

■ Tekst 5



Magazine Online

Teen Girls, Sexism, and Marketeting

By Cynthia Peters

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The more time a teen girl spends reading fashion magazines, the worse she feels about herself, according to a study done by Brigham and Women's hospital released earlier this month. And that's just how marketeers like it. For a girl feeling unattractive, overweight, and in dire need of a boyfriend is more likely to 8 the countless products that promise to correct her flaws, slim her down, and prime her for romance.

Unfortunately for marketeers, however, teen girls are 9. Seventeen Magazine and the MS Foundation discovered in a 1996 poll of 1000 teenagers that only 5% of the girls measured their self-worth by their appearance. They found that boys were more likely than girls to worry about appearances.

So the beauty and fashion magazines spill gallons of ink to convince girls that life revolves around self-care and self-improvement. Between the "do's and don'ts," the exercise advice column, and the ads focused almost exclusively on clothes and make-up, a girl's universe shrinks to the issue of her appearance and ways she can spend money on it. The fact that, in real life, girls actually have a lot more on their minds is regarded as 10. Articles about politics, art, community issues, religion, etc. might actually distract a girl from questions about whether her bare back will look shapely enough in her prom dress.

With the U.S. teen population on the rise (expected peak in 2010 at 35 million), marketeers are experimenting with the best ways to reach this media-wise lot. Raised on Disney and TV shows based on toys (is it a show or an ad?), today's teens have been the target of sophisticated advertising their whole lives. So today's marketeers are having to come up with even more 11 ways of selling to them.

One approach is to imbed advertising in articles and web sites, and to blur the lines between content and 12. Moxiegirl will send you a free subscription to its "magalog" as long as you buy at least "one little thing" from them. Their web site defines what it means to be a "cool chick," all the while blurring the boundaries between "hanging out" and shopping.

13, if you are a teen or know one, don't despair: there are national publications whose mission is other than marketing. New Moon Magazine (www.newmoon.org) for girls ages 8 to 14, Teen Voices (www.teenvoices.com) for teenage girls, and HUES (Hear Us Emerging Sisters, www.hues.net) for young women ages 17 to 29, are all written and edited by girls, teens and adults in collaboration.

Of these, Teen Voices is most committed to 14 young women and uncovering the roots of social problems in the process. For example, their feminist critique of a Nike ad points out the sexist depiction of women in advertising and then goes on to include information about labor laws and an analysis of how companies get you to buy.

The studies show that fashion magazines make girls feel bad about 15, and that girls don't put that much stock in their appearance anyway. So let's support the magazines that don't treat teens as if they are nothing without the shopping mall, and that offer themselves as a catalyst for individual empowerment.

'www.zmag.org'

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Kies bij iedere open plek in de tekst het juiste antwoord uit de gegeven mogelijkheden.

1p **8** ■

- A be dissatisfied with
- B look critically at
- C spend money on

1p **9** ■

- A a difficult target
- B a low-income group
- C an unhappy lot
- D an unlikely mix

1p **10** ■

- A decisive
- B hopeful
- C irrelevant
- D natural

1p **11** ■

- A familiar
- B honest
- C inventive

1p **12** ■

- A homepage lay-out
- B objective facts
- C product promotion
- D target group

1p **13** ■

- A However
- B In short
- C Moreover
- D Therefore

1p **14** ■

- A brainwashing
- B criticizing
- C informing

1p **15** ■

- A feminism
- B marketeers
- C society
- D themselves