69% of boys and 76% of girls have been in a romantic relationship within the last 18 months. Duration of relationship was actually pretty long for adolescents; half of the relationships of youth 16 years or older have an average duration of 21 months (Carver, Joyner and Udry 2003). Older adolescents typically have more involved and socially integrated, more mature relationships (Carver et al 2003; Crissey 2005).

Literature on dating addresses the negative and positive effects of dating. Romantic involvement and sexual behavior are known to be negatively associated with academic achievement throughout adolescence (Halpern, Joyner, Udry, and Suchindran 2000). However, the causal arguments behind the relationship have not been determined. It could be that less academically inclined people are more likely to form romantic relationships or, conversely, romantic relationships have an adverse affect on school achievement. One study did find that youth involved in sexual activity are less likely to go to college, a decision that inhibits marriage and cohabitation in early adulthood (Thornton, Axinn, and Teachman 1995). Also, marital dissolution is more common for people with only some college than for those who did not attend college at all or who earned a college degree (Glick and Norton 1977; Raley and Bumpass 2003).

Other studies find many other risks associated with dating, especially when that dating activity involves sex. Zimmer-Gembeck et al. (2001) find that with an over involvement in dating youth had poorer psychological functioning and that stressors related to dating could affect different aspects of general adjustment like self-perception and ability to handle various experiences. Williams et al. (2001) suggest that females involved in relationships with low intimacy could be at risk for higher levels of depression.

On the other hand, researchers stress that dating can have a positive impact. For adolescents, dating can help formulate a more adult identity, facilitate autonomy, and promote learning how to be emotionally intimate in a relationship (Brooks-Gunn & Paikoff 1993; Dekovic & Meeus 1997). In their study, Ciairano, Bonino, et al. (2006) show that for teenagers and young adults 14-19 years old, dating had some very positive effects. Those who dated had more positive views of themselves, felt more connected, and expected more success in health, work, and relationships. As youth move into adulthood, relationships become a more meaningful and influential part of life and can effect many behavioral and psychological aspects of it.

Finally, work on body image and romantic relationships focuses on how body image affects intimacy and the quality of the relationship. Several researchers have found that body image can affect the quality and quantity of sexual experiences within romantic relationships (Wiederman 2002; Cash, Beskin, and Yamamiya 2003). Nezlek (1999) found more confidence and influence within intimate relationship interactions for men and women related to better body image. McKinley (1999) says that young and middle aged women's body esteem was connected to their perceptions of their partner's approval of their appearance. Belief that their partners held positive views of their body led to more satisfaction within their relationship (Rieves and Cash, 1999).

Mate Selection

Mate selection is an area that interests a variety of disciplines including genetics, psychology, sociology, and anthropology. Each has been able to offer different perspectives on the choice of a partner. Most research inquiry centers on whether people choose a partner like

them or different from them. In the United States, homogamy, partnering with someone who shares a similar background and personal characteristics as you, is encouraged as opposed to heterogamy which is partnering with a person who has different personal and social qualities than you (Ross 1997).

Epstein and Guttman (1984) reviewed much of the literature on mate selection and focused their attention on "why we choose alike or opposite partners, and how we go about choosing them" (246). Notably, mate selection literature originally was gathered to support homogamy, specifically in marriage choice. This continues to be the main mindset in both literature and society. It was only later suggested that complimentary research be done. Multiple research has found that men and women do seek mates similar in race, socioeconomic status, religion, personality traits, types of social participation, physical traits, sexual and social attitudes, etc (Epstein and Guttman, 1984; Ross, 1997). Back in the 1970s, Dorothy Place (1975) asked young women around the ages of 15 and 16 about their experiences with dating. When asked what characteristics they found attractive, their top responses were good personality, good looks, good physique, and boy's actions. Other work states that in late adolescence and early adulthood, stimulus characteristics like personality and attractiveness are what people look at first (Furman and Shaffer 2003). Other factors in adolescence that might affect adult union formation include attractiveness, closeness to parents, religious involvement, maturity, academic performance, self-esteem, and having gender opposite friends (Raley, Crissey, and Muller 2007).

One debate around mate selection that exists is which approach, the evolutionary perspective or the sociocultural perspective, better explains mate selection. Buss and Barnes (1986) offer explanations of preferences for certain partner characteristics based on reproductive outcomes. They found that both sexes sought a person who was kind, liked children, was

intelligent, and had an exciting personality. However, the real power in the evolutionary perspective comes from the gender differences in preferences. Women preferred, more than men, a partner who was kind, adaptable, liked children, was well-liked, dependable, and had a professional status. Men preferred a partner who was physically attractive, economical, and a good cook.

The evolutionary perspective would explain this through the reproductive investment theory. It states that the factors that attract women to men center on how men could contribute to the family through security and material support. For men, attraction is based on a woman's reproductive ability. Outward signs of attraction and health show a woman's ability to successfully have children, which evolutionarily speaking, is a man's goal (Symons, 1979; Buss and Barnes, 1986). Attraction is intrinsically related to a mate's value. Singh (1993) suggests that women's waist to hip ratio (WHR) is a good determinant of reproductive attractiveness because the weight gain that women have around puberty is a good gauge for reproductive potential. Singh suggests that women with a WHR of 0.6 to 0.8 (meaning that their waists are 60-80% the size of their hips) are the most healthy, fertile women. Singh did find that men preferred women with a WHR around 0.7, but he also found that women's rated attractiveness was independent of their mate value, which is counter to evolutionary beliefs.

The sociocultural perspective would suggest that various aspects of one's culture explain mate selection. For example, Western culture's fascination with attractiveness, specifically thinness and muscularity, will be important factors in partner choice. While evolutionary perspective would say that attractiveness is important because it signals reproductive ability, the sociocultural perspective would show that attraction is not necessarily based on reproductivity. Instead, various social factors affect mate selection as opposed to reproductive, evolutionary

factors. Researchers cite differences in body size preference and sexuality as a way to show the importance of social factors. For instance, women's desire to be thin, particularly in their hips is counter to evolutionary perspective because women should want bigger hips to create a bigger WHR to attract men. Culturally though we seek thinness in all areas of the body and women discuss particularly high dissatisfaction with hips, thighs, and lower stomach wishing them to be smaller (Grogan 2007).

Also, the evolutionary perspective suggests that breast size is irrelevant to sexual attractiveness, but culturally we see the importance men and women put on breasts to signal attractiveness. Positive adjectives like confidence, popularity, and success were associated with women with larger breasts (Thompson and Tantleff 1992). Breast augmentation is one of the leading cosmetic surgeries in the US and in 2005, it was the most common cosmetic procedure in the UK (Grogan 2007).

Looking alternatively at men, the evolutionary perspective suggests that women look for security from men, but put little emphasis on attractiveness. Darwin suggested that women would use physical appearance too to choose a man. Research previously cited suggests that women do use physical appearance as a factor for mate selection. Fallon (1990) suggests that physical characteristics that portray dominance and maturity like baldness should attract women, but culturally these characteristics are not ideal.

Looking at homosexual couples can be a clear indication of the sociocultural perspective since evolutionary psychology would have a hard time explaining attraction not based on mate value. Research suggests that the lesbian subculture may have a protective function similar to that of the African-American culture. However, findings have mixed results and conclude that

lesbians do indeed internalize standards of thinness, but possibly not to the extent that heterosexual women do (Morrison et al. 2004).

The sociocultural perspective emphasizes the significance placed on attractiveness in the male gay community, particularly body appearance (Lakoff and Scherr 1984; Signorile 1997). Siever (1994) found that gay men and heterosexual women were the most likely to have the highest levels of body dissatisfaction. In his study gay men were more dissatisfied than heterosexual women. Cultural pressure for gay men to have the ideal body of slender, but muscular comes not only from the gay community, but from mainstream consumer industry and mainstream stereotypes of gay men as obsessed with their bodies and being physically fit (Forna 1996; O'Kelly 1994; Grogan 2007).[1]

Mate Selection by Race

While general mate selection literature suggests the importance of attractiveness and social status, literature that focuses on race differences within mate selection refer back to the cultural ideal of thinness as a distinguishing factor in attractiveness and datability.

African American Men Attracted to Larger Women

African-American culture seems to be a protective factor for mate selection as well. Euro-American men tend to prefer thinner figures than African-American men (Greenberg and LaPorte 1996). Brown-Collins and Susswell (1986) suggest that greater identification with within group culture keeps men from internalizing dominant culture ideals of beauty. The

[1] GLBT body image standards are an interesting topic and one that merit future research. However, homosexuality in the African American community is often hidden and in this sample can not be separated out for analysis.

African-American community places greater emphasis on other aspects of beauty and thus these men focus their criteria for attractiveness on more than just body size. (Smith, Burlew and Lundgren 1991; Webb et al 2004). Other researchers have supported this, suggesting that lighter skin color, hair care, and other physical characteristics besides body size are important (Ross 1997).

Historically, heavier black women were considered sexy, smart, attractive, employable, sought after by men in the community and easily able to find husbands as well as dominant in the household (Edison and Notkin 1994; Webb et al. 2004). Being overweight in African-American community is more acceptable than in white culture (Bissell 2002). Villarosa (1994) says that men have preferred women with larger body sizes.

African American Men Attracted to Similar Female Body Sizes as White Men

While some studies do suggest that black male attraction is still to larger black women, other literature suggests a shift in attraction criteria that is similar to white male preference. Singh (1994) says that blacks and whites generally use similar standards (body size and body shape) when judging attractiveness of female figures. Similarly, Demarest and Allen (2000) found that black men as well as black women did not differ from white men and women in perceptions of most attracted body shape. In their study Greenberg and LaPorte (1996) find that both black and white men chose thinner ideal body figures over heavier ones. From this they suggest that black men's perception of body size ideal is transforming to more general, American cultural ideals of thinness. Lavine et al. (1999) suggest similar notions to Greenberg and LaPorte (1996) and Webb et al.(2004) who found that black men with high acculturation scores, meaning they are more assimilated into white cultural ideals, were less attracted to heavier body sizes.

Halpern, Udry, Campbell, and Suchindran (1999) did a study on adolescent dating and found body fat to be a predictor of lowered dating experiences for both white and black females. Interestingly, while above average levels of body fat disadvantaged females for dating probability compared to average size females, girls with below average levels of body fat (compared to average levels) had a higher probability of dating. For African-American females, though, their mother's education interacted with body fat. Black females with mothers who were college graduates were more concerned about their weight and if heavier, were less likely to date.

Dating Expectations for African-American Men

Research of attraction often dichotomizes black men's attraction as either being attracted to larger women or having similar standards to white men which suggests attraction to thinner women. Other researchers often suggest that black men have a preference for larger women, but this is always in comparison to white men. For example, Bissell (2002) found that black men chose heavier female body figures as ideal than white men did. In Powell and Kahn's study (1995) when asked about their preference that the women they date be thin, black men had less desire for thinness than white men did. More research finds black men are less likely to turn down a date with an overweight woman than white men are (Harris, Walters, and Waschull 1991). Black men are more likely to date women with larger silhouette than white men and felt that if they did date a larger woman, they would be less likely to be made fun of for it (Powell and Kahn 1995). Also, white men have a stronger desire to date extremely thin women than black men and more often expressed a desire for their girlfriends to lose weight (Bissell 2002; Greenberg and LaPorte 1996). Unlike white men, black males actually choose a higher BMI for

their ideal girlfriend (Thompson, Sargent, et al. 1996). Webb et al. (2004) say that while black men may be attracted to smaller women, the women they choose to date tend to be heavier.

When compared to white males, black men often do prefer a larger body size. However on closer inspection of the literature it becomes apparent that black men are actually attracted to many different female shapes and what they really find in terms of dating might not be a preference for but more of a willingness to date larger women. (Cachelin et al. 2002, Webb et al. 2004, Harris 1995, Powell and Kahn 1995; Bissell 2002). For example, Webb et al. (2004) actually showed both white men and black men chose moderate or medium figures as the ideal size for their mate. In their study, Thompson, Sargent, and Kemper (1996) asked a series of questions related to ideal size including one about the size of the male participant's girlfriend. No statistically significant differences in size were found between races for guys that had girlfriends. Guys who did not have girlfriends were asked about their preference in BMI size. Findings show that that the black guys preferred larger size girlfriends. However, when looking specifically at their choices, white guys chose smaller average females, while black guys chose larger average females. Also, Harris, Walters, and Waschull (1991) study on consequences of obesity said, "Blacks who were dating were not thinner, but rather nonsignificantly heavier than those who did not date" and showed that blacks were less likely to be concerned about the weight of the person they pursued (1563). These studies imply that while black men do date larger women, they also date average size women as well.

While black men's preference for heavier ideal female sizes compared to white men is shown in the literature, this is not necessarily an indication of their preference for dating heavier females. Instead, it could just be a reflection of men's willingness to date many different body types.

6. HYPOTHESES

How does body weight perception affect late adolescent/young adult dating activity? With a focus on physical beauty in America and the fact that initial attraction is essential to dating, it would not be surprising to see body weight perception affect frequency and seriousness of dating activity. My main hypothesis is that body size perception will have an effect on not only the likelihood of dating, but also, if an individual is dating, then their amount of participation in dating. Much of previous literature suggests that while African-Americans were once protected through racial socialization from the white mentality of the culture of thinness, more current literature suggests that this mentality has become more universal and other races are not immune to it anymore. If it is the case that a more universal American mentality of thin as ideal exists and African Americans perceive their body types in relation to this, then the following hypotheses should hold true:

Hypothesis 1: Self-perceived overweight or obese females will date less frequently and be less likely to be in a serious relationship than self-perceived average or underweight females.

Hypothesis 2: Self-perceived underweight females will be the most likely to be actively dating or in a serious relationship compared to average, overweight, or obese girls.

Conversely, if there is still a protective factor of racial identification involved, then the opposite could be true:

Hypothesis 3: Self-perceived overweight and obese females will be more likely to be actively dating or in a serious relationship than self-perceived average weight or underweight females.

Hypothesis 4: Self-perceived underweight females are less likely to be actively dating or in a serious relationship than self-perceived overweight, obese, or average females.

While much of the literature on boys' body image is limited and inconclusive because of: measurement issues, the concept behind the literature suggests that either being underweight or obese would be attractiveness-wise limiting for various activities. Thus, I suggest:

Hypothesis 5: Boys who are underweight will date less frequently and be less likely to be in a relationship than average or overweight size boys.

Hypothesis 6: Obese boys will date less frequently and be less likely to be in a relationship than average or overweight size boys.

7. METHODS

Data

The data is from the Family and Community Health Study (FACHS), a multi-wave, multi-site panel study. FACHS is a survey that focuses on family and health processes of African-American youth in large metropolitan areas. FACHS is a unique data set because it focuses on African-American families living outside of urban inner cities, includes a variety of socioeconomic strata, and the factors that contribute to youth's development. Data were collected in Georgia and Iowa. Thus far there have been five waves of data collected. The first wave was collected in 1998 and consisted of 867 African-American children (400 boys and 467 girls) and their primary caregivers. Originally the children were between 10-12 years old. Additional waves have added secondary caregivers and best friends. Analyses were done between each wave due to attrition. These analyses suggest that each wave's participants have not differed significantly from the wave before in regards to general demographics (Simons et al. 2002).

Wave 4 data was used because it included the body image variable. Youth were between 16 and 21 years of age during this time, with the average age being almost 19. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the study. The first analysis had a sample size of 697, 305 males and 392 females. The second analysis focuses only on youth who are dating so those adolescents who were already in a committed relationship or were not dating yet were excluded. This left a sample size of 613, 271 males and 342 females.

Measures

Dependent variables

Dating status. Youth were asked, "What best describes your current relationship status?" The response format for the variable included eight answers ranging from not seeing anyone right now to being married. Responses were recoded into the categories not dating, casually dating, and in a serious relationship in order to assess relationship status.

Dating activity. Youth were also asked, "On average, how often do you go out on a date?" Responses included eight categories ranging from haven't dated yet to being married. They were recoded to focus specifically on dating activity: rarely dating, a few times per month, one to two times per week, and three or more times a week. Respondents who were not dating or said they were married or living with someone were taken out of analysis.

Independent variables

Body Size Perception. Research on body image uses the same terminology for many different meanings, but for the purposes of this study body image will be based on an individual's perception of their body type and size. Visual ratings of body size were chosen instead of more clinical measures like BMI because of the theoretical interest in implications of body size for dating activities.[2] This variable is measured using a scale created in 1983 by Stunckard et al. It's a nine-point scale ranging from significantly underweight to morbidly obese. Respondents were asked to view 9 figures and choose which figure most accurately portrayed their own body. Responses were coded into four categories: underweight, average, overweight, and obese. Underweight includes figures 1 and 2, average uses figures 3 and 4, overweight are

[2] It should be noted that BMI and the figures were correlated at .70. This strong association suggests that individuals in this sample have a pretty accurate perception of their body size.

figures 5 and 6, and obese includes figures 7, 8, and 9. A copy of the figures can be found in the appendix (Granberg, et al., forthcoming).

Gender. Gender is coded as a dummy variable with female =1 and male =0.

Age. Age ranges from 16 to 21 and is left as a continuous variable.

Class. Class was created using two variables addressing socioeconomic status. First, primary caregivers were asked about their present work situation and answers could include a wide range like employed by others, self-employed, student, unemployed, retired, and full-time homemaker. These were recoded into paid versus unpaid work situations. The second variable was based on asking the primary caregivers their gross income. This variable was recoded into income ranges 0-$10000, $10000.01-24999, $25000-49999, and $50000 and above. Then these two variables were combined by grouping different levels of work situations and income to create 5 classes: nonworking poor, working class poor, working class non-poor, middle class, and upper class. For any missing data, data was imputed from previous waves of the study.

School Attendance. Literature shows that whether or not a youth is in school affects their dating activity. Participants were asked, "Are you currently in school or will you be attending school during the next school year?" Answers are dichotomous, either yes or no.

Work. Work is also shown to affect dating activity. So youth were asked a dichotomous question, "During the past 12 months, were you unemployed at any time when you wanted a job?" Answers are yes or no.

Social Skills. Adolescents' parents were asked questions about their children's social skills. Parent perception of social skills was used instead of youth perception for a more objective view of youth interactions. Answers to questions were summed into a scale. Two questions were reverse coded so that the higher on the scale adolescents ranked, the higher their

level of social skills. Missing data on some of the questions greatly reduced the sample size. So in order to address this issue, sample means were imputed and missing data was replaced with the mean of that item. Reliability for this scale is .77.

Analytical Strategy

The overall goal of this study is to test the hypotheses above. Analysis is split by gender. For comparing dating status, a multinomial logistic regression is used. This test is the best choice because the dependent variable consists of not dating, casually dating, or in a serious relationship. A Hausman test was done to test the independence of irrelevant alternatives and showed that treating the categories of this dependent variable as separate outcomes is the best approach; thus multinomial logistic regression should be used. This has no real rank order and is instead more categorical. In order to look more closely at dating activity levels, I estimate several models using ordinal logistic regression. The dependent variable for this looks at how frequently a participant is dating and includes the options rarely, a few times per month, one to two times per week, and three or more times a week. Ordinal logistic regression is the best strategy to use when the dependent variable is ordinal. The ordinal logistic regression will estimate the effects of a one unit increase of an independent variable on the log odds of moving up into another category on the dependent variable. Effects of the independent variables are assumed to be proportional across the categories of the dependent variable. Models were nested so as to see the effect of body image variables before adding control variables. Analysis was done comparing all body types to each other in order to see comparisons of body types to each other and not just average weight perception. A fitstat test was done for all analysis and found that for both the

multinomial and ordinal logistic regressions adding in the control variables did not add to the goodness of fit of the models.

8. RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

For the multinomial logistic regressions, the sample size was 694 youth. Average age was 18.8 and 56% of the sample was female. Youth were generally from working class (non-poor) and were according to their parents, endowed with pretty high social skills. The youth's perception of their body type varied: 6% considered themselves underweight, 37% overweight, 40% perceived themselves as average, and 13% as obese. Because the outcome of the ordinal logistic regression was dating activity, those youth who were not dating or were married or living with someone were taken out of the sample. This left the sample size at 613 for the ordinal logistic regression. The general description of the sample stayed relatively the same with slightly less youth who perceived themselves as underweight (5%) and slightly more self-perceived average (42%). See Table 1 and Table 2 for a summary of the descriptive statistics.

Analysis

In order to test the hypotheses, analyses were split by sex. Looking at Table 3, having a body image that was underweight as a female was significant in the original model. Supporting hypothesis 4, females with an underweight body image (vs. average) were 4.2 times more likely to be not dating than in a serious relationship ($p<.01$).

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of Body Image and Control Variables for Males and Females for Multinomial Logistic Regressions

	Males (305)			Females (392)		
	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range
Dependent Variable:						
Dating Status	2.15	.908	1-3	2.27	.906	1-3
Independent Variable:						
Underweight [a]	.062	.242		.061	.240	
Overweight [a]	.367	.483		.375	.485	
Average [a]	.423	.495		.388	.488	
Obese [a]	.115	.319		.145	.353	
Control Variables:						
School Attendance [b]	.623	.242		.691	.463	
Work [c]	1.59	.493		1.56	.497	
Age	18.8	.893	16-21	18.8	.928	16-21
Class	3.37	1.27	1-5	3.40	1.30	1-5
Social Skills	2.52	.388	1-3.10	2.45	.411	1-3.20

[a] 1=that body image 0=not the body image. [b] in school=1, not in school=0. [c] working=1 not working=2 .

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations of Body Image and Control Variables for Males and Females for Ordinal Logistic Regressions

	Males (271)			Females (342)		
	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range
Dependent Variable:						
Dating Activity	2.16	.959	1-4	2.11	.971	1-3
Independent Variable:						
Underweight [a]	.055	.229		.056	.229	
Overweight [a]	.362	.482		.371	.484	
Average [a]	.439	.497		.398	.490	
Obese [a]	.111	.314		.140	.348	
Control Variables:						
School Attendance [b]	.627	.484		.711	.454	
Work [c]	1.59	.492		1.55	.499	
Age	18.8	.912	16-21	18.9	.915	16-21
Class	3.40	1.28	1-5	3.40	1.29	1-5
Social Skills	2.52	.395	1-3.10	2.43	.411	1-3.20

[a] 1=that body image 0=not the body image. [b] in school=1, not in school=0. [c] working=1 not working=2 .

The various types of body image were also analyzed in comparison to each other and not just self-perceived average weight for females. In table 4, comparing self-perceived underweight girls to the rest of the girls, both average and overweight body types were found to be more likely to be in a serious relationship (vs. not dating) before and after control variables were included ($p<.05$).

In general, females who perceived themselves to be overweight were 2.88 times more likely to be in a relationship (vs. not dating) than underweight youth ($p<.01$). In another analysis with obese females as the reference (tables found in Appendix B), it was found that self-perceived underweight size girls are 66% less likely to be in a committed relationship (vs. not dating) than obese girls ($p<.05$) or 3 times more likely to be not dating (vs. in a serious relationship) than self-perceived obese girls ($p<.05$). Self-perceived underweight females are 88% less likely to be casually dating (vs. not dating) than overweight youth ($p=.05$). These findings give partial support to hypothesis 3 and suggest that the protective effect could be helping larger females in relation to dating.

No body image variables were statistically significant for males when comparing the various body types to average body perception. Only one variable was statistically significant. Guys who are working are 1.87 times more likely to be not dating (vs. serious relationship) than guys who are not working ($p<.05$). Work remains pretty consistently statistically significant across different comparisons of body types. There was one statistically significant finding for males when comparing other body sizes to each other. Looking at table 5, self-perceived obese males were 2.5 times more likely to be not dating (vs. in a relationship) than overweight males ($p<.05$).

Table 3. Multinomial logistic regression of Dating Status (Not Dating compared to Monogamous Relationship) on Body Image and Control Variables for Females.

	Body Image Only	Full Model
Body Image Variables:		
Overweight	.813	.861
Obese	1.40	1.48
Underweight	3.75**	4.02**
Control Variables:		
Age	__	1.17
Work	__	1.07
School Attendance	__	1.36
Class	__	.945
Social Skills	__	1.56
ll	-354.494	-349.887
chi2	13.910	23.123
r2_p	0.019	0.032
N	392	392

legend: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
Dating Status is comparing Not Dating vs. Monogamous Relationship
Results are presented in terms of Odds Ratios.
Body Image reference category is **Average**.

Table 4. Multinomial logistic regression of Dating Status (Not Dating compared to Monogamous Relationship) on Body Image and Control Variables for Females.

	Body Image Only	Full Model
Body Image Variables:		
Overweight	2.95**	2.89**
Average	2.37*	2.44*
Obese	1.71	1.68
Control Variables:		
Age	__	.886
Work	__	.912
School Attendance	__	.734
Class	__	1.04
Social Skills	__	.643
ll	-356.756	-352.441
chi2	9.385	18.016
r2_p	0.013	0.025
N	392	392

legend: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
Dating Status is comparing Not Dating vs. Monogamous Relationship
Results are presented in terms of Odds Ratios.
Body Image reference is **Underweight.**

Using multinomial logistic regression, very little was discovered about casual dating activity. So in order to delve more closely into dating frequency, ordinal logistic regression was used. In table 6's first model with just the body image variables, perception of being underweight was statistically significant. The odds of underweight youth being in a higher rather than a lower category on the dependent variable (or having increased dating activity) are .48 times the odds for average weight youth suggesting that self-perceived underweight youth are less likely to be actively dating.

Table 5. Multinomial logistic regression of Dating Status (Not Dating compared to Monogamous Relationship) on Body Image and Control Variables for Males.

	Body Image Only	Full Model
Body Image Variables:		
Underweight	1.16	1.12
Average	1.40	1.52
Obese	2.41*	2.50*
Control Variables:		
Age	__	.984
Work	__	1.82*
School Attendance	__	1.39
Class	__	.956
Social Skills	__	1.31
ll	-308.709	-303.119
chi2	6.036	17.217
r2_p	0.010	0.028
N	305	305

legend: * p≤0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
Dating Status is comparing Not Dating vs. Monogamous Relationship
Results are presented in terms of Odds Ratios. Body Image reference category is **Overweight.**

Similar to the multinomial logistic regression findings, ordinal logistic regression shows the odds of increased dating activity for females who perceive themselves to be underweight are 77% lower than females with average perception (p<.01) and 78% lower than overweight perception (p<.01). Also, for self-perceived underweight females the odds of more actively dating than other types of females are 74% lower than for self-perceived obese females (p<.05;

all tables can be found in Appendix B). So basically these results show that self-perceived underweight black females date the least amount out of all the females in this sample.

Table 7 shows that for males, the odds of dating a lot for self-perceived obese males is 55% lower than self-perceived overweight males ($p<.05$). Self-perceived obesity in males compared to average was just barely significant ($p=.05$; table in Appendix B) when no control variables were included, but completely lost significance when controls were present. Self-perceived obesity compared to underweight body size was also just shy of significance even with control variables included for males ($p=.057$, table in Appendix B). There was support for hypothesis 6. This finding plus the marginal findings suggest that further work needs to be done related to males. It could be a measurement issue that is suppressing more statistically significant findings since the issue of muscles vs. fat is hidden in the measurements used here and that makes it harder to have and understand findings. This issue will be discussed more later on.

By using prvalues, comparisons can be made between all the various categories of the dependent variable for each body type. Females who perceive themselves to be underweight are the least likely to be dating (probability .47). The probability of dating a few times per month is 31%, dating a 1-2 times per week is 16%, and dating three or more times per week is 5%. Comparing that to self-perceived overweight girls, their probability of rarely dating is smaller at .30. Out of all the categories on the dependent variables, girls who perceive themselves to be overweight have the highest probability of dating a few times per month (probability is .34). Females who perceive themselves as average and females who think themselves overweight have almost identical dating probabilities. They both are most likely to be dating a few times a month (.34 /.31).

Table 6. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Dating Activity on Body Image and Control Variables for Females.

	Body Image Only			Full Model		
	β	SE(β)	OR	β	SE(β)	OR
Body Image Variables:						
Overweight	.052	.219	1.05	.045	.220	1.05
Obese	-.211	.296	.810	-.200	.298	.819
Underweight	-1.43	.521	.241**	-1.47	.523	.231**
Control Variables:						
Age	__	__	__	-.009	.109	.991
Work	__	__	__	.025	.202	1.03
School Attendance	__	__	__	.075	.230	1.08
Class	__	__	__	.076	.077	1.08
Social Skills	__	__	__	-.135	.246	.946
ll	-440.2735			-439.5584		
chi2	9.3165			10.7467		
r2_p	0.0105			0.0121		
N	342			342		

legend: * p≤0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
Body Image reference category is Average.
1= Rarely 2= A few times per month 3= 1-2 times per week 4= 3 or more times per week

Table 7. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Dating Activity on Body Image and Control Variables for Males

	Body Image Only			Full Model		
	β	SE(β)	OR	β	SE(β)	OR
Body Image Variables:						
Average	-.146	.242	.864	-.226	.246	.894
Obese	-.824	.392	.439*	-.799	.401	.778*
Underweight	-.252	.466	.777	-.133	.474	.970
Control Variables:						
Age	__	__	__	.223	.125	1.23
Work	__	__	__	-.125	.228	.941
School Attendance	__	__	__	-.144	.242	.933
Class	__	__	__	.127	.088	1.18
Social Skills	__	__	__	.104	.294	1.04
ll	-350.4905			-347.4056		
chi2	4.5448			10.7145		
r2_p	0.0064			0.0152		
N	271			271		

legend: * p≤0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
Body Image reference category is Overweight.
1= Rarely 2= A few times per month 3= 1-2 times per week 4= 3 or more times per week

Their probability of rarely dating and dating 1-2 times per week are similar (.31/ .30 for rarely and .26 for 1-2 times), and out of all their likely options for outcomes they are least likely to be dating a three or more times per week (9%). However, out of all body types, both average and overweight are the most likely to be dating three or more times per week.

Looking at males, the probability of rarely dating for boys who perceive themselves to be overweight is .28. Guys with overweight body image are most likely to be dating a few times per month out of all the options for outcomes on dating activity (.34). Their probability for dating 1-2 times per week is .28 and probability for dating three or more times is .11. Males with obese perception are most likely out of all the categories to be rarely dating (probability is .36), then a few times per month (. 34), followed by 1-2 times per week (.22), and lastly three or more times per week (.07). Again, while only one significant finding was found for boys, these probabilities emphasize a need for future work on boys' body perception and dating activity.

9. DISCUSSION

While biological explanations of beauty exist, the culture a person lives within effects self perception and every day living as well. However, what happens to groups who live within two social worlds, two cultures? Does the dominant, mainstream culture dictate or can the minority culture dominate? This study sought to see how body perception of daters within African-American young adults affected their dating activity. Findings from this study suggest that related to body perception's effect on dating, African-American culture serves as a protective factor in attractiveness for mating purposes for females. Regressions show that both of the hypotheses related to protective factors of black culture for females had support while no hypotheses related to females were supported for white culture effects. The strong support for self-perceived underweight females being least likely to date suggest that there may be something in African-American culture that runs counter to the white culture of thinness. We can see though that African-American culture seems to affect self-perceptions of body size and its relation to dating activity for females. Results for males are more inconclusive. Obese males were less likely to date or be in a serious relationship, but underweight males had no statistically significant results for dating activity. This finding underscores the male body image literature's notion that not just underweight, but overweight males have issues related to their bodies (Mishkind et al. 1986). However, it cannot be interpreted either way in terms of African-American or mainstream cultural influences. More work in this area needs to be done.

This study finds that self-perceived average and self-perceived overweight black women generally had more active dating lives, whether it be casually dating or in a serious relationship,

than underweight black females. While BMI and emotion-oriented body image variables are beneficial to use, this study shows that self-perception of body size can be important as well. Studies often address how another's view of a person's body size can affect the person being assessed and his or her daily activities (Hatfield & Sprecher 1986). Using self-perception allows researchers to see how a person's perception of himself or herself affects his or her activities as well. While ratings of attractiveness by other people and an objective BMI rating are important ways to study dating, self-perceived body size can be very influential on people's dating activity. A person's size is very personal, but the view he/she has of him/herself can also be seen as a comparison to societal views of acceptable body size. Often what size people think they are affects not only how they feel about their body but also the interactions they have with others including dating activities. My study shows that while self-perceived body size is only a small component of dating decisions, it can on its own merit play a role in dating activities.

It is important to note that causality cannot be inferred by these results. While body perception can have an effect on dating activity, the opposite may be true as well. Gralen et al. (1990) found that dating behavior is a factor that could be related to dieting and body dissatisfaction. As Cash et al. (2004) suggest in their work though, "social relations both shape and are shaped by body image experiences" (99). Further research using various waves of longitudinal data would be needed to delve into the causality issue and even then, body perception and dating might be too intertwined to rule out reciprocal causality. Measurement issues with the data need to be addressed with future work. Because overweight black women don't tend to perceive themselves as overweight, there may be discrepancy between perception and actual size (Chang et al. 2003). Respondents were asked to choose their actual body size and a correlation was done between BMI and body perception showing that the two were highly

correlated (.70). This suggests decent accuracy on the part of the participants, but caution should be used in interpreting results.

Also, while the figures used to assess body perception were supposed to be gender neutral, more recent work in body image suggests the need for different figures for males and females and also changes in the figures based on race. Body ideals are very different for men and women. Work on body image for men shows that while women consistently wish to be thinner, men are more diverse. Some men wish to be thinner, while others wish to be bigger, more muscular. Due to the neutrality of the figures used, it is hard to differentiate on the larger figures fat versus muscularity. Therefore, some guys may have chosen larger figures as representative of more muscular figures (Grogan 2007). Pope et al. (2000) worked with Amanda Gruber to create computerized images that men could adjust to display their ideal shape and size. This type of measurement addresses the fat versus muscularity issue because it allows men to change the image by these two dimensions (Grogan 2007). Future research on male body perception and body image needs to use the newer, more defined figures.

This study adds to the area of body image first because of the population studied and second because it shows how their body perceptions affect dating. Dating is generally an element of every person's life at some point because most people have a desire to find a mate. Culture and biology direct people's desires to belong to something or someone into a need to marry. The desire to couple is very strong, but some research says that opportunity to date can be limited for overweight individuals in American culture (Harris, Walters, Waschull 1991). A reason for this lack of opportunity could be related to the mainstream ideal beauty standards Americans hold and the stigma related to being overweight. African-American culture does not seem to have this same stigma for overweight people. In a society like America where one-third of the population

20 years or older is considered obese, studying how body size is affecting different interactions is relevant (Center for Disease Control 2007).

Specifically studying its affect on dating activities is important because no matter what a person's reason for dating whether it's to find a mate or just have fun, most people do want to date and fill this need they have for companionship and/or love (Buss 2003). While in some cultures like the mainstream one found in American society, weight can have an effect on opportunity and seriousness of dating, in the African-American community, men show not necessarily a preference, but definitely a willingness to date larger size women (Thompson, Sargent, Kemper 1996). Dating is a process of mutual acceptance and attraction. Both parties have to be attracted to each other. Because BMI and body perception are highly correlated (.70), this study could support other studies that say African-American men are willing to date overweight women (Thompson, Sargent, et al. 1996; Harris, Walters, Waschull 1991). Interestingly, while they are willing to go larger in body size for dating, they may not be willing to date smaller women. Hopefully, future work can seek an explanation for this.

This study only scratches the surface of body perception and dating activity. However, this study has contributed to the literature in many ways. While most studies in this area have depended on samples from college students, this study is able to take a look at a different, non-student focused sample. Also, studies looking at dating have limited their assessment to dating versus not dating. This study gives a slightly more nuanced look at dating activity. Unfortunately, because of limitations with body image variables, I can only say that self perception of body size does affect frequency as well as seriousness of dating. Future work could

consider what other mechanisms or avenues like self-esteem or self-confidence that body perception might work through when affecting dating activities.[3]

An important element of this study is the comparison of dual cultures and how this affects individuals' lives. The protective barrier that the African-American culture has is a pretty well established concept, but how effective and strong that barrier is continues to be explored. Other populations with a strong cultural component should be explored as well. Asians, Hispanics, Native Americans, and many immigrant populations continue to hold on to deep cultural values. More recent research is considering how various minority populations inculcate dominant culture attractiveness values. For example, Evans and McConnell (2003) did a study comparing whites, blacks, and Asians and found that Asian culture did not have the same protective effect as black culture. Asian women were more likely to endorse mainstream standards of beauty, even though not to the same extent as do white females. Future work should continue to look at these various minority populations to see why some cultures create strong barriers toward dominant cultures and others do not as well as how these dual cultures affect daily activities and interpersonal relationships.

[3] Preliminary analysis indicate that in an ordinal logistic regression looking at dating frequency, there is a significant interaction effect between self-esteem and overweight and average body image types males and average body image type and self-esteem for females. Future work will include self-esteem as a variable of interest.

10. CONCLUSION

While the American ideal is a thin body size, the American reality remains larger. The cultural ideal continues to be almost impossible to obtain for the average American, which leads to high body dissatisfaction for many people. However, the African American culture seems to have a protective effect for those individuals integrated into the community. While African-Americans have the highest rates of obesity (53% of African American women versus 39% of White women), their body dissatisfaction is generally lower than other races (Center for Disease Control 2007). African Americans do not necessarily strive for a cultural idea, but instead strive to look the best they can using the body they have. While this mentality works for creating more positive body image and higher self-esteem, it can inhibit concern for health issues related to obesity. Obesity heightens the risk of heart disease, diabetes, sleep apnea, and several other health conditions (Center for Disease Control 2007). While black women discuss several ways of keeping up their appearances including hairdos and clothes, they do not really cite exercise as a way to look the best they can nor are they generally concerned about weight. This could lead to more health problems in the future.

On the other hand, a mentality less concerned with achieving unrealistic expectations of thinness or muscularity would be beneficial. Body perception often links to attitudes about the body, self-esteem, and self-concept. Programs promoting body self-esteem and eating disorder treatment centers can benefit in many ways by looking at African American culture's protective effect from negative body image and incorporate it into a healthier, realistic mentality. Adopting more healthy attitudes about one's body could affect common interactions, including dating.

REFERENCES

Abrams, K. K., Allen, L. R., & Gray, J. J. 1993. "Disordered eating attitudes and behaviors, psychological adjustment, and ethnic identity: Comparison of Black and White female college students." *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 14: 49-57.

Adams, G., Turner, H. & Bucks, R. 2005. "The experience of body dissatisfaction in men." *Body Image: An International Journal of Research* 2: 7-22.

Akan, G. E., & Grilo, C. M. 1995. "Socio-cultural influences on eating attitudes and behaviors, body image and psychological functioning: a comparison of African-American, Asian-American, and Caucasian college women." *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 18(2): 181-187.

Allan, J. D., Mayo, K., & Michel, Y. 1993. "Body size values of White and Black women." *Research in Nursing G Health* 16: 323-333.

Allison D.B., Hoy M.K., Fournier A., Heymsfield S.B.. 1993. "Can ethnic differences in men's preferences for women's body shapes contribute to ethnic differences in female adiposity?" *Obesity Research* 1:425.

Altabe, M. 1998. "Ethnicity and body image: quantitative and qualitative analysis." *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 23: 153-159.

Bell, E. 1990. "The bicultural life experience of career-oriented black women." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 11:459-477.

Bell, Y. R., Bouie, C. L., Baldwin, J. A. 1990. "Afrocentric cultural consciousness and African American male-female relationships." *Journal of Black Studies* 21: 162-189.

Bell, C., Kirkpatrick, S. W., & Rinn, R. C. 1989. "Body image of an anorexic, obese and normal females." *Journal of Early Adolescence* 9 (1/2): 55-60.

Bissell, K. L. 2002. "I want to be thin, like you: Gender and race as predictors of cultural expectations for thinness and attractiveness in women." *News Photographer* 57: 4-12.

Bordo, S. 2003. *Unbearable weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the body* (10th anniversary edition). Berkley, CA: University of California Press.

Braun, M. & Bryan, A. 2006. "Female waist-to-hip and male waist- to-shoulder ratios as determinants of romantic partner desirability." *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 23: 805-819.

Brooks-Gunn, J., & Paikoff, R. L. 1993. "Sex is a gamble, kissing is a game: Adolescent sexuality and health promotion." In S. G.Millstein, A. C. Petersen, & E. O. Nightingale (Eds.), *Promoting the health of adolescents: New directions for the twenty- first century* (pp. 108–128). New York: Oxford University Press.

Brown-Collins, A. R., & Susswell, D. R. 1986. "The Afro-American women's emerging selves." *Journal of Black Psychology* 13: 1-11.

Buss, D. M. 1988. "The evolution of human intrasexual competition: Tactics of mate attraction." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 54(4): 616–628.

-----. 2003. "What Women Want." Pp. 19-48 in *The Evolution of Desire: Strategies of Mating.* Basic Books.

Buss, D. M., & Barnes, M. 1986. "Preferences in human mate selection." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 50*(3): 559–570.

Cachelin, F.M., Monreal, T.K., & Juarez, L.C. 2006. "Body image and size perceptions in Mexican-American women." *Body Image: An International Journal of Research* 3:67-76.

Cafri, G. & Thompson, J.K. 2004. "Measuring male body image: A review of current methodology." *Psychology of Men and Masculinity* 5: 18-29.

Caldwell, M. B., Brownell, K. D., & Wifley, D. E. 1997. "Relationship of weight, body dissatisfaction, and self-esteem in African American and white female dieters." *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 22: 127-130.

Cachelin FM, Striegel-Moore RH, Elder KA. 1998. "Realistic weight perception and body size assessment in a racially diverse community sample of dieters." *Obesity Research* 6:62.

Carver, K., Joyner, K., & Udry, R. J. 2003. "National Estimates of Adolescent Romantic Relationships." Pp. 23-56 in *Adolescent Romantic Relationships and Sexual Behavior: Theory, Research, and Practical Implications,* edited by P. Florsheim. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates.

Cash T.F. 1990. "The psychology of physical appearance: Aesthetics, attributes, and images." Pp. 51-79 in *Body Images: Development, deviance, and change*, edited by T. Cash and T. Pruzinsky. New York: Guilford Press.

Cash, T.F., Ancis, J. & Strachan, M. 1997. "Gender attitudes, feminist identity, and body images among college women." *Sex Roles* 36:433-447.

Cash, T.F., Beskin, C.L., & Yamamiya, Y. 2003. *Body image and sexual functioning among college women and men.* Manuscript submitted for publication. Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA.

Cash, T.F., & Fleming, E.C. 2002. "The impact of body-image experiences: Development of the Body Image Quality of Life Inventory." *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 31: 455-460.

Cash, T.F., & Henry, P.E. 1995. "Women's body images: The results of a national survey in the U.S.A. *Sex Roles* 33: 19-28.

Cash, T. F., & Pruzinsky, T. (Eds.). 1990. *Body images: Development, deviance, and change.* New York: Guilford Press.

_____. 2002. *Body image: A Handbook of Theory, Research, and Clinical Practice.* New York: Guilford Press.

Cash, T.F., Theriault, J., & Annis, N.M. 2004. "Body image in an interpersonal context: Adult attachment, fear of intimacy, and social anxiety." *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 23(1): 89-103.

Cash, T., Winstead, B., and Janada, L. 1986. "The great American shape-up: Body image survey report." *Psychology Today* 20(4):30-37.

Cawley, J. 2001. "Body weight and the dating and sexual behaviors of young adolescents." Pp. 174-198 in *Social awakening: Adolescent behavior as adulthood approaches*, edited by R. T. Michael. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

Center for Disease Control. 2007. *New CDC Study Finds No Increase in Obesity Among Adults;But Levels Still High.* Maryland: Center for Disease Control.

Chapman, R. 1988. "The great pretender: Variations on the new man theme." Pp. 225-248 in *Male order: Unwrapping Masculinity*, edited by R. Chapman and J. Rutherford. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Ciairano, S., Bonino, S., Kliewer, W., Miceli, R., and Jackson, S. 2006. "Dating, Sexual Activity, and Well-Being in Italian Adolescents." *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology* 35(2): 275-282.

Cohane, G.H., & Pope, H.J. 2001. "Body image in boys: A review of the literature." *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 29(4):373-379.

Cooper, P., Taylor, M., Cooper, Z., & Fairburn, C. 1987. "The development and validation of the Body Shape Questionnaire." *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 6: 485-494.

Cramer, P., & Steinwert, T. 1998. Thin is good, fat is bad: How early does it begin? *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology* 19: 429–451.

Crissey, S. R. 2005. "Race/ethnic differences in marital expectations of adolescents: The role of romantic relationships." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67: 697 – 709.

Crocker, J., & Major, B. 1989. "Social stigma and self-esteem: The self-protective properties of stigma." *Psychological Review* 96: 608–630.

Crocker, J., Major, B., & Steele, C. 1998. "Social stigma." Pp. 504-553 in The handbook of social psychology, 4th edition, vol. 3, edited by D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Dekovic, M., & Meeus,W. 1997. "Peer relations in adolescence: effects of parenting and adolescents' self-concept." *Journal of Adolescence* 20: 163–176.

Demarest, J. & Allen, R. 2000. "Body image: gender, ethnic, and age differences." *The Journal of social psychology* 140(4): 465-472.

Demarest, J. & Langer, E. "Perception of body shape by underweight, average, and overweight men and women." *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 83: 569–570.

Dewing. J. 1989. "Altered Body Image." *Surgical Nurse* 2(4): 17-20.

DiGioacchino, R., Sargent, R., & Topping, M. 2001. "Body dissatisfaction among White and African-American male and female college students." *Eating Behaviors* 2: 39-50.

Dittrich, E. 1997. "Sociocultural factors that influence body image satisfaction in women." *Unpublished doctoral dissertation*, California Institute of Integral Studies.

Dunphy, D. C. 1969. *Cliques, crowds, and gangs*. Melbourne, Australia: Chesire.

Edison, L. T., & Notkin, D. 1994. *Women en large: Images of fat nudes*. San Francisco: Books in Focus.

Emery, J., Benson, P., Cohen-Tovee, E., and Tovee, M. 1995. "A computerized measure of body image and body shape." *Personal Communication.*

Epstein, E., and R.Guttman. "Mate Selection in Man: Evidence, Theory, and Outcome. *Social Biology* 31(3-4): 243-278.

Evans, P. & McConnell, A. 2003. "Do Racial Minorities Respond in the Same Way to Mainstream Beauty Standards? Social Comparison Processes in Asian, Black, and White Women." *Self and Identity* 2:153-167.

Falconer, J.W. & Neville, H.A. 2000. "African American College Women." *Psychology of Woman Quarterly* 24(3): 236-243.

Fallon, A.E. 1990. "Culture in the mirror: Sociocultural determinants of body image. Pp. 80-109 in *Body images: Development, deviance, and Change,* edited by T.F. Cash & T. Pruzinsky. New York: Guilford.

Fallon, A. E., & Rozin, P. 1985. "Short reports: Sex differences in perceptions of desirable body shape." *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* 94: 102-105.

Fawkner, H. 2004. "Body image attitudes in men: An examination of the antecedents and consequent adjustive strategies and behaviors." *Unpublished thesis.* University of Melbourne.

Forna, A. 1996. "For women, or for men only?" *The Independent on Sunday*, 28 April.

Franzoi, S. L., & Herzog, M. E. 1987. "Judging physical attractiveness:What body aspects do we use?" *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin 13*(1):19–33.

Franzoi, S. L., & Shields, S. A. 1984. "The body esteem scale: Multidimensional structure and sex differences in a college population." *Journal of Personality Assessment* 48: 173–178.

Frederick, D.A., Fessler, D.M.T, & Haselton, M.G. 2005. "Do representations of male muscularity differ in men's and women's magazines?" *Body Image: An International Journal of Research* 2: 81-86.

Furnham, A. & Alibhai, N. 1983. "Cross-cultural differences in the perception of female body shapes." *Psychological Medicine* 13(4):829-837.

Furman, W., & Shaffer, L. 2003. "The role of romantic relationships in adolescent development." Pp. 3–22 in *Adolescent romantic relations and sexual behavior: Theory, research, and practical implications*, edited by P. Florsheim. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Furman, W. and E. Wehner. 1997. "Adolescent Romantic Relationships: A Developmental Perspective." Pp. 21-36 in *In Romantic Relationships in Adolescence: Developmental* Perspectives, edited by S. Shulman. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Garner, D.M., Garfinkel, P.E., Schwartz, D., & Thompson, M. 1980. "Cultural expectations of thinness in women." *Psychological Reports* 47: 483–491

Garner, D. M. 1995. "Measurement of eating disorder psychopathology." Pp. 117-124 in: *Eating disorders and obesity*, edited by K. D. Brownell, & C. G. Fairburn. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Garner, D. M., Olmstead, M. P., & Polivy, J. 1983. "Development and validation of a multidemsional eating disorder inventory for anorexia nervosa and bulimia." *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 2: 15-34.

Gibson, V**.** D. 1984. "*The relationship between African self-consciousness and personal causation in black college students."* Unpublished masters thesis, Florida A&M University, Tallahassee.

Glick, P. C., & Norton, A. J. 1977. "Marrying, divorcing and living together in the U.S. today." *Population Bulletin* 32(5): 4 – 34.

Gralen, S. J., Levine, M. P., Smolak, L., & Murnen, S. K. 1990."Dieting and disordered eating during early and middle adolescence: Do the influences remain the same?" *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 9: 501–512.

Granberg, E., Gordon-Simons, L., & Simons, R. 2006. "Exploring a Body Size Paradox: The Relationship between Body Size and Social Self-Concept Among Adolescent African American Girls." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, August 11-14, Montreal, Canada.

Granberg et al. forcoming. "Body Size and Social Self-Image among Adolescent African American Girls: The Moderating Influence of Family Racial Socialization." *Youth and Society.*

Greenberg, D. R., & LaPorte, D. J. 1996. "Racial differences in body type preferences of men and women." *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 19: 275-278.

Grogan, S. 2007. *Body image: Understanding body dissatisfaction in men, women, and children*. New York: Routledge.

Grogan, S. & Richards, H. 2002. "Body Image: focus groups with boys and men." *Men and Masculinities* 4: 219-233.

Halpern, C. T., Udry, J. R., Campbell, B., & Suchindran, C. 1999. "Effects of body fat on weight concerns, dating, and sexual activity: A longitudinal analysis of Black and White adolescent girls." *Developmental Psychology* 35: 721– 736.

Harris, S. M. 1995. "Family, self, and sociocultural contributions to body image attitudes of African American women." *Psychology of Women Quarterly 19*: 129-145.

Harris, M. B., Walters, L. C., & Waschull, S. 1991. "Gender and ethnic differences in obesity related behaviors and attitudes in a college sample." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 21: 1545-1566.

Hatfield, E. & Sprecher, S. 1986. *Mirror, Mirror… The Importance of Looks in Everyday Life.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Hebl, M., & Heatherton, T. 1998. "The stigma of obesity in women: The difference is Black and White." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 24: 417–426.

Hesse-Biber, S. (1996*). Am I thin enough yet? The cult of thinness and the commercialisation of identity.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Hesse-Biber, S., Howling, S., Leavy, P., & Lovejoy, M. 2004. "Racial Identity and the Development of Body Image Issues among African American Adolescent Girls." *The Qualitative Report* 9(1): 49-79.

Huon, G., Morris, S., and Brown, L. 1990. “Differences between male and female preferences for female body size.” *Australian Psychologist* 25:314-317.

Jackson, L. 2002. “Physical Attractiveness: A Sociocultural Perspective.” Pp. 13-21 in *Body Image: A Handbook of Theory, Research, and Clinical Practice*, edited by T. Cash and T. Pruzinsky. New York: The Guilford Press.

Kemper, K. A., Sargent, R. G., Drane, J. W., Valois, R. F., & Hussey, J. R. 1994. “Black and white adolescent females' perceptions of ideal body size and social norms.” *Obesity Research* 9: 117-126.

Klemchuk, H. P., Hutchinson, C. B., & Frank, R. I. 1990. “Body dissatisfaction and eating-related problems on the campus: usefulness of the Eating Disorder Inventory with a non-clinical population.” *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 37: 297-305.

Lakoff, R.T. & Scherr, R.L. 1984. *Face value: The politics of beauty.* Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Lamb, C.S., Jackson, L., Cassidy, P., & Priest, D. 1993. “Body figure preferences for men and women: A comparison of two generations.” *Sex Roles* 28: 345-358.

Landrine, H., & Klonoff, E. 1994. “The African American Acculturation Scale: Origin and current status.” *Journal of Black Psychology* 20: 119-132.

Lavine, H., Sweeney, D., & Wagner, S. H. 1999. “Depicting women as sex objects in television advertising: Effects on body dissatisfaction.” *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin* 25: 1049-1059.

Leit, R., Pope H., Gray J. 2001. “Cultural expectations of muscularity in men: The evolution of playgirl centerfolds Source.” *The International Journal of Eating Disorders* 29(1): 90.

Lewis, R.J., Cash, T.F., Jacobi, L., and Bubb-Lewis, C. 1997. “Prejudice toward fat people: The development and validation of Antifat Attitudes Test.” *Obesity Research* 5: 297-307.

Makkar, J. K., & Stube, M. J. 1995. “Black women’s self-perceptions of attractiveness following exposure to white versus black beauty.” *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 25: 1547–1567.

McCabe, M. 1984. “Toward A Theory of Adolescent Dating.” *Adolescence* 19(73): 159-170.

McCabe, M.P., Ricciardelli, L.A., Sitaram, G., & Mikhail, K. 2006. “Accuracy of body size estimation: Role of biopsychosocial variables.” *Body Image: An International Journal of Research* 3:163-173.

McKinley, N.M. 1999. “Women and objectified body consciousness: Mothers' and daughters' body experience in cultural, developmental, and familial context.” *Developmental Psychology* 35: 760-769.

Mishkind, M., Rodin, J., Silberstein, L., & Striegel-Moore, R. 1986. “The embodiment of masculinity: Cultural, psychological, and behavioral dimensions.” *American Behavioral Scientist* 29: 545-562.

Molloy, B.L. & Herzberger, S.D. 1998. “Body Image and Self-Esteem: A Comparison of African-American and Caucasian Women.” *Sex Roles* 38(7): 631-643.

Morrison, M.A., Morrison, T.G., & Sager, C.L. 2004. “Does body satisfaction differ between gay men and lesbian women and heterosexual men and women.” *Body Image: An International Journal of Research* 1: 127-138.

Mort, F. 1988. “Boys’ own? Masculinity, style, and popular culture.” In *Male Order: Unwrapping masculinity*, edited by R. Chapman and J. Rutherford. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Musher-Eizenman, D., Holub, H., Barnhart-Miller, A., Goldstein, S., and Edwards-Leeper, L. 2004. “Body Size Stigmatization in Preschool Children: The Role of Control Attributions.” *Journal of Pediatric Psychology* 29(8): 613-620.

Negrao, A. & Cordas, T. 1996. “Clinical characteristics and course of anorexia nervosa in Latin America, a Brazilian sample.” *Psychiatry Research* 62(1):17-21.

Nezlek, J. 1999.” Body image and day-to-day social interaction.” *Journal of Personality* 67: 793-817.

O’Kelly, L. 1994. “Body Talk.” *The Guardian* 23: 30-32.

Orbach, S. 1993. *Hunger Strike: The anorectic’s struggle as a metaphor for our age.* London: Penguin.

Park, S., Nichter, M., Vuckovic, N., Sims, C., & Ritenburgh, C. 1995. “Body image and weight concerns among African American and White adolescent females: Differences that make a difference.” *Human Organization* 54: 103-114.

Paxton, S. J., Norris, M.,Wertheim, E. H., Durkin, S. J., & Anderson, J. 2005. “Body dissatisfaction, dating, and importance of thinness to attractiveness in adolescent girls.” *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research* 53: 663–675.
Place, D. 1975. “The Dating Experience For Adolescent Girls.” *Adolescence* 10(38):157-175.

Powell, A. D.,& Kahn, A. K. 1995. “Racial differences in women’s desires to be thin.” *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 2: 191-195.

Pope, H.G., Olivardia, R., Gruber, A., & Borowiecki, J. 1999. Evolving ideals of male body image as seen through action toys.*" International Journal of Eating Disorders* 26: 65–72.

Pope, H.G., Phillips, K.A., & Olivardia, R. 2000. *The Adonis complex: The secret crisis of male body obsession*. New York: Free Press.

Pumariega, A. J., Gustavson, D. R., Gustavson, J. C., Motes, P. S., & Ayers, S. 1994. "Eating attitudes in African-American women: the essence eating disorders survey.*" Eating Disorders: The Journal of Treatment and Prevention* 2: 5-16.

Quinn, D. M., & Crocker, J. 1998. "Vulnerability to the affective consequences of the stigma of overweight." Pp. 125-143 in *Prejudice: The target's perspective*, edited by J. K. Swim & C. Stangor. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Raley, R. K., & Bumpass, L. L. 2003. "The topography of the divorce plateau: Levels and trends in union stability after 1980." *Demographic Research* 8: 246 – 258.

Raley, R.K., Crissey, S., & Muller, C. 2007. "Of Sex and Romance: Late Adolescent Relationships and Young Adult Union Formation." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 69(5): 1210-1226.

Ricciardelli, L.A. &McCabe, M.P. 2001. "Children's body image concerns and eating disturbance: A review of the literature." *Clinical Psychology Review* 21: 325-344.

Rieves, L. & Cash, T. 1996. "Social Developmental Factors and Women's Body Image Attitudes." *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality* 11(1) 63-78.

_____. 1999. *Do you see what I see? Actual and perceived physical appearance attitudes in romantic relationships.* Unpublished manuscript. Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA.

Root, M. P. 1990. "Disordered eating in women of color." *Sex Roles* 22: 525-536.

Roscoe, . Diana, and Brooks. 1987. "Early, middle, and late adolescents' views on dating and factors influencing partner selection." *Adolescence* 22(85):59-68.

Ross, L.E. 1997. "Mate Selection Preference Among African American College Students." *Journal of Black Studies* 27(4): 554-569.

Rucker, C. E. & Cash, T. F. 1992. "Body image, body size perceptions, and eating behaviors among African American and White college women." *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 12:291-299.

Schilder, P. 1935. *Image and Appearance of the Human Body.* Kegan Paul: London.

Schoen, R. & Standish, N. "The Retrenchment of Marriage: Results from Marital Status Life Tables for the United States, 1995." *Population and Development Review* 27(3): 553-563.

Seid, R. 1989. *Never Too Thin: Why women are at war with their bodies*. New York, NY: Prentice Hall Press.

_____. 1994. “Too ‘Close to the Bone’: The Historical Context for Women's Obsession with Slenderness.” Pp. 3-16 in *Feminist Perspectives on Eating Disorders,* edited by P. Fallon, M. Katzman and S. Wooley. New York: The Guilford Press.

Siever, M. 1994. “Sexual orientation and gender as factors in socioculturally acquired vulnerability to body dissatisfaction and eating disorders.” *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 62:252-260.

Signorile, C. 1993. *Life outside: The Signorile report on gay men*. New York: Harper.

Simons, R. L., Lin, K., Gordon, L.C., Brody, G.H., Murry, V., Conger, R.D. (2002). "Community Differences in the Association Between Parenting Practices and Child Conduct Problems." Journal of Marriage and Family 64: 331-345.

Singh, D. 1993. “Is thin really beautiful and good? Relationship between waist-to-hip ratio and female attractiveness.” *Personality and Individual Differences 16*(1): 123–132.

_____. 1994. “Ideal female body shape: Role of body weight and waist-to-hip ratio.” *International Journal of Eating Disorders 16*(3): 283–288.

Skipper, J. and G. Nass. 1966. “Dating Behavior: A Framework for Analysis and an Illustration.” *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 28(4):412-420.

Slade, P.D. 1994. “What is body image?” *Behavioral Research and Therapy* 32(5): 497-502.

Smeets, M.A.M., Smit, F., Panhuysen, G.E.M., & Ingleby, J.D. 1998. “Body perception index: Benefits, pitfalls, ideas.” *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* 44: 457-464.

Smith, E. 1962. *American youth culture: Group life in teenage society.* New York: The Free Press of Glencoe.

Smith, L. R., Burlew, A. K., & Lundgren, A. C. 1991. “Black consciousness, self-esteem, and satisfaction with physical appearance among African American college students.” *Journal of Black Studies* 22: 269-284.

Smolak, L. 2004. “Body image in children and adolescents: where do we go from here?” *Body Image* 1(1): 15-28.

Smolak, L., Levine, M.P., Thompson, J.K. 2001. “The use of the sociocultural attitudes towards appearance questionnaire with middle school boys and girls.” *The international journal of eating disorders* 29(2): 216-223.

Sobal, J. & Stunckard, A. 1989. "Socio-economic status and obesity: A review of the literature." *Psychological Bulletin* 105:260-275.

Steele, C. M., & Aronson, J. 1995. "Stereotype vulnerability and the intellectual test performance of African-Americans." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 69: 797–811.

Stice, E. & Shaw, H. 2004. "Eating disorder prevention programs: A meta-analytic review." *Psychological Bulletin* 130: 206-227.

Striegel-Moore, R. H. 1993. Etiology of binge eating: A developmental perspective. Pp. 142-172 in *Binge eating: Nature, treatment and assessment,* edited by C. G. Fairburn & G. T. Wilson. New York: Guilford Press.

Stunckard, A.J., Sorenson, T. & Schulsinger, F. 1983. "Use of the Danish adoption register for the study of obesity and thinness." In *The genetics of neurological and psychiatric disorders*, edited by S. Kety. New York: Raven Press.

Symons, D. 1979. *The evolution of human sexuality*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Teachman, B.A., & Brownell, K.D. 2001. "Implicit anti-fat bias among health professionals: Is anyone immune?" *International Journal of Obesity* 25: 1-7.

Thompson, J.K. 1996. "Body image, eating disorders, and obesity—An emerging synthesis." Pp. 1–20 in *Body image, eating disorders, and obesity: An integrative guide for assessment and treatment*, edited by J.K. Thompson. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Thompson, J. K., & Cafri, G. (Eds.). 2007. *The muscular ideal: Psychological, social, medical perspectives.* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Thompson, S. H., Corwin, S. J., & Sargent, R. G. 1996. "Ideal body size beliefs and weight concerns of fourth grade children." *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 20 (4):1-6.

Thompson, S. H., Rafiroiu, A. C., & Sargent, R. G. 2003. Examining gender, racial, and age differences in weight concern among third, fifth, eighth, and eleventh graders. *Eating Behaviors* 3: 307–323.

Thompson, S. H., Sargent, R. G., & Kemper, K. A. 1996. "Black and white adolescent males' perceptions of ideal body size." *Sex Roles* 34 (5/6): 391-396.

Thompson, J.K. & Stice, E. 2001. "Thin-Ideal Internalization: Mounting Evidence for a New Risk Factor for Body-Image Disturbance and Eating Pathology." *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 10(5): 181–183.

Thompson, J.K. & Tantleff, S. 1992. "Female and male ratings of upper torso: Actual, ideal, and stereotypical conceptions." *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality* 7:345-354.

Thornton, A., Axinn, W., & Teachman, J. 1995. "The influence of school enrollment and accumulation on cohabitation and marriage in early adulthood." *American Sociological Review* 60: 762 – 774.

Tiggeman, M. & Lynch. J. 2001. "Body image across the life span in adult women: The role of self-objectification." *Developmental Psychology* 37:243-253.

Tiggeman, M. & Pennington, B. 1990. "The development of gender differences in body-size dissatisfaction." *Australian Psychologist* 25: 301-311.

Tiggeman, M. & Rothblum, E. 1988. "Gender differences and social consequences of perceived overweight in the United States and Australia." *Sex Roles* 18:75-86.

Ussher, J. (ed.) 1993. *The psychology of the female body.* London: Routledge.

Villarosa, L. 1994. "Dangerous eating." *Essence* January: 19.

Wardle, J., & Marsland, L. 1990. "Adolescent Concerns about weight and eating: A social-developmental perspective." *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* 22: 377-391.

Webb, T., Looby, E., & Fults-McMurtery, R. 2004. "African American Men's Perceptions of Body Figure Attractiveness: An Acculturation Study." *Journal of Black Studies* 34(3): 370-385.

Wells, W. & Siegel, B. 1961. "Stereotyped somatotypes." *Psychological Reports* 8:77-78.

Whyte, M. 1990. *Dating, Mating, and Marriage.* New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Wiederman, M.W. (2002). Body image and sexual functioning." Pp. 287-294 in *Body image: A handbook of theory, research, and clinical practice*, edited by T.F. Cash & T. Pruzinsky. New York: Guilford Press.

Wilfley, D. E., & Rodin, J. 1995. "Cultural influences on eating disorders." Pp 78-82 in *Eating disorders and obesity* edited by K. D. Brownell, & C. G. Fairburn. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Williams, S., Connolly, J., & Segal, Z. V. 2001. "Intimacy in relationships and cognitive vulnerability to depression in adolescent girls." *Cognitive Therapy & Research, 25:* 477–496.

Williamson, L. 1998. "Eating Disorders and the Cultural Forces Behind the Drive for Thinness: Are African-American Women Really Protected?" *Social Work in Health Care* 28(1):61-73

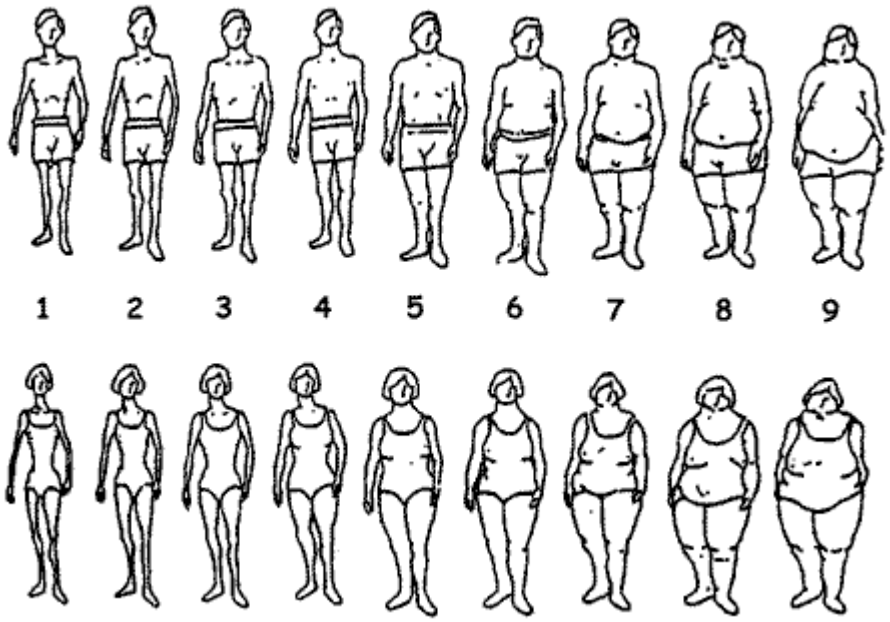
Wilson, D.B., Sargent, R.G. and Dias, J.K., 1994. "Racial differences in the selection of ideal body size by adolescent females." *Obesity Research* 2: 38–43.

Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J., Siebenbruner, J., & Collins,W. A. 2001. "Diverse aspects of dating: Associations with psychosocial functioning from early to middle adolescence." *Journal of Adolescence* 24: 313–336.

APPENDIX A: FIGURES

Figure 1. Body Size Perception Variable

Look at these drawings of various body shapes. Please indicate the number of the drawing that is closest to what you look like.



<1> Figure 1
<2> Figure 2
<3> Figure 3
<4> Figure 4
<5> Figure 5
<6> Figure 6
<7> Figure 7
<8> Figure 8
<9> Figure 9

APPENDIX B: ANALYSIS TABLES

Table 8. Multinomial logistic regression of Dating Status (Casual vs. Not Dating) on Body Image and Control Variables for Females.

	Body Image Only	Full Model
Body Image Variables:		
Underweight	.127*	.122*
Average	.621	.613
Obese	.544	1.556
Control Variables:		
Age	—	.715
Work	—	.934
School Attendance	—	1.17
Class	—	1.09
Social Skills	—	1.02
ll	-354.292	-349.549
chi2	14.314	23.799
r2_p	0.020	0.033
N	392	392

legend: * p≤0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
Dating Status is comparing Casual Dating vs. Not Dating
Results are presented in terms of Odds Ratios.
Body Image reference is **Overweight.**

Table 9. Multinomial logistic regression of Dating Status (Monogamous Relationship vs. Not Dating) on Body Image and Control Variables for Females.

	Body Image Only	Full Model
Body Image Variables:		
Underweight	.346*	.334*
Average	1.28	1.32
Overweight	1.60	1.56
Control Variables:		
Age	—	.865
Work	—	.928
School Attendance	—	.741
Class	—	1.06
Social Skills	—	.637
ll	-354.618	-350.000
chi2	13.662	22.897
r2_p	0.019	0.032
N	392	392

legend: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
Dating Status is comparing Not Dating vs. Monogamous Relationship
Results are presented in terms of Odds Ratios.
Body Image reference is **Obese.**

Table 10. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Dating Activity on Body Image and Control Variables for Males

	Body Image Only			Full Model		
	β	SE(β)	OR	β	SE(β)	OR
Body Image Variables:						
Overweight	-.004	.244	.996	.093	.249	1.05
Obese	-.747	.384	.474*	-.646	.397	.816
Underweight	-.176	.460	.839	.017	.473	1.00
Control Variables:						
Age	—	—	—	.223	.126	1.23
Work	—	—	—	-.123	.202	.941
School Attendance	—	—	—	-.119	.241	.944
Class	—	—	—	.123	.087	1.17
Social Skills	—	—	—	.098	.294	1.04
ll	-350.6718			-347.7580		
chi2	4.1821			10.0099		
r2_p	0.0059			0.0142		
N	271			271		

legend: * p≤0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
Body Image reference category is Average.
1= Rarely 2= A few times per month 3= 1-2 times per week 4= 3 or more times per week

Table 11. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Dating Activity on Body Image and Control Variables for Females

	Body Image Only			Full Model		
	β	SE(β)	OR	β	SE(β)	OR
Body Image Variables:						
Underweight	-1.48	.522	.227**	-1.52	.524	.219**
Obese	-.269	.298	.764	-.256	.300	.774
Average	-.070	.219	.932	-.072	.220	.931
Control Variables:						
Age	—	—	—	.012	.109	.989
Work	—	—	—	.026	.202	1.03
School Attendance	—	—	—	.077	.230	1.08
Class	—	—	—	.076	.077	1.08
Social Skills	—	—	—	-.133	.246	.876
ll	-440.2496			-439.5264		
chi2	9.3642			10.8106		
r2_p	0.0105			0.0121		
N	342			342		

legend: * p≤0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
Body Image reference category is Overweight.
1= Rarely 2= A few times per month 3= 1-2 times per week 4= 3 or more times per week

Table 12. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Dating Activity on Body Image and Control Variables for Females

	Body Image Only			Full Model		
	β	SE(β)	OR	β	SE(β)	OR
Body Image Variables:						
Overweight	.191	.277	1.21	.170	.280	1.19
Underweight	-1.29	.547	.277*	-1.34	.549	.262*
Average	.127	.275	1.14	.109	.278	1.16
Control Variables:						
Age	—	—	—	- .004	.109	.996
Work	—	—	—	.024	.202	1.01
School Attendance	—	—	—	.082	.230	1.04
Class	—	—	—	.076	.077	1.10
Social Skills	—	—	—	-.138	.246	.871
ll		-440.4213			-439.7077	
chi2		9.0208			10.4480	
r2_p		0.0101			0.0117	
N		342			342	

legend: * p≤0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
Body Image reference category is Obese.
1= Rarely 2= A few times per month 3= 1-2 times per week 4= 3 or more times per week